VISUAL EXPRESSION AMONG CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS: IMPLICATIONS FOR ART EDUCATION

BY

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Dedication

To my family and uncle Davies who have always been a source of inspiration.
Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all contemporary artists, Chikonzero Chazunguza (Chiko), David Chinyama, Charles Kamangwana, Doris Kampilira and Chenjerai Mutasa, who granted me the chance to interview and observe them as they worked in their ateliers, and provided artworks for analyses. It was through an analysis of their practice that I gained valuable insights into contemporary visual practice in Zimbabwe. Their co-operation and contribution is greatly appreciated. I am also grateful to colleges and art lecturers, schools and art teachers for the provision of documents for analyses as well as interviews and discussions. The documents were insightful and informative as they contained the much needed data on the implementation of art curricula at various levels of education. Thank you for the valuable information and candid views that made my understanding of current art education in Zimbabwe more informed. Great thanks go to Mr and Mrs Chawatama for the efficient and reliable audio tape recorder that was used in the study. It made the transcription process an easier task than I thought as all the interviews were clear and audible.

I am greatly indebted to my supervisors: Dr Natsa, Professor Zindi and Dr Matiure, for their invaluable guidance throughout the entire study. They went through the draft documents and examined their coherence and helped shape the overall structure of the thesis.

Last but by no means least I would like to thank my family, friends and colleagues for their moral support.

Thank you so much to you all.
Abstract

Zimbabwean art, particularly stone sculpture, has an international acclaim. While contemporary stone sculpture ideally emerged in the 1950s with the advent of Frank McEwen, it has reached many European and Asian countries as well as the Americas. Since then Zimbabwean art has evolved taking other dimensions and new art genres have subsequently emerged. This study sought to interrogate visual expression among Zimbabwean contemporary artists with the aim of proposing curricula reforms in art education reflective of such contemporary practice.

The study used a hermeneutic ethnographic design to collect data from purposively sampled artists, art lecturers and art teachers. Contemporary artists were interviewed and observed as they worked in their ateliers. The observations made were complemented by analyses of some of their artworks that epitomised contemporary practice. Focus group discussions were held with art lecturers to ascertain the status and infusion of contemporary art in college curricula. Data on infusion of contemporary art were also sought from secondary school art teachers and analysis of curricula documents at primary, secondary and college levels.

Contemporary Zimbabwean art was found to be significantly Westernised through syncretism. Influence was noted in artistic approaches, sources of inspiration, iconography and the use of non-indigenous media. The artists have adopted installations and performances that were not traditionally in the realm of African art.
Formal art training and attendance at workshops, seminars and symposiums influenced some of the artists to incorporate modern Western ways of perceiving visual expression. Some artists produced art with bicultural aesthetics as they used Western approaches to explore Zimbabwean political, social, historical and economic issues.

It emerged that art lecturers and teachers were not quite conversant with contemporary Zimbabwean art but satisfactorily informed about Western art and its traditions. Furthermore, it was narrowly conceptualised as stone sculpture practised by the first generation of sculptors such as Joramu Mariga, and art education in early mission schools. Resultantly, they taught more Western art. Effective teaching of contemporary art was marred by shortage of literature particularly by local writers, limited financial and material resources, negative attitudes by some art lecturers and students, inadequate contact time between lecturers and students, as well as limited knowledge by practitioners about contemporary art, among others.

Implications drawn from the study that impinge on curricula innovations at primary and secondary school levels and college level include the following: increasing interaction between contemporary artists, schools and colleges; reviewing college and school curricula to align it with contemporary practice; provision of more literature, particularly by local writers on contemporary art and its practice; reflecting more contemporary art in studio practice; and the need for a critical apprehension of the notion of contemporary art in Zimbabwe by art lecturers and teachers.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>Africancolours Artists Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td>Associate Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (Hons)</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts Honours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAT</td>
<td>British American Tobacco.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. ED</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Board of Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. TECH (Hons)</td>
<td>Bachelor of Technology Honours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAD</td>
<td>Computer aided design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDS</td>
<td>Curriculum Depth Study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDT</td>
<td>Craft Design and Technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Curriculum Development Unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>Certificate in Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUT</td>
<td>Chinhoyi University of Technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBAE</td>
<td>Discipline Based Art Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dip Ed</td>
<td>Diploma in Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTE</td>
<td>Department of Teacher Education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2 System</td>
<td>An inferior Junior secondary school for Africans during pre-independent Zimbabwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Course:</td>
<td>A pre-service programme producing a generalist teacher to teach all primary school grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>GTC</td>
<td>Gweru Teachers’ College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIFA</td>
<td>Harare International Festival of the Arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HND</td>
<td>Higher National Diploma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGCSE</td>
<td>International General Certificate of Secondary Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>Grades one to three.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Primary</td>
<td>Grades four to seven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. ED</td>
<td>Master of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACZ</td>
<td>National Arts Council of Zimbabwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND</td>
<td>National Diploma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>National Certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGZ</td>
<td>National Gallery of Zimbabwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSB</td>
<td>Professional Studies Syllabus B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Professional Studies Syllabus C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prode</td>
<td>A consultant project initiated in 1987 to review the status of art education in Zimbabwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSAD</td>
<td>A proposed Regional School of Art and Design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern Africa Development Community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOM</td>
<td>Source of Material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERC</td>
<td>Teacher Education Review Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>A higher level to the Primary Teachers’ Higher (PTH). A two-year course after two years of secondary Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>A higher version of the Primary Teachers’ Lower (PTL). A two-year teacher training course after primary education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UZ  University of Zimbabwe.

VAAB  Visual Artists Association of Bulawayo.

WUA  Women’s University in Africa.

ZGCE  Zimbabwe General Certificate of Education.

ZIVA  Zimbabwe Institute of Vigital Arts.

ZIMSEC  Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council.

2.5.2 model  A three-year model of pre-service teacher training in which students spend two terms in college, five terms out on teaching practice and the last two terms in college.

3.3.3 model  A three-year model of teacher training in which students spend three terms in college, three terms on teaching practice and the last three terms in college.
Chapter One

The Scope of the Study

Introduction

The world over, contemporary art is in constant flux due to several factors that include among others, interaction among artists and cultural nomadism (McEvilley, 1993). These assimilative processes result in an amalgam of art techniques, processes, themes, media and sources of inspiration which are, however, operationalised within the dictates of specific cultural contexts. Similarly, contemporary Zimbabwean art has gone through various phases of evolution to become what it is today. Although there was little documentation of local art-forms, the advent of westerners brought to the limelight the rich artistic heritage through research on art practice in the country. Studies by notable scholars like Roberts (1979), Winter-Irving (2004) and Stanislaus (1996) were instrumental in the furtherance of art in Zimbabwe. Stone sculpture emerged to be the dominant art-form and recently painting and other art genres such as textiles, print-making and photography also emerged.

The establishment of the National Gallery of Zimbabwe as a national institution by Frank McEwen in 1957 further enhanced the practice of stone sculpture in particular and painting and other visual art-forms to a lesser extent. In addition, informal institutional establishments such as Tengenenge and Vukutu that train artists further promoted the practice of stone sculpture. Presently, contemporary art practice enjoys various art genres, installations and performances, as artists endeavour to express themselves. There are numerous national
exhibitions, notably Batapata, Pritt, Gwanza and Heritage that are mounted annually to promote contemporary art at which a wide spectrum of renowned artists participate.

While contemporary art has maintained a hegemonic Zimbabwean perspective, it has been significantly influenced by acculturation. Zimbabwean art has in the process of its development assimilated new art-forms, non-indigenous media and materials, artistic approaches and processes among other aspects that are now an integral constituent of art practice. The impact of international exposure is self-evident as artists produce art for the gallery space, which was not the case before the advent of Westernisation.

Art practice elsewhere has been taken into formal art education in an effort to perpetuate contemporary visual practice (Prentice, 1995). In his study of stone sculpture in Zimbabwe, Moyo (1989) envisages the potential local sculpture has on art education. However, this has never been explored to fruition. In that light, the focus of this study is to explore how contemporary art is reflected. It is also an investigation into the ways in which this art can be integrated with art education at primary and secondary school levels as well as in teachers’ colleges. This is precisely because Zimbabwe has a rich artistic heritage whose impact has not been significantly exploited in formal art education. In this study, I therefore explore art practices by contemporary artists that could be beneficial to art education in Zimbabwe.

**Background to the Study**

Zimbabwe is well known for its artistic heritage that dates back to the San rock paintings, glyptics (Garlake, 1987), soapstone bird sculptures (Arnold, 1981) and the stone architectural forms scattered all over the country (Dederan, 2010; Matenga, 1998; Willet, 1993; Vanscina, 1984; Garlake 1985). This artistic heritage has been an inspirational source to many local and international contemporary artists. It directly resulted in the introduction of art education
programmes at Serima, Cyrene, Silveira and St Faith mission schools (Williams, 1994; Walker, 1985; Kangai, 1990; Kileff & Kileff, 1996). Under the tutelage of missionaries such as Father John Groeber and Edward Paterson, there was deliberate fusion of traditional art into mission mainstream education to produce Christian art forms with a strong Africanised identity.

Visual art forms, especially stone sculpture, also sprouted and flourished at various centres such as Vukutu established in 1968 near Nyanga and Tengenenge Sculpture Community established in 1966 north of Harare (Walker, 1985). These initiatives were organised to encourage indigenous cultural expression. The then Rhodes National Gallery, now known as the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, was established in 1957 under the directorship of Frank McEwen (Huggins, 2001). Its thrust was to become an arts cultural centre where artists of diverse geographical origins and artistic affiliations would share their cultural heritage and means of expression. McEwen’s methodology encouraged artists to draw inspiration and subject matter from their traditional culture (Kileff & Kileff, 1996; Roberts, 1982). From the gallery workshop emerged internationally renowned artists who have become key advocates of Zimbabwean art, especially stone sculpture, to the international world through numerous successful exhibitions. Artists such as Tapfuma Gutsa, Nicholas Mukomberanwa and Henry Munyaradzi, together with their contemporaries from other African countries, have participated at international exhibitions such as the 1990 Venice Biennale, Magiciens de la terre of 1989 and Contemporary African Artists: Changing Tradition of 1990 (Stanislaus, 1996; Kennedy, 1992; McEvilley, 1993). These exhibitions were meant to bring some understanding to African art and to remove it from the realm of ethnographic art (Vogel, 1994) that is traditionally meant for the museum space.
Post-independence Zimbabwe has witnessed a proliferation of diverse forms of visual arts from both formally trained artists and autodidacts who are self-taught. The art, both academic and naïve (untutored), ranges from sculptures to paintings, graphics, ceramics, textiles, prints, jewellery, weaving, drawing and mixed media. The artists have also experimented with new non-indigenous media and techniques and art forms such as cyber art, installations, happenings, environmental art, and conceptual art in response to local and international trends in the discipline (Khatchadourian, 1985; Driskell, 1995; Kennedy, 1992). There has also been a paradigm shift in the generic concept of art, from art as a product to art as a process. Robbins (1989: 12) reaffirms this idea when he argues that “African art is primarily conceptual, not representational art form...the artist is carving ideas or concepts.”

Various critical factors can be discerned from these artists’ visual expressions including their aesthetic and philosophical orientation, cultural, historical, socio-political perspectives, as well as aspects of media and technology. Murray (1999) observes that among painters, past and present, there are some that pursue an objective delight in the physical world. Others are preoccupied with expressionism. Yet others also focus on semiotic processes and aestheticism. This post-colonial character of contemporary Zimbabwean art has Western and international influence, imbibed through formal art training and acculturation. The motivational and other factors of visual expression are, thus, varied and diverse.

Visual aesthetic theories, which include mimesis, expression, attitude and institutional theories, have been variedly applied by artists (Arnold, 2004; Levi & Smith, 1991). The mimetic theory, which is based on objective representation of subjects, has, since the Platonic era, remained the strong guiding force to both Western and African visual expression. The expression theory of the 1920s still has an impact on artists’ expression of feelings and
emotions as the prime function. The theory was also pivotal in the development of art curricula, pedagogy and methodology from the 1920s when art activities revolved around expression of innate capabilities and sensitivities (Freedman & Popkewitz, 1985). The attitudinal and institutional theories have fostered multi-media studies and the adoption of new art forms traditionally viewed as non-art, particularly by international African artists.

Modern and post-modern styles and practices, which cut across all paradigmatic periods and cultural spheres, have also led to a resurgence of avant-garde art, art that seems to be ahead of its times. Although there is raging debate as to whether or not there is African avant-garde, several authors believe the avant-garde also existed among post-colonial African artists such as Valente Malangatana of Mozambique and Skunder Boghossian of Ethiopia who had international exposure. Western art movements such as Dadaism, Surrealism, Cubism and Impressionism that emerged at the turn of the 19th century, have had an impact on contemporary art forms and practices in Zimbabwe. A number of Zimbabwean artists, particularly those who have had international exposure such as Tapfuma Gutsa, borrow their approaches and techniques from the various historical stylistic art movements. For example, Murray (1999) notes that the Romantic tradition of Delacroix, Francisco de Goya and the symbolist approaches influence Helen Lieros, a Zimbabwean born artist of Greek parentage. A modernist sculptor, Brancusi and his Bird in space (1919), and Duchamp’s The Fountain (1917) have revolutionised art abstraction in particular. Their conception of art dominates contemporary practice in Zimbabwe as evidenced by the works of Chiko Chazunguza, Tapfuma Gutsa, Voti Thebe and Hillary Kashiri, among others. Some of these artists have incorporated ready-mades, installations and mixed media studies, which are now in the realm of Zimbabwean art. Some
indigenous artists with a Western orientation in the use of mixed media, approaches and techniques have also influenced some contemporary Zimbabwean artists.

Kangai (2005: 1) observes that:

Discourse in the visual arts has in the recent years moved from the dominance of modernist interpretations towards more diversified post modern or post structuralist paradigms in which the grand or master narratives of beauty, science, rational man and progress have given way to a multitude of so called ‘little’ narratives.

Such multi-cultural dimension of art as explored by semiologists and philosophers such as Barthes (1915-1980), Foucault (1926-1984), Lyotard (1924-1998), Derrida (1930-), Baudrillard and Jameson, among others, characterise contemporary Zimbabwean art in its attempt to get a linguistic analysis. Post-structural deconstructive and textual reading of a visual text has pushed the artist into the periphery in the process of elucidating meaning (Klages, 1997; Belsey, 2002; Preziosi, 1998). Hirsch (1987) calls this the theory of authorial irrelevance where focus has shifted from the author (artist) to his work. Work by contemporary artists such as Dominic Benhura, Chiko Chazunguza and many others, particularly international artists, has incorporated such post-modern reader perspectives (Osegi, 1991; Kasfir, 1995; Vogel, 1994). The artists are being guided by post-modern practices such as simulacrum, pastiche and bricolage, which focus on fragmentation and multiplicity of visual texts.

This study explores visual expression among contemporary artists and how the artists have taken on board some of the aforementioned traits into their practice. It further interrogates
the ways in which visual expression among contemporary artists can contribute in shaping and
directing the course of art education in Zimbabwe.

**Motivation**

The study was inspired by my background in teacher education. My involvement in art started
during initial teacher education at Mutare Teachers’ College when I participated in public
exhibitions at the Mutare Museum under the auspices of the Mutare Society of Artists. Later,
during a staff development Learner–Tutor programme at Hillside Teachers’ College in
Bulawayo, I had the opportunity to interact with several renowned contemporary artists in
Matebeleland. The Learner-Tutor programme included the pedagogics of art, studio practice
and theories of art in the initial preparation of secondary school art teachers. This accorded me
a better insight into the on-goings in contemporary visual practice in Zimbabwe. I became a
friend of the Bulawayo National Gallery and attended several local and national exhibitions
organised by the Visual Artists Association of Bulawayo. Subsequent to joining the University
of Zimbabwe for the undergraduate and post-graduate studies and later as a lecturer, I had close
contact with artists, some of whom participated in this study. Chiko Chazunguza was my
lecturer at both Bachelors and Masters Levels.

I also had the opportunity to be an assistant examiner in the country’s national
examinations, Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), at ‘O’ and ‘A’ levels in
addition to being an external examiner in art and design education at the Great Zimbabwe
University. Some of my prime responsibilities as an art and design lecturer at the University of
Zimbabwe include giving guidance to teacher education colleges in the area of art and design
education, syllabus reviews and examinations moderation as well as external examining in teachers’ colleges.

From an analysis of several academic study Art and Design syllabi from various teachers’ colleges, I observed that although the documents had some fundamental components relating to Zimbabwean art, these were, however, limited to traditional crafts with little accompanying theoretical and philosophical art discourse. Lancaster (1982) made similar observations that the Zimbabwe art education system lacks curriculum grown from its local traditions and practices. The curriculum tends to ape Western art as similarly observed by Osegi (1991:58) who notes that, “The result of such limitations is that African art schools have little modification, if any, from what was handed over from Western art traditions.” A survey by the BV Project Development Prode in 1987 also recommended for the Africanisation of curricula at all levels of art education and the need to develop a new historiography and sociology of art in Zimbabwe. A synopsis of theory content listed in main subject syllabi revealed the thrust towards Western art history.

Numerous examination papers that I moderated at different teachers’ colleges also focused mainly on modern Western art movements, schools and traditions. There was very little that was examined on contemporary art and local traditions. As a result, there was visible variance between taught and tested curriculum in teacher education programmes and contemporary visual practice. The examinations set at different teachers’ colleges are sent to the University of Zimbabwe, Department of Teacher Education (DTE), for moderation. This is because of the relationship entered into between the University and colleges known as the Scheme of Association. Under the scheme, the University has the prime mandate to moderate
all examinations with the aim of standardising the examinations in all associate colleges. It also provides external examiners for the courses in the scheme.

My interest in contemporary art was also generated by Lancaster’s (1982) and Rogers’ (1986) proposals to establish a national art education and culture institution whose aims, would be to review the national system of education, validate teacher education curricula and synthesize both indigenous and contemporary art with Western ideas on art education so that the curricula are more relevant to the needs of the country (Lancaster, 1982).

The motivational factors for this study can therefore be summarised by three observations: First, there are distinct disparities between contemporary visual expression and teacher education curricula with respect to local art content and methodology. Second, there is lack of an indigenous thrust in teacher education art curriculum for relevance and appropriateness; and lastly, there is too much reliance on Western art and traditions at the detriment of local art and cultures. I am, therefore, interested in investigating visual expression among contemporary Zimbabwean artists with the aim of contributing to the process of indigenising art education.

**Theoretical Framework**

Art practice is never static. It is always in a state of flux due to a myriad of adaptive factors that include syncretism, cultural plagiarism (Vogel, 1991), enforced appropriation, political and social shifts and what Mc Evilley (1993) calls cultural nomadism. Of all these factors, among many others, cultural nomadism in its variants has been the most influential. The notion entails how, when artists migrate to different parts of the world, relocate with their practices, that, in turn, influence or are influenced by artists of the new locations. These assimilative processes vary from intra-cultural to inter/trans-cultural (Oguibe, 1995; Barbanell, 1994). Cultural
nomadism has been the major factor in adoption of new artistic artforms, styles and mutation of art practices. As McEvilley (1993: 17) argues, cultural nomadism is characterised by the culture of pastiche “in which individuals are uprooted from their inherited matrices, and cultures are overlaid upon one another, combined in unpredictable ways.” For example, when the early missionaries to Africa established missionary institutions, they influenced the locals to adopt Western visual aesthetics through interaction and organising art exhibitions for them. This study uses this perspective of cultural nomadism to explore how artists assimilated new approaches, techniques and media through this inter-cultural learning. It examines how the artists who are widely travelled and internationally exhibited were influenced by practices from elsewhere during symposiums, exhibitions, workshops and other art fora. Thus, the notion of cross-cultural assimilation could have had some impact on the contemporary artists who were studied.

Art is defined by the philosophical and aesthetic orientation one adopts. In the history of art, the four commonly cited theories are mimesis (Plato and Aristotle cited in Beardsley, 1982), expression (Croce and Collingwood cited in Heid 2005 and Thompson, 1995), attitudinal (Dickie, 1974; Hospers, 1969) and institutional (Heid, 2005). The theories have attempted to define and categorise art although there is no consensus on a definitive conception of art. This study uses these visual aesthetics theories to establish how artists conceptualise their practice. Tapfuma Gutsa, among other artists, for example, is into multi-media studies and installations that are defined by the art world- an institutional perspective. Dadaism is reminiscent of both the attitudinal and institutional theories while the Renaissance art is conceptualised through the mimetic theory. Charles Kamangwana, one of the Zimbabwean contemporary artists, is into mimetic representation of the physical environment. National galleries, through which most
artists go, are influential agents of the art-world that have persistently conferred art status to most exhibitions through adjudications. While the study examined the artists under the lenses of these theories, it took cognisance of the fact that the artists themselves were not consciously aware of the orientations influencing their practice.

McEvilley (1993), Vogel (1994) and Kasfir (1999) articulate the evolution of African art, particularly from nations that were once colonised. They then propose three phases in its development. They identify the pre-colonial period, the colonial period and the post-colonial period where artists eventually abandon colonial influence and chart their own methods and techniques. The post-colonial has brought new art-forms that are alien to African art. This study uses the proposed evolutionary trends in contemporary art to locate art practice by the artists. It also uses Empedocles’ model where art practice emerges from sameness in terms of practice to the vengeful rejection of colonisers’ art discourses.

Related to the aforementioned categories is the ideology of negritude or Africanity in the development of contemporary African art. As a political and philosophical ideology that was strongly advocated for by the Senegalese Leopold Senghor, it tried to reinstitute the annihilated African glory and identity. This is a reaction where artists aim to return to their inherited traditions. Vogel (1994) argues that Africans reject outside influence and materials in favour of Africanness, while Dime (in McEvilley, 1993: 9) says artists “use material that leads people to be closer to their own lives.” McEvilley observes that African artists in the post-colonial era have arrived at their own post-modern aesthetic as they view Western art as simply one of the multitude of sources of inspiration surrounding them. The study uses this notion of negritude superseded by the more contemporary notion of Afrocentricism to analyse how artists operated in terms of sources of inspiration, media use, subject matter and techniques. Of late, artists
have shown the proclivity to gravitate away from this orientation due to factors that include formal art training and international exposure.

Lancaster (1982) argues for a pragmatic and existentialist philosophy about art education. The BV Prode project (1987) advocates for the inclusion of art historiographical and sociological discourses in the organisation of the art curriculum. In addition, Lancaster (1982) pushes for an art education curriculum grown from the arts and practices of the indigenous people spiraling out to include arts from other traditions, including Western. This study uses the concentric view of the curriculum as it analyses how the present art curricula at primary, secondary and college levels are organised vis-à-vis contemporary art. Borrowing from Lancaster’s theory, the study explores aspects of contemporary art that could be assimilated into the existing art curricula to make them more relevant to the needs of the Zimbabwean art student. Prentice (1995) highlights some challenges associated with such attempts, mainly that contemporary art is yet to be categorised and fixed compared to art history. The study also examined local challenges encountered in trying to merge contemporary art and the art curricula.

**Statement of the Problem**

Visual expression is one of a nation’s cultural heritages that should be preserved. It is the means through which a culture is identified, defined and perpetuated. This is demonstrated by five African artists who participated at the 1993 Venice Biennale (McEvilley, 1993). They explored materials and tools within their cultural experiences as well as codes and meanings within their cultural boundaries. However, visual expression is prone to perpetual transformation through its own evolutionary capacity as well as syncretism. Visual aspects such as art-forms, styles of
expression, iconography, cultural idioms, media and materials as well as general visual discourse are in constant transformation. This is due to new ideas brought in, for example, by artists trained from outside the country, from workshops and conferences, and from assimilation of people from diverse cultures. Modern and post-modern cultural attitudes have also been influential in terms of approaches to art.

What was traditionally termed ‘Shona sculpture’ in Zimbabwe, as coined by Mc Ewen (Winter-Irving, 2004), was an amalgam of a myriad of mythological themes and interpretations from cultures such as Malawian, Mozambican, Angolan and Zambian (Winter-Irving, 2004). Art for art’s sake, such as installations and happenings, that synthesise theatrical activity and found materials, are examples of Western approaches to visual expression, which most African cultures, including Zimbabwean, have incorporated. Several African artists have expressed the need to adopt Western views and ideas as Oguibe (1993: 322) argues, “Otherization is unavoidable, and for every One, the Other is the Heart of Darkness. The West is much the Heart of Darkness to the Rest as the latter is to the West.” However, these ideas should be applied according to artists’ own creative capacities. Despite these seemingly powerful and pervasive influences, a culture needs to maintain its unique overall identity.

While visual expression in Zimbabwe has assimilated Western influences, the need for a hegemonic culture is critical. From a review of some available literature on cultural influence, particularly Western, it is evident that art education in Zimbabwe has been significantly influenced to such an extent that it is now partially an imitation of Western traditions. Despite deliberate government efforts through policies such as localisation of art examinations through (ZIMSEC) and institutional autonomy accorded to teacher education colleges (see, Paper
AST/23/96), the problem of inadequate indigenisation of art still remains a threat to curricula relevance.

This study therefore views contemporary art as a useful and unique resource that can be used to indigenise art education. These curricula gaps have not been bridged in terms of concretising art curricula content relevant to Zimbabwe, which this study hopes to achieve. The study provides analytical insights into the nature of visual expression among contemporary artists. It aims at understanding indigenous art and the ways it relates to art education, and, also the extent to which it can be of value to art educators. This self-consciousness and reflectivity raises awareness about indigenous contemporary art so that it does not become a lost tradition, but one that can have a positive impact on world art. This can lead to a better understanding of contemporary visual practices in Zimbabwe. In view of these observations about visual practice in Zimbabwe, the problem that this study seeks to investigate can be crystalised as follows:

*What is the nature of visual expression among Zimbabwean contemporary artists, and what aspects, both theoretical and practical, can be integrated into art education curricula?*

**Purpose of the Study**

Prode (1987) cited in Williams (1994) and Abrahams (2000) describe Zimbabwean art education as still in its infancy. Lack of adequate art materials and equipment and the low status accorded to art education, are some of the impediments to the successful development and elevation of the subject at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Lack of a research culture on art education in Zimbabwe, is yet another reason. As Williams (1994: 60) argues, “art culture in Zimbabwe merely apes that of the Western culture in the 1960s and 1970s.”
In post-independent Zimbabwe, one of the government’s deliberate policies is the resuscitation of indigenous arts and crafts that suffered mainly during the colonial era (Machinga, 1993; Rogers, 1986; Cultural Policy, 2004). This is anchored on the premise that African art as viewed by several authors, is aesthetics laden, embodies myths, folklore and creative impulse, and, should, therefore, take centre stage in the education system. This primodal function of art is reflected in the cultural policies and other studies such as the 1999 Nziramasanga Presidential Commission into Education and Training. The study is, however, not advocating for complete historicism as defined by Pevser in Walker (1989), which is monolithic. Instead, it advocates for pluralism associated with contemporary eclectic trends and practices world-wide. Jencks in Walker (1989) also recommends for a plurality of traditions, which calls for a reconsideration of both indigenous and Western contemporary visual practice. The purpose of the study is, therefore, to analyse visual expression among selected Zimbabwean contemporary artists and subsequently propose curricula practices reflective of such expression in Zimbabwe.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

i) What factors influence visual expression among contemporary artists in Zimbabwe?

ii) Which paradigms of symbolisation, image making and iconography can be discerned from contemporary visual expression?

iii) What is the nature of artistic knowing and visual expression among selected artists?

iv) How relevant are the present art and design curricula and syllabi to the Zimbabwean society?
v) What art curricula reforms reflective of visual expression by Zimbabwean contemporary artists can be made to art education?

**Delimitation of the Study**

The study was confined to visual expression among practising Zimbabwean contemporary artists from various artistic disciplines such as paintings, photography, installations and sculpture. The artists studied were confined to Harare, which is the epi-centre for visual expression in Zimbabwe because of the diverse art activities that take place in the city. It focused on artists with diverse educational, cultural, social and artistic backgrounds. The main reason for selecting artists with such diverse backgrounds was to have deeper insights about artistic practice among contemporary artists reflective of contemporary practice in a multicultural Zimbabwe.

Participating teachers’ colleges were drawn from the cities of Bulawayo, Harare and Masvingo. The selection of the three colleges from different geographical regions was meant to access the different art experiences in the different colleges. This is despite the general observation that as associate colleges, their curricula are about the same because of curricula moderation done by the Department of Teacher Education (DTE) that monitors quality in associate colleges. While two of the three selected colleges offered three-year primary education programme, the third one offered two-year post ‘A’ level secondary education programmes. The study also studied two primary and two secondary schools, all from Harare.

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1 Advanced Level: High school entry qualifications into university education attained two years after the Ordinary Level.
Limitations of the Study

Although the research attempted to study artists from diverse disciplines such as painting, sculpture, print-making and mixed media, the list of available art-forms was not exhaustive. The sample focused more on major artistic disciplines. An examination of a broader array of visual forms, including crafts, could have given a wider perspective of visual practice in Zimbabwe. Proponents of qualitative research, however, do not view this as a confounding threat to credibility and trustworthiness but, instead, emphasise deeper and penetrating insights derived from the purposive sample rather than generalisations of findings.

Contemporary thinking is that an artwork is a text that has semantic import and requires deconstructing by the perceiver (Selden, 1989; Belsey, 2004; Silverman, 1984). It is no longer an embodiment of some fixed meaning. I, as the major instrument of data collection, had to grapple with the challenge of reading into the artists’ work for meanings. This could have affected the interpretation of the source of inspiration, themes and subject matter. This was, however, minimised through constructing data collection instruments that searched for personal meanings and interpretation of phenomena. Other alternative data analyses methods, namely critical, semiotic and iconographical analyses and photo elicitation, were employed to bring a more objective interpretation of artists’ intentions.

Definition of Terms

Art Education

Art education is the process whereby students acquire knowledge about art and themselves and their environment through art learning experiences (Silverman, 1984: 153). Husen and Postlethwaite (1994: 338) similarly define art education as “…a practice and research into
teaching and learning in art.” The purpose of art education has been to enable individuals to acquire skills of artistic expression, design, critical apprehension and knowledge of art and its history. Historically, approaches to art education range from academies to apprenticeship and guild systems and to more formalised approaches as embedded in the Bauhaus tradition (Efland, 1990; Dormer, 1993; Walker, 1989). In Zimbabwe, like in many African countries, art education is both formal and informal.

**Contemporary Art/Artist**

The term contemporary art is difficult to pin down as each art epoch would define itself as contemporary. Gottlieb (1976) defines contemporary as a historical phenomenon specific to the art of New York which falls under two phases: (1945-1960) characterised by Abstract Expressionism (the last ism), and (1960-1970) characterised by several tendencies and trends such as conceptual art, pop(ular) art, kinetic art, op(tical) art, minimal art, and land art. Key artists in the phase include Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, Jackson Pollock and Christo. However, Jones (1985) provides a broader definition to include any art of the times including the future which is normally influenced by the *zeitgeist*, the spirit of the moment. It is art of the present, the future and the recent past by living and non-living artists. Later contemporary art theorists (Smith, Enwezor & Condee, 2008; Smith, 2011) view the notion as a post-1980 ideological phenomenon characterised by diversity that has the power to change and shape the future of art. It is the present paradigmatic art practice in different cultural locations that has diversity as its main attribute, a development from the singular notion of modernity (Eysteinsson, 1990). In the context of this study, contemporary art is conceptualised as both fine art and craft practiced in the country since Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980.
Similarly, a contemporary artist is defined in this study as a practising artist, who participates in a variety of art fora such as exhibitions. The artists vary in their educational and artistic backgrounds from informal to formal backgrounds. In this study, therefore, contemporary artists mean post independence Zimbabwean practising artists representing a variety of art genres. Although there are prominent Zimbabwean artists of non-African descent, these have been deliberately excluded from the study on the premise that including such artists would imply adopting profound non-African perceptions about contemporary art and its practice, which would be contrary to the motivational impetus to this study, that of Africanisation and indigenisation of the art curricula. This would also imply further acculturation of the already acculturated art curriculum. This study does not, however, assume that Zimbabwean art is pure and free from other cultural influences, but that it is assumed to have a hegemonic outlook peculiar to its inhabitants. Contemporary artists are, therefore, restricted to black, originally Zimbabwean artists of diverse geographical, cultural and artistic affiliations.

Visual Expression

Artistic expressions are personal ways of understanding expressive qualities of media and materials in visual form. Such expressions, normally at a self-consciousness level, have resulted in new approaches and art-forms such as installations and ready-mades.

Summary

Visual expression is a characteristic feature of every culture, the world over. It has helped define each cultural group. Art practice is, however, subject to transformation as artists
assimilate new ideas through inter-cultural and inter-generational learning. In some countries such as Britain, contemporary art practice has been taken into art education in order to perpetuate visual practice (Prentice, 1995). In this chapter, I discussed the notion of visual expression and the problem, which is illuminated in the background to the study, statement of the problem, and the research questions. The motivational factors to the study assist in shedding light into the nature of the problem, its magnitude and parameters. Three critical terms in the thesis, namely, art education, contemporary art/artists and visual expression are conceptualised and defined. The remainder of the study is organised as follows:

In chapter 2, literature relevant to the study is reviewed. This reviewed literature will act as a basis for conceptualising and exploring contemporary art and art education. The concept of visual expression is explored including factors impacting on visual expression. The focus will be on exploring the nature of visual expression among artists. The second segment of the literature review presents a survey of art education in Zimbabwe, covering both colonial and post-colonial periods, formal and informal art education institutions and programmes such as Tengenenge Sculpture Community, The National Gallery of Zimbabwe and the proposed Regional School of Art and Design. Art at primary, secondary and tertiary levels will be discussed mainly focusing on how developments in art education have influenced and have been influenced by Zimbabwean visual culture.

The research methodology used in the study is discussed in chapter 3. This includes the research design, three principal data collection methods used, procedures that were followed as well as ethical considerations. In chapter 4, I focus on contemporary visual practice in Zimbabwe. Chapter 5 deals with the issue of contemporary art in teachers’ colleges, while chapter 6 is devoted to contemporary art in primary and secondary schools. The last chapter,
which is chapter 7 is a summative reflection on all the preceding chapters. Conclusions and implications are made based on research findings, initial set targets as listed in the research questions of the study as well as reviewed literature. In the chapter, I articulate the established relationship between contemporary art in Zimbabwe and art education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

Introduction
In this chapter, I seek to review available literature on the nature of contemporary visual expression among African artists and contemporary Zimbabwean artists in particular. I explore contemporary theories that define visual expression, forces that have had impact on contemporary visual practice such as modern and post-modern concepts, syncretism, aesthetic and philosophical perspectives, and international influences. The dimensions of African art and evolution of African art in addition to the development of some visual art-forms in Zimbabwe as they relate to contemporary practice are also explored.

I also examine the evolution of art education in Zimbabwe from the early missionary period up to today at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The status of art education, educational commissions and colonial policies are examined before reviewing different institutional programmes in the history of art education in the country. An analysis of the status of art education gives the context in which the evolution should be understood. Also included in the review is the role of indigenous arts and contemporary art in art education.

According to Bairati as cited in Lazotti and Del Guercio (1988), contemporary art stands for all artistic manifestations that have not been historicised and are subject to critical judgment. Lazotti and Guercio (1988) further articulate the importance of contemporary art in art education curricula. Their discussion is in line with a report by UNESCO, which discusses how some countries have failed to allocate sufficient curriculum space to contemporary art, hence
missing on important educational features, socio-economic and cultural value. Contemporary art as a critical dimension in contemporary visual arts education is, thus, hard to place in the school curriculum as well as suggest relevant pedagogical approaches for it. Lazotti and Del Guercio (1988: 22) outline the challenges in dealing with present day art “which gives a diachronic view of artistic events precedence over a direct reading of the works, and gives art of the past precedence over that of the present.”

Theories Defining Contemporary African Art

In order to better understand contemporary art, it is important to examine theories that define visual practice. Such theories help explain and illuminate contemporary art practice. Mitias (1982) views an artwork as a visual manifestation possessing an emotional import. Whilst Price (1979) conceptualises it as a perceptual equivalence of our conceptual grasp of ideas and emotions, Beardsley (1982) argues that it focuses on the sensuous features that evoke phenomenally subjective emotions. The import creates an aesthetic experience in the viewer (Hospers, 1969; Mitias, 1982; Price, 1979), which Hospers (1969: 19) defines as “disinterested and sympathetic attention to and contemplation of any object of awareness whatever for its sake alone.” A closer analysis of work by some contemporary Zimbabwean artists seems to suggest the adoption of such psychologistic views about art.

According to Levi and Smith (1991) and Preziosi (1998), the whole question of aesthetics, a critical term in visual expression, has been explored by major philosophers from antiquity, the Middle Ages, up to contemporary times as exemplified by Arthur Schopenhauer, Susanne Langer and Nelson Goodman among others. Aesthetics as a philosophical discipline is centred on the object, appreciation and interpretation, critical evaluation, artistic creation, and
cultural context of art (Levi & Smith, 1991). However, the concept of aesthetics as it applies to the visual arts, has, from the classical times, shifted from the object to the beholder’s aesthetic experience as in the role of the Duchampian object. Heid (2005) articulates contemporary definitions which focus on art that deliberately evokes an aesthetic experience or intellectual pleasure. On the other hand Beardsley (1982), extrapolating from the Platonic doctrines, defines art as a faithful representation of nature. The Croce-Collingwood expression theory further views art as an attempt at making clear one’s innermost emotions, feelings, intuitions and attitudes (Levi & Smith, 1991). Expression is thus psychological therapy, a common perception among contemporary artists. All these conceptions have directly impacted on the contemporary African artist in his attempt to express himself through manipulation of the media.

In line with Collingwood’s perspective, Tolstoy (1987:181-182) defines art as:

human activity consisting in this, that man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands to the others feelings he has lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them…and not only is infection a sure sign of art, but the degree of infectiousness is also the sole measure of excellence in art…the stronger the infection the better is the art, as art.

The attitudinal and institutional theories (Dickie, 1992; Thompson, 1995) are more contemporary in that they include some art-forms that have never been thought to be art before such as ready-mades, performances and happenings. Contemporary artists produce art inspired by such conceptual grasp of visual practice. Duchamp’s ready-mades are examples of how
trivial everyday objects “generally marked as being excluded from the realm of art” are attributed art status (Schaeffer 1996 in Derlon and Jeudy-Ballini, 2010: 139). The definition, therefore, is more conceptual and is a conferment of art candidacy to everyday objects (Rees & Borzello, 1986; Blistene, 1985). The way one looks at an object or the attitude one takes towards an object ultimately defines what an art object is. Such Western perceptual views about art are evident in contemporary African art, including Zimbabwean.

The traditional concept of art includes human expression in objects, as well as expression of a people’s aspirations and achievements (Silverman, 1984). Thompson in Jules-Rosette (1986) identifies several ethno-aesthetic categories of African art. These include symmetry, visibility, proportion and movement. Such a definition, however, tends to be limiting particularly in contemporary visual practices that have incorporated intangible visual events such as performances and happenings and have not relied on such visual cues. The art-forms are among those being practised by Zimbabwean contemporary artists. According to Vogel in Mc Evilley (1989) and Ross (1987), if a thing has significant or expressive form or intent it is to be called art.

Efland (1992), Belsey (2002), Sarup (1993) and Woods et al (1993) conceptualise modernism as both an artistic style and an epoch in Western culture, which originated at the turn of the 19th century. It is a paradigmatic period that cuts across all fields including the visual arts. Late modernists in the visual arts were centred around Clement Greenberg’s philosophy of formalism, which focused on inherent qualities of an artwork (Fransina & Harris, 1992). This gave the rationale and persuasion for abstract and non-objective styles by Western artists such as Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock, Robert Motherwell and Hoffman. Emphasis was put on an aesthetic experience through two-dimensional art-work. An analysis of contemporary
visual practice among African artists shows that most artists are adherents and advocates of the modern epoch. The epoch emphasises originality and creativity, exploration of media and technology as well as specific modernist styles. Over the years, work by African artists, particularly modernists, has portrayed the view, *when is art?* while work by traditionalists seems to have been defined by *What is art?*

Belsey (2002) and Klages (1997) articulate the concept of post-modernism as derived from Derrida, Foucault and Lyotard. According to Rust (1991) the major concerns of post-modernism are the problem of the other, the totalitarian nature of meta-narratives, that is, the development of society through technology, art and aesthetics in everyday social life. Post modernism acquires its definition and meaning around critical terms such as signification, appropriation, authorship, deconstruction, discourse and ideology. Rust (1991), Rees and Borzello (1986), Stephanson (1987) and Sarup (1993) examine how contemporary practice has adopted a multiplicity of post modern approaches, influences, concepts and perceptions. In her interpretation of the signifier-signified relationship, Belsey (2002) postulates that there is no one theological meaning behind an artwork by an alleged artist, but that each perceiver creates his or her own meaning, a Nietzschean concept of sacrifice or death of the author. Each reading into the work for meaning is a reconstruction as no absolute meaning lies behind the text. With reference to a work’s elusiveness, Belsey (2002: 18-19) contends that, “the signifier is a shifter, it moves from speaker to speaker as each lays claim to it.” Similarly, the notion of the other, as a post-modern notion, has resulted in the emergence of new categories of art in contemporary practice such as feminist, gay and lesbian studies and art, and other single-issue groups (Cheetham *et al.*, 1998). Unlike traditional art that was of utilitarian purpose, contemporary art seems to have been significantly influenced by such post-modern notions about an art object.
Cheri Samba from Zaire, Valente Malangatana from Mozambique and Tapfuma Gutsa from Zimbabwe are leading third world artists in the way they explore moral and societal issues. Their work depicts rural and urban life and politics and has been approached using post-modern techniques, methods and media.

The above syntheses indicate that some Zimbabwean artists such as Vote Thebe also operate within the post-modern realm, which McEvilley (1993:11) conceptualises as:

The hope that instead of difference being submerged in sameness and difference can somehow contain and maintain one another – that some state which might be described as a global unity can be attained without destroying the individualities of the various cultures within it.

While modernism is based on the belief that all cultures and sub-cultures would ultimately be united in aspects such as sources of inspiration, approaches and media, post-modernism advocates for a multiplicity of worlds and interpretation. Through syncretism, some contemporary Zimbabwean artists like Hlen Lieros and Luis Meque have adopted and assimilated Western art practices. Resurgence of the post-colonial period in most African countries has resulted in use of Western approaches by contemporary African artists (Stanislaus, 1996; McEvilley, 1993).

**Contemporary African Art**

The term *contemporary* just like *modern* does not relate to some fixed historical time frame or cultural phase. Non-experts normally equate contemporary to modern. However, it should be
noted that contemporary is a neutral term, whereas modern implies a value judgment. Several texts have been written on the premise that they were contemporary. What is contemporary today is history to another cultural phase. Theoretically, contemporary art in specific terms refers to the art of New York and London, based on the history and culture of the here and now. However, many authors such as Kasfir (1999), Vogel (1994), Mudimbe (1990), Kennedy (1992) and Mc Evilley (1993) have applied it to African art to designate art of the present era. Vogel (1994) designates the term contemporary from the time when African artists started painting on paper.

She further conceptualises contemporary African art in a broader sense to include contemporary traditional, contemporary urban and new functional art. She is, however, uncomfortable with the inclusion of the educated artists in this realm. Her use of the term ‘international’ for contemporary artists, however, encompasses both the educated and the self-taught artists as they both represent their countries at international exhibitions. Most of the artists have been educated under Western systems and styles in local African schools or abroad. Jones (1985:8) defines contemporary art as “the art of the times and meant to include art of the future as well.” It is art of the future, the present and the recent past by living and non-living artists. It is influenced by the zeitgeist, the spirit of the moment, which influences aspects such as style, material, media, themes, inspiration and approaches. Cornet et al. in Vogel (1994), Willet (1993) as well as Kennedy (1992) concur that contemporary African art has been heavily influenced by the international audience and patrons, who generally dictate taste and style. However, Vogel (1994) is cautious when she notes that the term international does not deny the artists their identity as Africans, neither does it narrowly define their Africanness. Iba N’Diaye, a Senegalese, acknowledges having international influences from Velaqueze, while Fode
Camara was influenced by Jasper Johns, an American pop artist of the 1960s. Valente Malangatana from Mozambique was similarly influenced by the expressionist style, characteristic of Western art.

Contemporary African art, including Zimbabwean, is full of diversity. This has generated debate as to whether African artists are in the modern or post-modern cultural phase of visual expression. However, McEvilley (1993) refutes the view that there are post-modern African artists, as he regards the notion as a wholly Western concept. Ross (1994) argues that contemporary practice reflects artists’ aesthetic and cultural backgrounds. Many artists, who are adherents to the modern tradition or post-colonial art, believe in diversity of styles, originality and creativity. As such, some synthesize allusions of the past with contemporary contexts, while others “create imagery with mythical or ritual references” (Kennedy, 1992: 15). Many contemporary artists are inventing visual images to express contemporary life. They have gone beyond the confines of tradition to explore new ideas and technologies, methods and images with personal aesthetics. Unfortunately as Vogel (1994) contends, the majority of African artists have gone to the extent of imitating European art and have rejected the notion that their art should be recognised as African. This is contrary to ideologies by some contemporary thinkers such as Senghor who still believe in the notion of negritude.

The extent of Western influence on contemporary African art is portrayed by Iba N’Diaye who argues, “I need to go back [to Paris] often… If I remain here I would run the risk of going to sleep. But for inspiration, I need Africa” (Mount 1973 in Vogel, 1994: 192). Zimbabwean artists are also among Africa’s avant-garde who have developed new directions and styles, which, however, still embrace aspects of African tradition. Artists have experimented with new non-indigenous materials and techniques. They incorporate whatever
they perceive as useful into their work. Tapfuma Gutsa used multi-media in his cosmological installation *African Genesis (1995)*, which depicts the metamorphosis of an African from a cultural and global viewpoint. Contemporary Zimbabwean art thus had a plurality of influences creating cultural composites.

McEvilley (1993) observes that cultural hybridisation, particularly in Africa, has been a result of cultural nomadism. Several highly travelled artists have had international exposure, which has, in turn, influenced their perceptions and practice. Most Zimbabwean contemporary artists have assimilated Western ideas about art and its discourse. Although artists still function within the African tradition, with communal sympathetic cultural collaboration (McEvilley, 1993), the majority have embraced the notion that art is autonomous. This individuality in expression characterises contemporary practice. On the whole, four kinds of markets, namely, village, the conventional urban, curio trade and gallery (Jules-Rosette, 1986) influence artistic production and practice by contemporary artists.

**The Evolution of African Art**

McEvilley (1993), Vogel (1994) and Empedoles in McEvilley (1993) propose models or cycles through which art evolves. The models and cycles also apply to the development of African art, particularly amongst nations that were once colonised. McEvilley (1993) identifies three phases in the evolution of African art that are also evident in the evolution of artistic expression in Zimbabwe. The pre-modern or pre-colonial era was characterised by unquestionable functionality of artefacts such as basketry and pottery (applied art). It also involved passing down of visual conventions in some socially oriented manner. Although the phase is long past,
it still has influence as some contemporary artists such as crafts-persons like Zaphania Tshuma, who are market driven, produce mostly airport art.

The modernist or colonial period is characterised by strong hegemonic influence of the colonisers’ perceptions about art. Rust (1991) calls this Los Angelization or Californication of the world or globe while Rhodes (1994) calls it institutional primitivism. Artists relegate their own art and imitate Western standards, which are viewed as universal identity and good. This influence was noticed in early missionary schools and workshops. Nicholas Mukomberanwa’s earlier style had a Romanisque orientation reminiscent of Serima mission influence where his mentor, Father Groeber, used Congolese masks as alternatives to Western canons. The style is illustrated in the naïve and rudimentary integration of arms with the torso (Roberts, 1979). This is salient pegagogical practice by Father Groeber where he merged Western and African cultures. Post-colonial art under which most contemporary Zimbabwean art falls, blends both Western and African identities, an indication of some cultural identity crisis. This is characterised by reversal of self-esteem in the colonised. This vengeful stage, according to Empedoles in Mc Evilley (1993), is the late modernist period, the phase of resistance and the negritude movement. Mc Evilley (1993) also calls this stage the recovery of the altered or lost identity. Kasfir (1999) articulates this phase as the counter movement period of decolonising African art which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s with the the attainment of independence by several African states.

According to Vogel (1994), the colonial period is characterised by enforced art, the removal and ridiculing of traditional art and exposure to a wide range of techniques, media and materials. Patrons’, mainly the colonisers’ ideologies are imposed. Upheavals, radical changes and discontinuities of practices characterise the post-colonial art. These changes relate to
contemporary African life. Due to the entrenched colonial influence, artists relegate their traditional modes of expression in favour of contemporary forms. This is exemplified by innovations such as Kane Kwei’s new functional art such as coffins. According to Willet (1993) and Vogel (1994), this is a transitional phase for Western-trained artists, an experimental phase shrouded by external influence. Artists are more eclectic (Efland, 1992).

Similar to McEvilley’s (1993) model is an evolutionary cycle suggested by Empedoles, a Greek philosopher. The evolutionary cycle entails the merging of disparate things under the influence of sameness, through assimilation and appropriation of hegemonic colonial influence until everything becomes one and is united. This hypothetical and amorphous theory of sameness, is, however, never entirely achieved. As the cycle progresses, things fall apart due to forces of difference until systems are fractured and fragmented. This stage can be equated to the vengeful stage by the descendants of the colonised. Contemporary African art belongs to the last phase characterised by charting of new identities with artists self-consciously accepting hybridisation. Art, thus, reflects a myriad of influences. These models and cycles are evident in the evolution of art in Zimbabwe.

Trends in Contemporary Zimbabwean Art

Zimbabwe has an artistic tradition, arguably unsustained (Anorld, 1980), that dates back to the 2000 BC San paintings and the 14th century architectural structures such as the Great Zimbabwe, Khami and Dhlodlo (Danangombe) and Nalatale ruins (Willet, 1993; Vanscina, 1984; Garlake, 1985). Pre-colonial arts were mainly utilitarian arts such as the wooden zodiac bowl, soapstone ceremonial bowls, mortars, basketwork, weaving and the Zimbabwe stone birds discovered by Willi Posselt in 1889, Theodore Bent in 1891 and Richard Hall in 1903.
Some of these art forms have continued into the present day as traditional art (Vogel 1994; Kasfir, 1999). The current purported and internationally acclaimed *Shona* sculpture\(^2\) has no pre-colonial genealogy (Kasfir, 1999; Roberts, 1979; McEwen in Vogel, 1994; Arnold, 1980) but emerged with the advent of colonisation, particularly with the establishment of the Rhodes National Gallery in 1957 by Frank McEwen, and later informal establishments such as Tenganenge and Vukutu sculpture communities.

Zimbabwe does not also have a sustained painting tradition. Besides the San rock paintings no other painting tradition was documented until the advent of missionaries and white settlers who introduced and promoted the art form to what it is today (Rogers 1986; Huggins 2001). Winter-Irving (1991) identifies the prominent colonial painters as Thomas Baines, an explorer, who did oil and watercolour paintings; Robert Paul, a British landscapist; Thomas Papenfus, a landscapist and Marshal Baron, an expressionist. Their paintings were topographical and pictorial recordings of the settlers’ experiences of the Zimbabwean environment.

Painting was further developed and explored in mission schools such as Cyrene and later at other centres such as Mzilikazi Art and Craft Centre whose painting workshop produced some of the finest contemporary artists such as Taylor Nkomo, Themba Sibanda and Newman Ndlovu. The white settlers continued painting during the war of liberation that led to Zimbabwe’s independence in 1980. Rashid Jogee is one contemporary abstract painter, whose canvases reflect the aftermath of the *chimurenga* war\(^3\) through his violent gestural brushstrokes and the vivid fauvist colours. He was a paramedic in the Rhodesian army.

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\(^2\) *Shona* is the dominant cultural group in Zimbabwe accounting for over 80% of the population. The second largest group is Ndebele.

\(^3\) A war of liberation from British rule that led to Zimbabwe’s independence in 1980.
Post independence leading painters include Thakor Patel and graduates from Cyrene and Mzilikazi. Voti Thebe has influence from Cyrene. Helen Lieros’ style is a fusion of Byzantine and African styles (Murray, 1999; Huggins, 2001).

Photography can be traced back to the 16th century. In America the first studio was established in 1840 (Honour & Fleming, 1995). Photography has evolved with contributions from artists such as Eugene Delacroix, Vermeer Calanetto and Thomas Wedgwood and the French lithographer Nicephore Niepce. However at these early stages, photography was used as a simple record of visual appearances with minimal individual sensitivity to the visual phenomenon by the artists. In Zimbabwe photography existed outside the realm of art and its acceptance as a unique art form is a recent phenomenon. Murray identifies some photographers during the colonial period such as John Mauluka. Today, photographs are both artistic and documentary and distinguishing between the two genres is not easy. Normally, presentation and content in photographs differentiates photography as art and photography as documentary.

The use of modern technology such as the digital computer and video camera has further developed photography to include motion and repetition. The advent of new software has even extended the artist’s imagination and creativity in photography. Abstraction in photography includes dealing with “viewpoint, angle, distance, special lenses, darkroom techniques or any combination of these” (Rita & McCarter, 1985:243).

Recently, several exhibitions have been held at the Nationary Gallery of Zimbabwe (NGZ), among them a one-man show by Tamuka Mutengwa, and a group exhibition, both held in 2006. An installation of Zimbabwean photography was held in Barcelona in 2001. The exhibition depicted urban life in Harare and its outskirts. The works captured urban life, such
as, bus queues, traffic jams, vendors, morning walks to work and crowded taxes (Murray, 2001). Contemporary Zimbabwean photographers include Calvin Dondo, Fidelis Zvomuya and Andrew Curling. Others who are not exclusively into photography include Colleen Madamombe, Chiko Chazunguza and Charles Kamangwana.

At a 1997 Mibile Workshop in Zambia at which twenty seven artists from twelve culturally diverse nations participated, Ahti Isomaki presented his performance as an art form which is described by Muray (1997: 18) as follows:

A fire was lit on the beach where the artist sat contemplating his paintings. After some time he proceeded to burn his paintings along with his painter’s jacket and cap. A woman symbolising Africa entered the scene, presented him with a drum and began to dance around the flaming canvases as he drummed. When the fire died down they left hand in hand.

Performances are now among Zimbabwean art forms as artists experiment with media and ideas.

The use of technology and new non-indigenous media is a recent phenomenon and has broadened the realm of contemporary Zimbabwean art. A video installation Off Centre (1995) by Stephen Foster “deconstructs stereotypes and mythologies by re-appropriating and re-claiming appropriated images” (Murray, 1997:17). The work is a political statement that protests racist abuse.

Weld art is also another art form that has dominated contemporary art. Adam Madebe’s giant sculptures at Construction House, Harare and the *Ploughman* (1993) at Hurudza House are among the many works he produced. A number of artists have ventured into installations, which incorporate mixed media. Tapfuma Gutsa’s installations *Hwange* (1994) and *Corpse* (1996) are typical examples where he used fabric, paint, plaster of Paris, coal and found objects such as chains and helmets.

**Categories of Contemporary African Art**

Various researches have come up with different categorisations of African art which, however, zero in on traditionalists, contemporary Western and synthesisers (Stanislaus, 1996). While traditionalists focus on indigenous materials, contemporary African artists reflect current trends, concepts and styles. Most of these artists have received Western art training. Synthesisers on the other hand, are mostly academicians, whose work retain the essence of cultural heritage that is however fused with best qualities of modernity. Trowell in Williams (1974) classifies African art under spirit regarding, man regarding and art of ritual display. His classification is similar to Himmelheber’s classification of art into art with religious content, art with practical purpose, and art that is purely aesthetic, generated through the urge to create art. (Williams, 1974). Similarly, Chanda as cited in Delacruz (1996) describes African art as religious, ceremonial, political and commemorative. Other categories include traditional, transitional (non-college trained modernist), and modern (college trained modernist) (Osegi, 1991) and ceremonial, commercial, original, copy, legitimate as well as counterfeit. Robbins’ categories include authentic African art, correct copies, counterfeit African art, tourist art, contemporary African art (intercultural tradition) and the ex-cultura art.
Although these are distinct categories, they overlap as artists switch from one category to another. The categories suggested by Vogel (1994) and Kasfir (1999), provide means of interpreting African art and do not imply developmental phases. Kasfir (1999) identifies the categories as traditional art, international art, urban art, new functional art, extinct art, tourist art (by survivalists or souvenir artists), primitive art and popular art. The distinction between urban and international art, according to Kasfir’s (1999) and Vogel’s (1994) categorisations is not definitive. Vogel (1994) describes international artists as academically trained and normally represent their nations to international audiences. It has, however, been observed that most international artists, particularly in Zimbabwe, have informal training since formal training was limited during the colonial era. As a result, several self-taught artists are internationally acclaimed.

The philosophical concept of Afrocentricity has, however, been superficially articulated by the academically trained with some openly disregarding its supremacy. The notion has impacted on art practice by some categories of contemporary artists. Urban art, commonly known as popular art, is market driven (Kasfir, 1999). The patrons are mostly Western tourists and determine the repetitiveness of art. He talks of how the Maconde masks remained functional artefacts in their cultural context while the West African masks from the Sefuno and Yoruba cultures were commodified due to European patronage. Similarly, Weya art introduced by Ilse Noy in Zimbabwe had a commercial motive. According to Vogel (1994), traditional art, which contemporary thinkers refer to as regional art, is village art. She, however, queries the use of the term regional, as all art is regional. This category is now limited to traditional crafts and in a few cases, particularly in North Africa, it serves an instrumental role in society (Herold, 1990). The art serves a functional purpose such as in ritual performances in the lives of the
people. New functional art such as Kane Kwei’s coffins is a rare art-form. It is a form of art, which is a result of artists going through a phase of experimentation, inspired and stimulated by Western contemporary art.

**Influences on Contemporary African Art**

Zimbabwean art is among art-forms documented in many research studies on African art (McEvilley, 1993; Kennedy, 1992; Stanislaus, 1996; Kasfir, 1999). Its diverse themes, patronage, aesthetics and categories are similar to those of any other African country. Various factors such as commercial, Western and African beliefs have influenced iconography in Zimbabwean art, “iconography is dubiously traditional but expression is Western in derivation” (Roberts, 1979). The author likens contemporary Shona sculpture to 20th century Western sculpture. Arnold (1980) further identifies Western oriented economic, political and educational systems, Christianity and urbanisation as having contributed to the erosion of traditional African heritage and practices. Kasfir (1999) articulates how introduction of formal art education opened a phase of radical self-definition and realisation by African artists. They were introduced to new techniques, art materials and media as well as familiarisation with world art histories. Thus some distinction was created between formally trained and self-taught artists. Contradicting perceptions about the role of acculturation are expressed by Youssourf Bath as quoted in Stanislaus (1996: 20), a traditionalist, who is adamant that an artist should not,

> copy what comes from the West. We should be able to produce something that is typically African ...It should make a special contribution to our culture. This is why I have decided to use these materials and orientation in my work.
On the contrary, Keith is open to the world. He argues that he would not want to close himself to Africa. Gerald Santom, an Ivorian, similarly argues that “it doesn’t make sense to have a specifically African painting... I’m glad to see myself as part of a world tradition” (McEvilley, 1993:10). This is further supported by artists such as the Nigerian sculptor Olu Oguie cited in Kasfir (1999: 210) who reiterates that:

An artist as transitory as myself would not fit into a style. I have referenced Uli, Nsibidi... Dogon sculpture, Ndebele murals, San rock art, Maya and Inca textile art, European abstract expressionism, post-modernism, social realism and conceptualism, in addition to my own forms and ideas.

Similarly, Sokari Douglas Camp points out that it is not important to be neither an African or Western artist. What is significant is that being an artist overrides all such notions.

The role of missionaries in influencing ethnic art was noticed throughout Africa. The establishment of early workshop schools such as Oshogho by Sussanne Wenger and Ulli and Georgina Beier as well as Mbari Mbayo (Kennedy, 1992) in Nigeria, The Poto Poto School of Art at Brazzaville in Belgian Congo established by Pierre Lods (Kasfir, 1999), The Polly Street Art Centre in 1948, and Evangelical Lutheran Church Art and Craft Centre in 1963 in South Africa, indirectly introduced colonial influence, although all these missionary initiatives deny determining the direction and course of art in the respective countries (Wenger in Kennedy, 1972). The Swedish artist, Peder Govenius, introduced new art-forms (painting, graphics, weaving, textile design) and media and encouraged individual directions at the Evangelical Art and Craft Centre in South Africa.
Thus in Africa, the first generation of artists who worked under missionaries took into their art colonial influence although more often the artists incorporated Africanness in their themes and styles. Colonial art schools introduced other art-forms such as lithography, furniture design, silkscreen, murals, mosaics and jewellery through workshop schools (Kennedy, 1992). Colonial influence on art, therefore, cannot be denied. McEwen talks of a cultural desert in Zimbabwe (Rogers, 1986) when he introduced artists to stone sculpture. The cultural desert was a purely Western perception and definition of African art as there was plenty of functional art such as wood and stone sculpture and other crafts practised by the indigenous Africans prior to the coming of the whites. Moyo (1989) reaffirms that colonial art actually destroyed traditional art and practices in colonised nations. Most internationally acclaimed artists such as Valente Malangatana (Mozambican), Ibrahim el Salahi (Sudanese), Twins Seven Seven (Nigerian) Onobrakpeya (Nigeria), Joramu Mariga and Nicholas Mukomberanwa (Zimbabwe), Julian Motan and Cyprian Silakoe (South Africa) all had colonial influence in themes, media and style (Willet, 1993; Kennedy, 1992).

These perceptions on colonial influence are a clear testimony of the uncertainty that besets contemporary artists. Some formally trained artists and those who had training outside Zimbabwe still acknowledge the supremacy of indigenous art over formal art education. Tapfuma Gutsa, Joseph Muzondo, Chiko Chazunguza and Arthur Fata, although trained in Western countries, have maintained Zimbabwean iconography in their work. This is evidenced by the centrality of local folklore, mythology, cosmology and proverbs in their art. Their use of images and motifs embrace the above notions.

Although McEwen, Paterson, and Blomefield’s methodologies encouraged spontaneity and naivety of ethnic art, cultural nomadism played a critical role. Artists have travelled
abroad, and have as a result interacted with their contemporaries from both African and Western traditions. In addition they have exhibited at international exhibitions such as Venice Biennial, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Studio Museum of Harlem, Cleveland Museum, and have also been artists in residences. Kasfir (1999) talks of migration and displacement as well as diasporic experience as having influenced artists such as the Ethiopian Skunder. These factors caused by transAfricanism have influenced and broadened their perception and definition of art which Kasfir (1999) calls textured narratives of displacement. This has resulted in experimentation with non-indigenous media and materials, styles, techniques and art-forms. Their styles have evolved. Williams (1974) notes that “style in art can never be fixed, in order to remain style it must be renewed from generation to generation or even several times within a generation.” Fagg in Osegi (1991: 5) who says “We are at the death of all that is best in African art” summarises the extent of colonial influence. He argues that African art thus lacks identity and can, therefore, be best described as Western art made by Africans. Such controversies have drawn the attention of contemporary connoisseurs of African art.

While Mc Ewen as cited in Arnold (1980) claims that his instructional methodologies focused on promoting intuition and spontaneity in expression of cultural themes and subject matter, his subjection of artists’ work to rigorous selection criteria before a work could be accepted for exhibition is a clear indication of cultural imposition. Mount in Arnold (1980) argues that Mc Ewen had indirect influence on the Workshop school at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe:

Mc Ewen’s approach…is compromised by the museum environment in which the artists worked or at least received criticism. Paintings and sculpture from major periods in the history of Western art and European influenced white
Rhodesian work are predominantly displayed on gallery walls. It would be a rare artist who could remain untouched when faced with this wealth of unfamiliar styles and techniques (Arnold, 1980: 32).

Zimbabwean culture is an amalgam of several ethnic groups. The so-called Shona sculpture produced during McEwen’s time was by sculptors from diverse cultures. Some were of Malawian origin while others were of Mozambican and Angolan descent implying depiction of diverse African societies (Roberts, 1979). This, therefore, meant that the repertoire of mythological themes, symbolism, iconographical motifs and folklore was a culturally heterogeneous experience. Contemporary art is similarly defined. Locally and internationally acclaimed painters, textilists, ceramists etc., have varied artistic and cultural backgrounds. This socio-historical Zimbabwean context has brought plurality and diversity in contemporary art.

The relationship between art and politics is exemplified in the interactions among artists, political leaders with social influence and the establishment. In Western art, Hitler in 1933 ordered the closure of the Bauhaus school, which had adopted a socialist orientation in its attempt to fuse art, craft, design and technology (Radbourne & Fraser, 1996; Dormer, 1993) resulting in some prominent artist teachers such as Paul Klee going into exile. Similarly, Mao’s manifestos delineated a politically accepted Maoist Revolutionary realist style. Elsewhere, art has been used as a revolutionary tool sending some artists into exile, while others have faced various forms of persecution. Katchardourian (1985) discusses these issues in his article “artistic freedom and social control.” He articulates how political coercion stifles art and how art volarizing the establishment lacks ingenuity and authenticity. Art has not been spared by informal feminist politics. In Western art, Barbra Kruger, Cindy Sherman and Judy Chicago as
leading feminists have articulated the cause of women by deconstructing the patriarchal system. The pervasive power of art can also be seen in some contemporary Zimbabwean artists such as Adam Madebe in his gigantic weld metal sculpture *Looking to the future (1994)* and the recent installation *Gukurahundi* (2010) by Owen Maseko which caused controversy in the Zimbabwean artworld.

**Art Education in Zimbabwe**

Art education in Zimbabwe has gone through various phases of evolution, some of which have been uncoordinated because of lack of a co-ordinating and monitoring system and institution. It can, therefore, be compared to “a neglected and under-nourished child” (Lancaster 1982 in Abraham, 2000: 49). Prior to the advent of missionaries and the setting up of mission schools, art teaching was mostly an informal enterprise. However, as early as the 1920s some African government schools (Domboshava and Tjolotjo) were already teaching art as local handicrafts. The emphasis on handicrafts and manual subjects was enshrined in the 1899 Education Ordinance. According to Abraham (2000) Hebert Keigwin, the first director of Native Affairs, in 1918 stressed the teaching of crafts such as basketry and other basic crafts. Among landmark developments in the visual arts education were the Secretary of Education Report of 1962, The Phelps-Stokes Commission’s adaptive principles of 1922, Kerr Commission of 1952, Lewis and Taylor Report of 1974, The BAT workshop of 1981, Learner Tutor Course initiated in 1983, and the 1982 Evaluative Survey by Lancaster. The following sections give a synopsis of art education in Zimbabwe in relation to indigenous and contemporary arts.
The Current Status of Art Education in Zimbabwe

The position of practical subjects, among them Art and Design, in the academic hierarchy has always been a precarious and bottom most rung both in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. In Britain, for example, the less gifted, code-named ‘thickies’ (Penfold, 1988) had their places guaranteed in practical disciplines. It was common belief among the British parents and the general public that being unable to handle and use a tool was a sign of intellectual superiority. Parents also remained unconvinced that children could actually benefit from the subject in spite of the overwhelming research evidence about the educational value of art (Penfold, 1988; Moyo, 1989; Abraham, 2000). In Zimbabwe, Munjoma (1994) argues that many youths parade the streets loaded with intellectual equipment but find themselves unable to participate meaningfully in the national economy. This could have been a result of lack of thrust towards impartial teaching of contemporary artistic skills to students relevant to the needs of the country.

The colonial education system also significantly contributed to the negative perception of the subject in Zimbabwe and many other countries (Atkinson, 1972). Education policies and commissions such as the Phelps-Stokes and the Judges Commissions, although they had sound philosophical intents, were used for the furtherance of colonial domination (Siyakwazi, 1996; Moyo, 1989; Mujere, 2007). Moyo (1989: 16) contends that in India, for example, the arrival of the British, “not only destroyed the existing crafts, but eliminated the potential for developing any such crafts into indigenous technologies.” Such cultural, historical and economic factors also negatively impacted on the image of art in Zimbabwe during the colonial period (Machinga, 1993; Moyo, 1989; Abraham, 2001; Siyakwazi, 1996). The negatively perceived F2 School system, which had its thrust on vocationalisation of practical subjects and
targeted at the academically less gifted, was a deliberate hegemonic strategy by the colonisers aimed at black schools. A similar programme did not exist in the European education system. Such a curriculum denigrates indigenous arts and crafts in favour of colonisers’ art-forms mainly for aesthetic and expressive purposes. Art was conceptualised from a Western perspective, that is, it involved drawing, painting, printing, etc., leaving out the critical dimensions of local art-forms which could be further enhanced by developments in other artforms and perspectives globally. The critical indigenous arts include stone sculpture, traditional pottery, weaving and wood carving among others.

Uncertain nomenclature also had negative implications on the value attached to the subject. In Zimbabwe, Art and Design has had several designations such as Handcraft, Art and Craft, Art, and Design (Kangai, 1994). Similarly, Penfold (1988) notes that in the United Kingdom, Craft Design Technology (CDT) changed names from Design, Craft and Technology, Technology and Heavy Craft, Design and Technological Studies, Technical Design and Craftsmanship, and Workshop Technology. The content that was taught under the designation “Handcraft” and “Art and Craft” was negatively valued and perceived by the public. Of similar status was industrial work initiated by the Phelps-Stokes Commission. Such nomenclatural and content instability has led to insecurity of the subject. In the 1970s, practical subjects, particularly CDT, were not considered for university entry in most universities in the United Kingdom (Penfold, 1988). Similarly, at the University of Zimbabwe, Art and Design took a long time to be recognised as a qualifying entry subject (Abraham, 2000).

A number of views regarding the negative perception of Art and Design in Zimbabwe have been debated. At a 1994 Art and Design national workshop held in Kadoma, it was observed that despite having a critical role in synthesising most curricula subjects and life
experiences, art remained marginalised, minimalised and under-valued. Kangai (1994) cites the following as some of the major reasons: low level content, over emphasis on production, and the conspicuous absence of a systematic national art and design curriculum with a pedagogical concept of critical analysis. On a broader domain, Siyakwazi (1994) notes the following as the contributory factors: lack of clear policy in support of practical subjects, content that does not take serious consideration of the needs of society, and lack of relevant research studies in the practical subjects.

There is need, therefore, to re-conceptualise the role of art in post-colonial Zimbabwe that could include contemporary art. Several recommendations can be put forward regarding elevating the status of art education. These include:

• Improving subject co-ordination among the various institutions involved in the arts such as universities, colleges, schools, regional offices and Curriculum Development Unit (Kangai, 1994);

• Broadening the curriculum to include other art curriculum models (Munjoma, 1994);

• Making art examinable at all levels of education (Kangai, 1994; Prode, 1987); and

• Increasing art teacher qualification at all levels (Kangai, 1994; Lancaster, 1982).

Implementing some of these recommendations would further strengthen the position of the subject in the school curriculum. It would further make the subject more academic and its role in the curricula at primary, secondary and tertiary levels would be justified. Improved teacher qualification would entail improved pedagogical skills and management of curricula content. Art and Design as a subject in the primary school curriculum is partially neglected due to its status as a non-examinable subject. Teachers tend to focus on those subjects that are examinable.
Inadequate funding (Lancaster, 1982; Moyo, 1989; Abraham, 2000) has kept the subject elitist and limited to private schools, which can still afford materials and equipment. Art has maintained an insecure position despite several strategies being instituted by the government and art-related institutions such as local universities, the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, polytechnics and teachers’ colleges in an attempt to elevate its status.

**Colonial Policies on Practical Subjects**

Several commissions and committees have been appointed in the early 1920s, among them, the Phelps-Stokes Commission of 1922, and The Advisory Committee of 1925 (Siyakwazi, 1996; Atkinson, 1972). Other commissions that emerged later were the Kerr and Judges commissions of 1952 and 1966, respectively. Although the commissions focused on Native education in Central Africa in general, they had implications on the provision of practical subjects that subsequently led to the other genres of art such as Handcrafts and Art and Craft in the 1960s in Zimbabwe (Gentile & Pashapa, 1993). The Phelps-Stokes commission reported the need to adapt the curriculum to suit the individual and communities’ mentality, tradition and heritage (Atkinson, 1972). Thus, Jesse Jones’ adaptation theory was followed up by Kegwin’s forced introduction of industrial subjects such as carpentry and agriculture for boys and needle craft, pot making and animal skin dress-making for girls. According to the Education Ordinance of 1889, African children were to spend at least two hours a day on industrial training. The time was later increased to four hours (West 2000 in Mujere, 2007; Atkinson, 1972).

Although such colonial policies on Native education sounded positive in that they infused indigenous crafts, several critics among them Siyakwazi (1996), Moyo (1989) and Mujere (2007) view these with scepticism. The policies facilitated a discriminatory education
system aimed at creating a broad and more efficient worker base for the European community. It was, thus, an inferior education system as proposed by the Native Commissioner of Matebeleland in 1904, quoted in Ndawi (2003: 20-21) as follows “The Native in his ignorance almost invariably abuses a purely academic education, utilising it only as a means of defying authority. A purely literary education for natives should not be considered for many years.” Later developments such as the education for economic domination, which was an extension of practical skills aimed at improving the lives of the black indigenous people, also had political connotations. Emphasis on industrial work was thus perceived as “having a ‘civilising role’ to the Africans whom they [Whites] viewed as indolent” (Mujere, 2007:181). The significance of art in the secondary school curriculum was reported by the Education committee of 1908 as:

[The] provision as far as may be, for the teaching of science, music, art (until separate technical departments are established) of technological subjects likely to be of use, such as book keeping, typing and elementary principles of agriculture for the boys, and domestic economy, dress making and cooking for the girls (Atkinson, 1972: 112).

The importance of practical subjects was also emphasised by Joyce Childs in her New Approach in the 1960s. Although her focus was on expressive arts in the infant grades, the approach aimed at providing children with better education through teacher re-orientation, innovative methodologies and a change of text-books to make them more relevant (TINA 1972 in Manjengwa, 1994). In the present curricula at various levels, art plays a critical role in developing the whole person: individuality, expression, social, cognitive, aesthetic and other
dimensions of a person (Campbell, 2006; Hart, 1991). It is argued that a study like this one can further enhance such domains in addition to understanding the cultural heritage of the country as well as art of the other cultures.

**Indigenising the Art Curriculum: Pre and Early Post-independence Initiatives**

This section of the chapter focuses on the art and design curricula from the pre to the post-colonial periods in Zimbabwe. Like in many other African countries, Zimbabwe had several missionary initiatives that focused on the promotion of visual arts education. These include Serima, Cyrene, and Drefontein, among others. While missionaries introduced new art-forms in these schools, there were also attempts to indigenise the curriculum through infusing contemporary arts and practices. Walker (1985) discusses how Cyrene mission, the first missionary school established in 1938 laid the foundation for the majority of contemporary artists such as Voti Thebe, Rashid Jogee, Kingsley Sambo, Sam Sango, Stephen Williams and George Nene, among others while Mzilikazi Art and Craft Centre produced some of the locally and internationally renowned contemporary artists such as Taylor Nkomo, Kaufman Ndlovu. He explains how Paterson provided a wide curriculum such as fresco, drawing, wood carving, pottery, bronze and silver castings, interior decoration and poster design (Walker, 1985). As an adherent of the Creative Self-expression, Paterson believed that students should express their cultural identities free from Western influence (Williams, 1994). Students’ work, therefore, had to reflect naivety and spontaneity, which was congruent with this educational philosophy then in addition to art content that had thrust towards valuing indigenous forms of expression.

In 1948, art teaching at Serima mission, another initiative by a Swiss Catholic missionary, Father Groeber, initiated boys at the institution to painting and wood sculpting.
Father Groeber’s methodology involved inculcating Christian beliefs and values through narratives in indigenous expressive forms, particularly wood carving (Abraham, 2000; Kangai, 1978). It was therefore a deliberate fusion of African and Western aesthetics and perceptions. As part of his approach, Father Groeber introduced Congolese masks as an alternative to Western canons. These were reduced to a series of planes, a cubist approach. In a way, Father Groeber was reintroducing to Zimbabwe, African approaches and techniques that had been appropriated and assimilated by the West through artists such as Picasso, at the peak of modernism. The totemic wooden figures were African in style and form yet Christian in themes and subject matter. Father Groeber also recognised the significant role of cultural expression on Christianity as Kangai (1978: 21) reports, “This fusion of Christian beliefs and African expressions is exemplified in the paintings and wood sculptures made for the Church designed for the mission.” Prominent contemporary artists from Serima include Joramu Mariga who is considered a key figure in stone sculpture in Zimbabwe.

Saunton (1970) and Walker (1985) discuss how Paterson also founded Nyarutsetso and Chirodzo schools in the 1960s in the high density suburb of Mbare. Art at Nyarutsetso had a social realist role, and through his pragmatic philosophy, Paterson equipped school leavers with artistic skills that were needed in advertising (Staunton, 1970; Walker, 1985). A synopsis of the curriculum includes art history, model drawing and painting as well as linoleum printing.

While Paterson’s methodology was based on Creative Self Expression philosophy, that is, it recognised each child’s individuality rather than conformity to conventions, it was also hedonistic in orientation. There was little formal teaching and intervention by the teacher but abundant provision of materials for experimentation and exploration of everyday experiences such as rural life and political violence. Such subject matter promoted the creative impulse,
imagination, communication and was cathartic (Case & Dalley, 1990). It provided a critical form of visual expression.

Abraham (2000) and William (1994) discuss the formation of Mzilikazi Art and Craft Centre as well as its curriculum. At inception in 1958, although it was formally launched in 1963, the centre was based on three principal socialist goals. It aimed at becoming a cultural centre providing diverse cultural and artistic skills that would enable participants, some with no formal art qualifications, to become more responsible citizens. The participants would become more employable and also create their own job opportunities. Indigenous crafts that were at the verge of obliteration and extinction would also be revived and sustained, in addition to ways of self-expression (Staunton, 1971; Kangai, 1990).

The curriculum was taught in three departments – art, sculpture and pottery, which later merged into two complementary departments. The pottery section developed faster and became more viable. Its earthenware and stoneware products that had an African flair got international acclaim through various marketing strategies such as exportation to South Africa and beyond.

The curricula included drawing, painting, print making, commercial art (sign writing, poster design etc), sculpture, photography, graphics and woodwork among others (Williams, 1984). Of note is Lamberth’s observation that the locals had an innate sense of colour and a great feeling for form. This observation was in line with contemporary instructional methodology then, by tenants such as Lowenfeld, Read, Viola whose focus was on venting out endowed creative impulse through experimentation and material provision. Naivety and originality were highly priced. The centre contributed immensely towards making the indigenous township folk access formal art training as well as promote indigenous forms of expression. This was an initiative and extension of the original NGZ workshop established in
the 1950s. It was founded in 1981 and was solely sponsored by the British American Tobacco Group (BAT) as part of its contribution to the wider community. The BAT programme provided a bridging gap between school art and tertiary art education. Entry into the workshop school depended mainly on the strength of one’s portfolio rather than formal art qualifications.

The objective of the workshop was to provide,

An art education in keeping with realistic understanding of the needs of the young Zimbabwean artist today. In keeping with the ideology of government, in post independence Zimbabwe art at the workshop is seen as vocational, and an aspect of cultural production (Winter-Irving, 1991; 9).

According to Paul Wade, the first full time instructor at the BAT, the institutional philosophy was to provide a liberal art education that developed students’ creativity and promoted self-direction. Today the thrust of the programme is to meet the vocational, academic and philosophical requirements of a nation devoid of a strong art education system (Abraham, 2000; Lancaster, 1982). As Winter-Irving (1991:9) comments, “As much as it teaches art, the workshop teaches what art is, and what society expects of the artist.” The curriculum is, therefore, an amalgam of formal and informal art education as well as local heritage. The three-year programme offers courses in drawing, graphic design, painting, print-making, sculpture and art history, both western and African.

Students are exposed to local, international, national and historical art forms. The students also interact with visiting artists so that they have an international perspective on art. In the 1980s and 1990s, the workshop hosted some international guest artists including Professor Melvin Edwards, Christian Heinze, Howard Bowcott and Bruce Onobrakpaya. The workshop has been
able to provide sponsorship to excelling students to study abroad in countries such as Canada, Sweden, United Kingdom and Bulgaria. The studies offer qualifications from Diploma to Masters Levels. The workshop also has a standing relationship with the University of Zimbabwe, B.ED art programme where students in Part II of their programme are seconded to the school for internship (DTE/BS/97/05).

Overall, the workshop school has been a valuable facility that provides the much needed art training to students with no formal art education but have an aptitude and inclination towards the visual arts. Since 1984 the workshop has been able to offer both ‘O’ and ‘A’ level art examinations as part of its mandate to provide a holistic art education curriculum. While the school is housed at the epi-centre of art practice in Zimbabwe, the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, its curriculum has no operationalised documents that reflect contemporary art. There is however, emphasis on the study of artists, their work and contribution to the art-world in the country.

Contemporary Art in the Primary and Secondary School Art Curricula

Several developments took place in the evolution of primary school art education. The 1971 Gweru Teachers’ college (GTC) conference (T4/T3 seminar)\(^4\) attended by teacher trainers and members of the inspectorate came up with several recommendations regarding the aims and objectives of art education, content and teaching approaches. Besides being hedonistic, art was to provide experiential learning. The curriculum was also to provide theoretical study of African art and the life and works of prominent living artists. Thus, the study of contemporary indigenous artists was initiated early in the colonial educational system. This syllabus had

\(^4\) T3 was a two-year teacher-training course after two years of secondary education. T4 was a two-year teacher-training course after seven years of primary education.
tremendous impact on the general acceptance of art as one of the core and vital subjects in the school curriculum. This study had a similar focus to the GTC recommendations, that of relating contemporary art and art education.

Lewis and Taylor (1974) report that African primary education recommended widening of pupils’ experiences to include self-expression, aesthetic appreciation, processes and materials and development of tactile sensitivity. This move was towards art per se, which was offered in European schools and was elitist. The move from craft to art had nomenclature implications. The move was also from a gendered, sexist and racist art curriculum to one whose emphasis was to acquaint “children with the more conventional Western forms of artistic expression and craft” (Lewis & Taylor, 1974:23) in addition to the indigenous arts and crafts.

Kangai (1978: 24) observes that there was practice in the use of traditional tools “and where the services of a local traditional craftsman were available, these were to be utilised.” Mc Fee and Degge cited in Efland (1994) put emphasis on the role of traditional art in equipping children of varied cultural backgrounds to cope with the mainstream of society without causing them to devalue their own cultural background.

In response to Lancaster’s (1982) recommendations, the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) in 1985 published a teachers’ resource book for primary schools. The booklet focused on scheming, planning and lesson delivery. Since 1990 when art was made compulsory in all primary schools, tremendous strides have been made in upgrading its content, methodologies and general structure of the curriculum. The theory, which now characterises the curriculum as stipulated in the primary school syllabus, is well augmented by that which is provided in teacher education colleges as a result of Lancaster’s recommendations. Currently, most teachers’ colleges have professionally qualified lecturers with at least a B.ED, BA, BFA or HND
qualification from universities and polytechnics. This, therefore, means the student teacher is adequately prepared to handle art theory content in the primary school. The Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE)\(^5\) approach has become a dominant model in teachers’ colleges, hence in most primary schools in Zimbabwe. Theory, particularly local tradition, is covered under art history, criticism and aesthetics.

Abraham (2000) observes that art education at secondary school level in Zimbabwe has had profound changes, particularly in the 1990s. Colonial art education at ‘O’ level provided art from Cambridge and London Examination Boards and its content and examination themes were internationally aligned such as the *Japanese calligraphy* and *off shore oil rigs*. However, the 1990s saw a complete localisation of both the ‘O’ and ‘A’ level curricula. This was accompanied by corresponding qualitative changes in examination themes. Examination questions are now Zimbabwean oriented as evidenced by interpretive themes and observational studies. An earlier attempt to include a theory paper met resistance particularly from private schools. Reasons offered included limited reference books and proper teacher orientation among others. Thus, the curriculum remained essentially studio-based. A theory paper at ‘O’ level was however, finally introduced in 2005.

At ‘A’ level, a research project was introduced which focused on in-depth study of local art. These changes were, however, modifications of the Cambridge examination, which originally had six papers (Syllabus 9191). The major challenge is on the quality of the ‘O’ level theory paper, particularly with respect to visual aesthetics, analysis, interpretation and criticism. There is, however, limited local literature on other art disciplines such as weaving, pottery and ceramics, wood carving, drawing and other different crafts. Sculpture has, on the other hand,

\(^5\) DBAE is a curriculum model focusing on the four disciplines of aesthetics, art criticism, art history and art production.
been extensively explored and documented since its emergence in the 1950s with the promotion by Frank McEwen. Overall, there has been a decline in the number of schools entering ZIMSEC ‘A’ Level examination (Abraham, 2000; Altman, 1994). Art continues to be offered mostly in private schools and has remained elitist. These schools can afford to buy art materials and have proper art facilities.

High cost of materials has been cited as the major contributory factor. Art in mission and government schools has remained limited. Some schools have even closed their departments due to a decline in the number of entries. However, if schools could broaden their conception and definition of art, there could be an increase in the use of locally available media, resources and technologies.

**Contemporary Art in Tertiary Education**

Numerous State owned teachers’ colleges emerged as early as 1956 and some like the United College of Education in Bulawayo took over the training of teachers from some mission institutions. Five colleges: The Teachers’ College (Hillside), Gwelo (now Gweru) Teachers’ College, Mutare Teachers’ College, United College of Education and Mkoba Teachers’ College had associateship with the university prior to Zimbabwe’s independence in 1980 (Mamvuto *et al.* 2012). The rest entered the University of Zimbabwe’s Scheme of Association after independence (DTE Handbook 2006). Currently there are fifteen teachers’ colleges, three of which are mission owned (Nyadire, Bondolfi and Morgenster) and two are polytechnics with teacher education (Gweru and Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo). Art is taught in all primary teachers’ colleges as Professional Studies Syllabus B, formally Applied Education. The syllabus’ focus is on how to teach art at primary school level and the development of professional proficiency
in the subject. It focuses on pedagogical and methodological issues of the art classroom. In the majority of colleges, art is offered as a Main Subject/Academic Study-for personal enrichment (TERC report, 1986). Two teachers’ colleges (Hillside and Mutare) train secondary school art teachers and, on average, each college produces 30-50 graduates a year. At inception, Hillside (The Teachers’ College) catered for whites only and was elitist.

The 1971 Gweru Teachers’ College conference came up with a curriculum for secondary school teachers’ colleges. Among the major recommendations made was that emphasis should be put on art theory. This included child developmental studies, which had their origins in the progressive education era (Efland, 1994). Authorities such as Read, Viola, Lowenfeld and Helga were to be studied. Emphasis was also to be put on the role of criticism and appreciation as enriching domains of production. The role and importance of art was underscored by the participation of practising artists (Prentice, 1978). The importance of artists in residences can be exemplified by the Mkoba Teachers’ College craft week experience (Kangai, 1978). Students had the chance to interact with visiting artists who took them through crafts such as sculpting and weaving from the conception to completion. Artists such as Thomas Mukarobgwa from the NGZ participated at these workshops. The interaction between formal art education and community art was the genesis of what contemporary art education advocates for. According to Kangai (1978: 28) “the craft week held at the college enabled students to experience traditional arts and crafts at firsthand.” Students learnt traditional customs, spiritual beliefs, and types of media and artistic skills. It is the researcher’s observation that since the Mkoba concept, contemporary art has incorporated diverse innovations, new art-forms besides sculpture, new aesthetic perceptions and discourses. These can be used to enrich school and college curricula, a gap not yet bridged in the current curricula.
One of the aims of the 1986 Report of the Teacher Education Review Committee (TERC) was to enable students to gain insights and possibilities that exist in the subject in the use of local traditional media and materials as well as to link local and foreign concepts in studio practice. This was in line with Lancaster’s (1982) recommendation of linking local and Western art. The other aims were on self-fulfilment and provision of an experiential learning and study of child psychological art, appreciation and criticism. It would appear that the aims and objectives of art education have not changed from those suggested by Eisner (1976), Lanier (1975), Hamblen (1997); Freedman and Popkewitz (1985) and Efland (1994). Local studies have been based on the above progressive educational thrust with little infusion of contemporary art.

Prior to 1996, there was no formal institution in Zimbabwe that offered art at degree level. The highest qualification one could attain was a Higher National Diploma (HND) from the Bulawayo and Harare Polytechnics. Those who held degree qualifications had obtained them from outside the country. Art teaching in Teachers’ Colleges was, therefore, mostly by non-degreed lecturers, a situation which Lancaster (1982) laments as a contributory factor to the low status accorded to the subject.

In an effort to alleviate the critical shortage of qualified staff, in 1983 the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education introduced a one-year Diploma staff development programme at Hillside Teachers’ College, Bulawayo. The programme offered courses in theory and practice of education as well as specialist studio courses. The curriculum included intensive studio practice in painting, drawing, printing, textiles, ceramics and also theory courses in art history, criticism and a research project, among others. A new curriculum model, Craft Design and Technology (CDT) was also introduced. This was an initiative by beneficiaries of a scholarship
fund to the UK, also facilitated by the Ministry. Resultantly, learner lecturers from this programme manned most art departments in teachers’ colleges. In 1991, the last group was trained under this programme before the introduction of the B.ED degree programme at the University of Zimbabwe in 1996. Despite the rich theoretical and studio courses offered through this programme, there is a conspicuous absence of the study of local art, both past and present which ideally should act as a spring board for curriculum implementation.

Besides teachers’ colleges, art is also offered at five polytechnics in the provinces of Mashonaland, Masvingo, Manicaland, Midlands and Matebeleland. Their curricula include applied art, commercial art, fine art, art history and criticism. It is oriented towards industry, thus making it relevant to the needs of society. The programmes involve a lot of interaction with practising artists although this is not deliberately reflected in policy documents such as syllabi.

Art at degree level is a recent development. Current art programmes offered in universities are post 1996 initiatives. The University of Zimbabwe introduced a two-year Bachelor of Education degree in 1996 with an Art and Design specialisation. The programme’s curriculum includes: visual aesthetics, design, drawing, painting, textiles, multimedia studies, graphic development, foundations in art and design education, art history, and a research project, among others (University of Zimbabwe Bachelor of Education Regulations). Presently, the University of Zimbabwe offers both Master of Education and Bachelor of Education degree programmes with specialisation in art education.
Women’s University in Africa (WUA) introduced a Bachelor of Arts Honours (BA Honours) degree in 2002, in the Faculty of Management and Intrepreneurial Development Studies while Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT) and Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) introduced BA (Hons) and Bachelor of Technology (B.TECH Hons) and B.ED art programmes in 2003 and 2004, respectively. The National University of Science and Technology (NUST) has a three-year technical teacher education programme whose thrust is to upgrade mainly art and design lecturers from polytechnics who are holders of National Diplomas (ND) and Higher National Diplomas (HND). In line with technical education, the courses include visual communication, engineering drawing, design development and analysis, product design, curriculum development, graphic design, computer studies, research methodology, design as a form of enquiry and a research project, among others. Courses at the Women University include art history, aesthetics, curatorship and a wide range of applied Art and Design courses that include industrial and theatre design, and film and video (WUA Bachelors degrees regulations). Courses at CUT include fundamentals of art, survey of world art histories, and African art history, among the many studio courses. The four year degree programmes lead to a Masters degree. Graduates from the programmes are expected to function in a wide range of fields in both private and public sectors.

While these universities offer diverse curricula areas and specialisation, no courses specifically focus on contemporary art although operationally there is a lot in terms of infusing contemporary art in the learning processes. Contemporary art represents diversity in Zimbabwean art practice. The development of art programmes at tertiary level is a welcome development. Opportunities for formal art education have increased greatly and the dire need for such programmes is revealed by Prode (1987), Williams (1984) and Lancaster (1982). The
two-pronged approach adopted by the university programmes accommodates the variety of stakeholder institutions such as teachers’ colleges, industry, museums, galleries as well as other art-related institutions.

**Regional School of Art and Design**

The establishment of a school of art and design has been a long-standing issue from colonial times as Lamberth observes, “It seems almost unbelievable that in the whole of Rhodesia, with its enormous and rapidly increasing African population…there is no one academy or school for the teaching of fine and applied art” (Winter-Irving, 1991: 169). Rogers (1986) and the jurists of the 1986 Nedlaw exhibition also lament the lack of a national art school in the country. This muted the idea of a Regional School of Art and Design (RSAD) for the SADC region intended to be established in Harare. The proposed RSAD as argued for by Williams (1989), Williams and Matome (1994), Coombe (1987) and Lancaster (1982) was an innovative move which, unfortunately, did not materialise due to problems of operational logistics. Some of its core objectives according to Abraham (2000) were to:

1. Provide leadership at all levels of art education in Zimbabwe;
2. Establish international links;
3. Provide in-service training for lecturers in colleges and University of Zimbabwe;
4. Create links with industry;
5. Provide an educational environment rooted in Zimbabwe heritage; and
6. Offer education for all Zimbabwean artists.

These objectives have a Zimbabwean inclination and did not take a regional approach. William’s (1994) argument also has a Zimbabwean perspective instead of a regional outlook.
The envisaged programmes of study included a Diploma in Art and Design, BA Art and Design, B. ED Art and Design, and short courses for practising artists and crafts-persons (Prode, 1987). Chinhoyi University of Technology has absorbed the BA degree programmes, while the University of Zimbabwe has assimilated the B.ED and M.ED programmes. At the inception of the RSAD, there were no plans to introduce such programmes at the University of Zimbabwe but that the RSAD would be an Affiliate or Associate institution of the University as is the case with teachers’ colleges (Prode 1987; Paper AST/23/96). The total envisaged scope of the RSAD has not, however, been met. Its initial intents include “collaboration between the school and a proposed African Centre for the Training of Performing Arts at the University” (Prode, 1987: 11). Of interest to note are the courses of study that would focus on indigenous arts such as sociology of art and traditional studies as well as art history and aesthetics. Thus one of the expectations of the RSAD was on the Africanisation of the curriculum.

Due to the proliferation of universities and polytechnics in the country, there is need for a re-assessment of the necessity, aims and objectives of the initiative. The multi-sectional approach in the education system has been able to cater for the major artistic requirements in the formal sector. However, something needs to be done for artists with no formal artistic background such as ‘O’ and ‘A’ level art qualifications as initially contained in the mission of the RSAD.

**Informal Art Education**

This sub-section is chiefly concerned with informal art education in Zimbabwe. During the period under consideration, art also developed and prospered in informal institutions. Winter-Irving (2004) discusses how Tengenenge sculpture community was established in 1966 by Tom Blomefield, a tobacco farmer, when Rhodesia was under sanctions. He teamed up with his farm workers and exploited the black serpentine rock that was available in abundance. Saunton
(1994) and Winter-Irving (2004) claim that the inspiration for sculpting was the availability of stone, ready market for sculptures through links with the NGZ, and a large repertoire of mythological themes due to diversity in nationalities of workers on the farm. The sculpture community produced some internationally acclaimed sculptors including Nicholas Mukomberanwa, Bernard Takawira and Joseph Muzondo. Mc Ewen’s wife established Vukutu sculpture centre in Nyanga. Other centres include Chapungu Sculpture Village and Wedza Valley Centre, initiated by Eldridge (Abraham, 2000).

In 1992, Ilse Noy established the Weya community in Headlands, 170km east of Harare. The centre’s mandate was to assist disadvantaged rural women earn better living standards through their untutored paintings, appliqués, drawings, embroidery and fabric paintings. Themes included women artists’ experiences and aspirations (Kasfir, 1999). Currently, there are many informal institutions that train artists in a variety of art genres such as painting, sculpture, print-making and mixed media studies among others. Many road-side artists have emerged and most of them produce airport art for the tourist and international market (Kileff & Kileff, 1996). These are exported to neighbouring and overseas countries where they have a ready market. Art by these informal assemblies also has some educational value that the education system can actually embrace.

**Summary**

Visual expression among contemporary African artists has been variedly defined and conceptualised. Artists, philosophers and critics have different perceptions about the notion of visual expression, some emanating from aesthetic theories and practices. In its historical development, African art has shifted from its original instrumental role in society to art for art’s
sake. It has been subsequently syncretised and this has affected available visual art-forms and practice. Contemporary African art has also been variedly categorised. Debates are still going on about the Africanness of contemporary African art. The major influencing theories and forces behind contemporary practice in Zimbabwe have been examined in this chapter.

A survey of art education in Zimbabwe was also discussed. For clarity, this was discussed under primary and secondary, tertiary and informal art education. Focus was on developments during both the colonial and post-colonial periods. It is evident that art education remains marginalised despite several attempts at having it in the mainstream and having the same status as other subjects. Colonial policies on the position and status of practical subjects, art included, left a perpetual legacy that still bedevils art as a subject. It, however, needs to be appreciated that from the time studies such as Prode (1987), Lancaster (1982) and Williams (1994) were carried out several positive developments have taken place in elevating the status of art education. Art is now considered one of the core and compulsory subjects in the primary school curriculum though it is not yet examinable. What remains, as advocated by this study, is a re-assessment of curricula content including contemporary art, objectives and methodology so that they are relevant to Zimbabwe. In the next chapter I present the qualitative methodological approach adopted in this study.
Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I present the research design and methodology that I used to investigate contemporary visual practice among artists. First, is contextualising the paradigmatic approach by locating it in cultural studies. This is followed by the sampling procedures that were used and then a discussion of the data collection processes. A road map detailing how the data were actually collected is also presented. Lastly, I examine the issue of trustworthiness as it relates to this study.

This approach has been taken to explore visual expression in Zimbabwe that has been gaining momentum and popularity since the introduction of formal art education. Airport art has also subsequently emerged and proffered in the realm of contemporary art. Numerous formal and informal institutions have been established with the mandate of furthering art education. Some art education founders, though, such as Tom Blomefield would have preferred to see art remained in the informal realm (Abraham, 2002; Williams & Matome, 1994). Such perceptions are shared by some art teachers who feel comfortable teaching historicised art that has been tested and has withstood the test of time compared to contemporary art that is yet to be fixed, judged and categorised (Lazotti & Del Guercio, 1988; Prentice, 1995).

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6 Airport art is repetitive souvenir type of art that is meant for export. The term was coined by Mc Ewen
Research Paradigm: Ethnography

This study used ethnography, which is a hermeneutic design oriented towards interpretation of contemporary visual practice, as perceived by artists, the cultural participants, (Patton 2002; Silverman, 2011; Huberman & Miles, 2002; Lancy, 1993; Opie, 2004; Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Creswell, 2007) involved in visual expression. This translated to understanding the practice by artists as they worked in their studios. It has become common belief that artists have developed their own peculiar cultural practices. Resultantly they belong to a cultural group, which can be effectively investigated from within using a design such as ethnography.

The study focused on artists’ lived experiences by searching for deeper understanding of their experiences of visual expression. The design enabled me to focus on how the artists functioned in their culture and involved sharing their cultural meanings, perceptions and interpretation of artistic life described by Hitchcock and Hughes (1989:52) as “...to grasp the native point of view, his relation to his life to realise his vision of the world.” It is, therefore, a study of artists’ culture through fieldwork. Principal methods of in-depth interviews, document analysis, participant observation and conversational interviews were used to collect data from the artists.

The methodological design similarly involved focus group discussions and document analysis to gather data from participating art lecturers and teachers. As is synonymous with ethnography, the number of individuals and institutions studied were kept to a minimum in order to allow collection of comprehensive data. The design was not aimed at establishing generalisations, but on extrapolating possible implications of contemporary visual practice on art education through deeper insights. Justification of the chosen design is summed up by Spradley (1980) in Bogdan and Biklen (1992: 38) who says, “At its best an ethnographer should
account for the behaviour of people by describing what it is that enables them to behave appropriately given the dictates of common sense in their community.”

**Selection of the Study Site (Harare)**

Visual expression the world over appears in various forms as discussed in the background to the study and the literature review. These include process art, earth art, environmental art, conceptual art, body art and paintings to mention but a few. Zimbabwean artists have incorporated some of these art-forms using indigenous materials, techniques, technology and interpretation. This is mainly a result of experimentation and acculturation since no group is a cultural universe, it is always influenced by cultural nomadism (McEvilley, 1993). Zimbabwe is an art-dominated nation as evidenced by art practices in all the administrative, political and provincial regions of the country, namely, Matebeleland, Mashonaland, Midlands, Masvingo and Manicaland. There are, however, limited exhibition facilities and infrastructure in some parts of the country. The main ones are in the major cities of Harare, Bulawayo and Mutare. The National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare, runs the other two galleries- Bulawayo National Gallery and the recently established National Gallery in Mutare.

It is however in Harare where prominent art exhibitions and activities are held. These include the multidisciplinary Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA), Pritt, Heritage, Gwanza and some other solo and group exhibitions. The capital city also has numerous privately owned galleries, which include Gallery Delta, Gutsameso Gallery, Mutupo Gallery, Verandah Gallery, Pierre Gallery, Chapungu Sculpture Park, Sandro’s Gallery and many others. These attract both local and international exhibitions. Some of the international exhibitions are organised through foreign embassies such as the 2006 “Rembrandt in Retrospect” organised by
the Embassy of the Netherlands at Delta Gallery. Examples of group exhibitions that were once mounted include “Give a dam” by Visual Artists Association of Bulawayo (VAAB), and Exhibitions by Harare Polytechnic students, The Pritt and Allied Arts Annual schools exhibitions and the annual Batapata workshop, which attracts regional artists from countries such as Zambia, Botswana and South Africa.

Harare also has several annual exhibition events among them, the Harare International Agricultural Show and Heritage. These attract regional and international participants. Harare is also characterised by numerous art education institutions, from secondary schools, Polytechnic (Harare Polytechnic), Galleries, Universities (University of Zimbabwe, Women’s University in Africa and Catholic University) and privately owned art academies such as, Zimbabwe Institute of Vigital Arts (ZIVA), Harare Institute of Allied Arts and Peter Birch School as well as private studios such as Dominic Benhura Studio. Harare is also the centre for the envisaged but prematurely aborted Regional School of Art and Design (RSAD) for Central and Southern Africa (Williams, 1994), which is currently under reconsideration.

Art associations are also found in the city such as, the Africancolours Artists Association (AAA), Arts Journalists Association of Zimbabwe, and the Zimbabwe Association of Art Critics that gives a platform to the critique of art exhibitions, artists and art events. Harare is the epi-centre of art in Zimbabwe. This makes Harare region a multi-cultural centre offering diverse art activities. Roberts (1979: 53) describes Harare as “the art and curio centre of the country.” It is for these reasons among others that I purposively selected all participating contemporary artists from this city. The artists are of diverse cultural, artistic and social affiliations as well as educational backgrounds. This made it a convenient site for the study of
contemporary visual art practice. Although exhibitions and other art activities are organised and held in other centres such as Mutare, Gweru and Bulawayo these are of a lesser magnitude.

**Purposeful Snowball Sampling of Artists**

Contemporary artists are practising artists as defined in Chapter One. They participate frequently in art exhibitions and other art fora. Some are studio owners, for example, Dominic Benhura and Chenjerai Mutasa who have practising facilities for young, budding artists. The artists selected for this study feature prominently in national exhibitions and mass media and are internationally acclaimed. The snowballing technique also called network sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001), is basically a referral system, and was used to identify such artists. In this kind of sampling, successive individuals or groups are selected on the basis of recommendations from the preceding informants who share the same profile of attributes or traits (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The selected participants facilitate in the development of the envisaged theory. This strategy is used when selecting informants, for example for in-depth interviews, who cannot be located in a homogeneous group in a population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Like in this study, contemporary artists with the required attributes were scattered around the city of Harare. First, popular art genres as evidenced in yearly exhibitions were identified. These are painting, sculpture, graphics, performances, photography and installations. However, artists studied were not confined to one particular art-form, but practised and experimented with a variety of art-forms. As a result, the genres identified above were simply a guide representing the forms in which the artists’ strengths were strongly represented. The genres were, therefore, neither inclusive nor binding. After an artist in a discipline such as painting was purposively selected as a potential participant, he/she was
requested to also identify one other artist in the same discipline whom he/she felt was of significance in contemporary visual practice. I then built a list of these artists according to how they were presented and then made the final sampling using my prerogative against the criteria of a contemporary artist as defined in Chapters I and II.

The National Gallery of Zimbabwe as the locus and epi-centre of art activity in Zimbabwe was the starting point. After selecting the artists representing each of the disciplines, they were then approached for consent to participate in the study. The snowballing technique ensured that only the key artists were identified and given opportunity to participate. The five artists who were finally sampled represented the following art-forms: graphics, mixed media, sculpture, installations and performance as detailed in the interviews with the artists and from an analysis of their artworks.

**Purposive Sampling of Teachers’ Colleges and Schools**

Riverton, a secondary teachers’ college was conveniently selected from Bulawayo, the second largest city in the country, while the two primary teachers’ colleges were purposively sampled, Kingsdale from the three Masvingo region colleges and Mapango from Harare. The colleges offer three art curricula, namely Academic Study, Professional Studies Syllabus B\(^7\), and Curriculum Depth Study, Syllabus C (PSC)\(^8\). Selection of the three colleges was based on the assumption that colleges offered varied learning experiences although as alluded to in Chapter One, college curricula are generally standardised by DTE during reviews of syllabi which take place after every three years.

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\(^7\) A curricula component in teacher education that focuses on the pedagogics of specific subjects

\(^8\) Professional Studies Syllabus C: A research project undertaken by all students in teachers’ colleges
Similarly, two secondary schools, one private (Rava College) and one public (Hilltop High School), were purposively selected from Harare. These schools had one teacher each for art and these were persuaded to be the sample of participating teachers. Two primary schools and two teachers were similarly, purposively selected from Harare. Due to the nature of the qualitative study, it was necessary to keep the number of participants and institutions to a minimum so that detailed qualitative data could be collected. The table below shows the total number of participants involved in the study and their categories.

Table 3.1 Summary of participants and their categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>MODE OF DATA COLLECTION</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College art lecturers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group I</td>
<td>Focus group discussions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group II</td>
<td>Focus group discussions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group III</td>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Trained</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Trained</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary artists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 males</td>
<td>In-depth interviews</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 female</td>
<td>Analysis of artworks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant observation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conversational interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gaining Access

In this study, I negotiated entry with each artist so that I could observe them working in their studios, interview them, and analyse their artworks. This was an overt and cooperative approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) that sought their full cooperation. That process accorded me greater access to the studios and participants were, as a result also open and candid in their responses. I presented myself as a
bona fide researcher and art educator, with the same goals and objectives as those of the artists in contributing to the art community. However, for full consent I explained fully the purpose of the study, their role as participants and how both the participants and I were likely to benefit from the study. I then asked the artists to endorse their consent to participation by signing an informed consent slip, which I had designed. I, being a participant at various art fora, had interacted with some of the key artists. I had interacted with the artists during official launch of some national art exhibitions and I had visited some of the artists with students and had interacted with them during workshops and seminars among others. That made my acceptance easier and was treated as an insider (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Likewise, after seeking permission from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, the Ministry of Education Sports Arts and Culture and authority from the relevant principals of teacher education colleges and heads of schools, I negotiated my entry with art lecturers and teachers. I had also interacted with art lecturers during academic examining exercises and on other Scheme of Association business and was therefore fully accepted. The interaction I had with art teachers was during workshops organised by the NGZ. So I was not a stranger to all participants and this facilitated the establishment of conducive data collection environments.

**Data Collection Methods and Procedures**

Qualitative research has several methods of collecting data. Researchers often triangulate these methods so that there is credibility and legitimacy in the data. Bosk (1979) in Maxwell (1992: 279), however, fears that “All qualitative fieldwork done by a single field worker invites the question, why should we believe it?” It is for this major reason that I triangulated principal qualitative data collection methods of in-depth interviews, document analysis, focus group
discussions and participant observation to collect data from artists, art lecturers and teachers. Details as to how the methods were used are presented in the following sections.

Data collection as detailed below was guided by the following data planning matrix adapted from Vulliamy (1990). The matrix enabled co-ordination of the complex series of data collection activities. It also helped focus the study, collect relevant data, and ensured that all research questions were adequately answered.
Table 3.2: Data planning matrix: Adapted from Vulliamy (1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</th>
<th>DATA NEEDED</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>METHODS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What factors influence visual expression among contemporary artists in Zimbabwe?</td>
<td>-Artworks</td>
<td>-To establish sources of influence for artists</td>
<td>-Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Photos</td>
<td>-To establish how artists approach their art e.g. in use of cultural idioms</td>
<td>-Interviews, Document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Artists’ statements</td>
<td>-To interpret artworks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Exhibition catalogues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Autobiographies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What paradigms of symbolisation, image making and iconography can be discerned from contemporary visual expression?</td>
<td>-Artworks</td>
<td>-To establish influences on artists</td>
<td>-Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Photos</td>
<td>-To understand approaches, style techniques and tools used by artists</td>
<td>-Interviews, Document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Studio facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Exhibition catalogues</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Autobiographies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Studio checklists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the nature of artistic knowing and visual expression among selected artists?</td>
<td>-Artworks</td>
<td>-To understand approaches, styles, materials used by artists</td>
<td>-Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Photos</td>
<td>-To understand visual imagery</td>
<td>-Document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Artists’ statements</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Studio facilities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Exhibition catalogues</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Autobiographies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What curricula reforms reflective of visual expression by Zimbabwean contemporary artists can be made to art education?</td>
<td>-Art syllabi</td>
<td>-To assess what is educationally relevant from contemporary art</td>
<td>-Focus group discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Schemes of work</td>
<td>-To indigenise the art curricula</td>
<td>-Document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Course outlines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-External reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Examinations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How relevant are the present art curricula and syllabi in Zimbabwe to society?</td>
<td>-Art syllabi</td>
<td>-To integrate what is relevant from contemporary practice with existing art curricula</td>
<td>-Focus group discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Schemes of work</td>
<td>-To Africanise the art curricula</td>
<td>-Document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Course outlines</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-External reports</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Examinations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interviews

In-depth Interviews with Contemporary Artists

I conducted in-depth interviews (Silverman, 2011; Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Patton, 1990; McMillan & Schumacher, 1993) which qualitative researchers view these as an amalgam of formal and conversational interviews. I visited the artists at their workplaces in Domboramwari Art village in Epworth, National Art Gallery of Zimbabwe, Highlands Suburb, Harare Polytechnic and Zimre Park. It was, however, time consuming, energy sapping and needed a lot of patience to organise the interviews. In a number of occasions, interview dates and times had to be rescheduled because artists often had other pressing commitments. The interviews were guided by a broad outline of topics and issues to be discussed in the form of questions.

The questions were, however, not rigidly or systematically followed, but these provided a general framework in which emergent questions were asked. This was to allow respondents greater latitude to express their views. I probed for in-depth responses and guided the interviews to ensure that all topics/areas were adequately addressed. It involved asking impromptu and situational questions. These were adjusted to suit the participants’ cognition of art discourse, their language and knowledge of art content. All interviews were conducted in English.

The broad areas covered in the interviews included artistic styles, themes, sources of inspiration, acculturation, educational and artistic backgrounds, media use, iconography, semiotic processes, techniques and approaches. The interviews were audio-taped because of their relatively lengthy duration. Immediately after the interviews they were transcribed, typed and then coded later during formal analysis. To ensure that artists expressed themselves freely,
pre-briefing calls were made to each of the artists during which, the purpose of the interview was explained. The familiarisation visits helped create collegial and non-threatening relationships with the artists. The fact that I had also interacted with the artists at other art fora made the relationships conducive for in-depth interviews. I was, however, mindful of the need to maintain objectivity and avoid getting too native (Creswell, 2007; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) which could have affected collection of credible and trustworth data.

Informal conversational interviews were conducted where issues were discussed in a more casual manner (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). These were used during participant observations of artists in their studios. The interviews were meant to bring a relaxed observation context while at the same time serving a verification purpose as well as soliciting for data not collected during in-depth interviews. The main advantage of this form of interview was that it was contextual. I was able to ask questions relative to what the artists were actually experiencing during studio work. These interviews were not audio-taped but were recorded as field notes using pen and paper. The interviews were taken as complementary to the in-depth interviews.

**Interviews with Secondary Schools Art Teachers**

Two secondary school art teachers were interviewed. The interviews complemented document analysis in which official syllabi, teachers’ schemes of work and lesson plans were analysed. The interviews were held separately with each teacher. Guiding areas of art domains were established and situational questions as guided by the teachers’ responses were asked. The issues that were discussed included the relevance of the art curriculum to Zimbabwe, the state of the curriculum, their conception of contemporary art, how teachers incorporated
contemporary art, how students benefited from contemporary art practice, and teachers’ general views about contemporary art in Zimbabwe.

For the primary schools curricula documents were analysed, that is, the 1990 Ministry of Education and Culture Primary School Art Syllabus and the 1985 Introductory Booklet for Primary Schools Teachers by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) as well as their schemes of work and lesson plans. Primary school teachers are not art specialists, unless they did art academic study at college, but they did art at college as PSB in which they focused on pedagogical and methodological issues of art at primary school level. So going deeper into contemporary visual practice would not yield anything substantial beyond the teaching of art at primary school level. However, the study analysed their documents for evidence of contemporary art in their teaching.

Focus Group Discussions

Two focus group discussions (Creswell, 2007) were conducted with art lecturers. The group interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) were structured in such a way that they promoted uninhibited expression among the participants. I acted as a moderator (Silverman, 2011) and was able to direct the ‘focused’ discussions according each participant equal opportunity to free expression. Such interaction was the hallmark of these group interviews. One focus group discussion was conducted at a primary teachers’ college, (Kingsdale) and the other at a secondary teachers’ college, (Riverton). At the third primary teachers’ college (Mapango), I was unable to conduct the intended focus group discussions because of difficulties in scheduling all the lecturers but I managed to collect various curricula documents for analysis. Kingsdale has a complement of four Art and Design lecturers - a senior
head of subject and three junior lecturers. Riverton has two senior lecturers including the subject head and one junior lecturer.

Both discussions were recorded using an audio tape recorder. I did not have back up facilities, such as taking down of notes in case of failure of the equipment as a precautionary measure. The piece of equipment had been used several times during interviews with contemporary artists and had proved to be reliable and efficient. Immediately after each of the interviews the task of transcription (Silverman, 2011; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) of the discussions commenced. Like in all other interviews, all words were audible. However, the discussions were long and tedious to transcribe. Replaying of the tapes several times ensured transcription of every word verbatim. The transcriptions were then typed. Adequate margins were left on both sides of the transcription sheets for entering of comments and context codes during analyses.

The two focus group discussions were comparable in content. Although there were a few variations in terms of probing questions, the major and majority of questions were similar. This made analysis easier particularly coming up with recurring themes and categories. My role during the discussions was that of a moderator who guided and managed the discussions. This was done to remove the interviewer–interviewee barrier that could have created undesirable distance between the interviewees and myself, thereby stifling free expression of opinions by the participants.
Document Analysis

Analysis of Artists’ Visual Forms

Data collection from artists also involved analysing various art-works, which Silverman (2011) calls visual data. Visual analysis derives concepts from the discipline of semiotics (Ali, 2004 as cited in Silverman, 2011). Analysis of such semiotic data involves decoding the materials for cultural codes and meanings. Visual data in this study included paintings, sculptures, installations and mixed media work. Such data augmented and triangulated what artists claimed they practised in their studios. The data also yielded valuable information which artists might not have been consciously aware of such as their aesthetic orientation, guiding philosophies and acculturation that impacted on their practice. However, according to art history studies, the major drawback in visual analysis is in understanding the individual meanings underlying artworks. To this end, the critical notions in visual analysis are, therefore, meaning, form and interpretation. An artwork is a visual narrative that is subject to interpretation. According to Arnold (2004: 91), “it is what the viewer brings to it [artwork] that makes it represent.” This art of reading an artwork for meaning through analysis is culturally determined. The viewer analyses the interaction among the subject matter, materials, approaches and methods used by an artist. Freeland (2001) discusses a three-pronged analysis that examines the work’s formal and material properties, the content (thoughts and meanings) and the contextual background of the work (political, social, economic, historical, etc.). Arnold (2004) further discusses how artworks such as *Marilyn Monroe* (1962) by Andy Warhol, *Le Violon d’Ingres* (1924) by Man Ray and the Renaissance famous painting *Mona Lisa* by Leonardo Da Vinci have been canonised and historicised through such visual analyses techniques. In most cases, a researcher is unable to interview individual artists, but relies on information embedded in the artwork. In
this study analysis of artworks was guided by the different visual clues. Such an approach was used in the analysis of historical and canonical artworks. Aspects that were analysed include paradigmatic symbolisation, subject matter, art-forms, media and tools, iconography and semiotic processes. Comments were recorded as field notes in a journal.

Analysis of Curricula Documents

A number of curricula documents were reviewed in order to ascertain the extent to which colleges and schools under study incorporated contemporary art. If they did incorporate it, how, when and what methodologies would be consistent with such infusion. Through document analyses (Koshy, 2005) I was able to make “replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorff in Bannette et al., 1994: 237). College documents that were analysed include syllabi (Academic study; PSB- general and ECD, PSC), examination papers, teaching programmes, marking guides and internal assessors’ reports. The analyses attempted to pick on those aspects that relate to contemporary art. Later on findings from the documents were triangulated with data from focus group discussions. This was to ascertain whether what lecturers claimed they taught was consistent and evident in the documents, or whether such content was misconstrued for contemporary art or limited in terms of deliberate coverage. The documents were analysed college by college and later summed up for the three colleges. It should, however, be noted that in secondary teachers’ colleges there is one art syllabus that encompasses both academic study and professional and pedagogical content (PSB syllabus). At the point of carrying out this study art had also been introduced as a PSB subject under expressive arts in ECD in all primary teachers’ colleges. So the two PSB syllabi for primary teachers’ colleges were under the general course and Early Childhood Development.
Similar to the analysis of documents in teachers’ colleges, analysis of documents in primary and secondary schools was also done. Focus was on how the documents reflected infusion of contemporary art. If so, how was it fused? What curricula activities and content were suggested? Analysis of schemes of work and lesson plans was also done for evidence of teaching of contemporary art. Findings from the analyses were correlated with what teachers claimed they taught. Analysis of these documents was relevant because according to Eisner (1991: 184) the documents “frequently reveal what people will not and cannot say.”

Two policy documents were analysed for the primary school. These were the 1990 Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture Primary Art Syllabus Grades 1-7 and the 1985 Introductory Booklet for Primary School Teachers by the CDU. Although the documents were dated, they were the most current documents in operation in the primary schools. Also analysed were teachers’ schemes of work and lesson plans to ascertain the extent to which they infused contemporary art.

**Participant Observation**

Observation during fieldwork in a qualitative study falls on a continuum between complete observation and non-participant observation (Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Vulliamy et al., 1990; Lancy, 1993). The degree of participation, however, rests upon aspects such as the nature of activities, the participants and the goals of observation. Bogdan and Biklen (1992: 96) say that, “over-participation can lead to ‘going native’ that the originally set objectives are lost.” The authors contend that it is, therefore, desirable to limit participation to a level at which the researcher can still objectively collect the intended data. In this study, observations were confined to studio practice. It involved visiting the artists in their ateliers and observing them as they worked through their art projects.
The observations were recorded as field notes and recording took a journal format and developing an observation checklist of available items. My participation involved assisting the artists in organising art materials during which discussions on aspects such as artists’ intentions, working procedures, media and styles were held. That constituted the informal interviews meant to complement in-depth interviews. The idea was not to be fully engrossed in the artists’ work such that I would forget the intended objectives by becoming too native (Creswell, 2007; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). I still had to maintain that requisite social distance to be able to collect the intended credible and trustworthy data.

One of the problems that a participant observer encounters is that of dividing his or her time between participation and recording of observations. In this study, recording of the observations were done while the artists were doing work that did not require my participation. More detailed field-notes were entered soon after exiting the studios before I forgot some of the details. Observations were entered in a journal each time I visited the artists. The journal was, therefore, a source of critical reflection both during and after the observations.

The observations also involved assessing the studios in which the artists operated in using an observation checklist. It involved making field-notes on available materials, equipment and the general set up of the studios. Photographs were taken for analysis later during content analysis. Critical artistic processes and stages were also photographed for analysis. Photographs provide a vivid visual record of situations and were therefore advantageous in the study.
Data Collection: The Roadmap

A Visit to Domboramwari Art Village

On the 12th of January 2008 I visited Domboramwari Art Village after making prior arrangements with Chenjerai Mutasa on when and how to get to the village. I took with me a digital camera, note pad and a pocket size audio tape recorder. These tools were going to be used to gather information from the artist about his practice and about the art village. On arrival in Epworth I dropped off at the shops where Mutasa and two other artists were waiting. After some brief introductions we then proceeded to the village. It was a walk through the densely populated suburb, crossing a fairly big river and after about twenty minutes we arrived at the village.

*Domboramwari* literally means “The stone of God.” Historically, the name is a derivative from one of the large stone plateaux situated in Epworth, about 20 kilometres south east of the city of Harare. The Domboramwari Art Village is situated in a quiet rocky area adorned with granite boulder outcrops and balancing rocks. The site is suited for art practice as it provides a serene and tranquil inspiring African atmosphere away from the busy city and fast expanding shanty and densely populated Epworth. Here the artists live in harmony with nature. The village consists of a number of structures that include one main gallery, a kitchen shed, a water reservoir, pit latrines and small traditional bedroom huts dotted on the flat piece of land. All structures are built of stone under thatch, making them complement and harmonise with the surrounding environment. Each bedroom is fitted with a single bed. A variety of sculptures at different stages of completion could be seen strewn all over, showing that many artists often visit the village to do their workshops. The availability of granite entailed that stone sculpture dominated the art-forms practised at the village although most stones were imported from
outside Epworth. It is here that artists come and enjoy workshop facilities and atmosphere in a variety of art-forms: paintings, wood carving, stone sculpture and mixed media constructions.

After being shown around the village, Mutasa and I then walked to a huge rock outcrop overlooking the village. It is here where we sat and had a lengthy interview. The interview focused on the artist’s practice and about the village itself. After the interview, I then left after making arrangements and plans on when to come back again to observe him as he worked through some of his artworks. It was difficult to set a concrete schedule of visits as Mutasa indicated that he was also busy organising a workshop for upcoming artists. Therefore the subsequent visits to the village were made after verifying the artist’s availability, days and the times.

I then made six other visits to the village to observe the artist working on some of the mixed media pieces and sculptures. The observations and interviews yielded valuable insights into the artist’s practice. I established that Mutasa is a renowned performance and wall hanging installations artist. He works with found objects and media such as stone, metal, glass, wood, ceramics and plastics. His work is mainly a combination of media inspired by social issues. After high school at Goromonzi, he attended the National Gallery and Peter Birch School of Art. He attended several programmes, symposiums and workshops, among them the Thapong in Botswana, some residence programmes in the United States and one workshop in South Africa, Great More Studios. Through the Domboramwari initiative, he aims to offer space to both established and up-coming artists to participate in individual or the village’s designed programmes. He also owns a sculpture studio and trains up-coming sculptors. The picture below shows part of the Domboramwari Art Village with some sculptures strewn around.
Chiko Chazunguza operated from two venues, the Harare Polytechnic where he was a lecturer, and Dzimbanhete Arts Interactions. My first visit was to the Polytechnic for an interview. The Polytechnic which borders the western end of the city is just a few minutes walk from the Central Business District. On arrival at the centre I found Chiko already waiting in his office. After exchanging greetings I was led to one of the studios that Chiko had organised for the interview. The audio-recorded interview centred on his practice as an artist. After the interview I thanked Chiko and left for town. The transcription process of the interview commenced that very day while events were still fresh in my mind.

A lot was learnt about the artist. Chiko is a renowned contemporary graphic artist. He works in a variety of media and has ventured into diverse genres of visual art-forms: photography, installations, printmaking, performance, painting and sculpture. He is inspired by
African ways of looking at symbolic images. After ‘O’ Level\(^9\) he joined the National Gallery School, that is, from 1986-1987. He then went to study in Bulgaria at the Sophia Art Academy for seven years and graduated with a Masters degree in Fine Arts. He has exhibited at several exhibitions, both locally and internationally and he has received several awards that have earned him international acclaim. He participated at several workshops such as the annual Batapata and many symposiums. He has been a lecturer at the Harare polytechnic for several years as well as a part-time lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe (M.ED and BED Art and Design programmes) in the Department of Teacher Education, at the Chinhoyi University of Technology and the Zimbabwe Institute of Vigital Arts (ZIVA).

After the Polytechnic I had my first visit to Dzimanhete Arts Interactions. This is where Chiko operates from in terms of studio production. After making prior arrangements, I drove to the centre, which is approximately twenty minutes drive from the city centre. On arrival I was met by a couple of artists who were also busy on their work. After being shown around the centre, which was adorned with visual media from paintings, prints, sculptures and a lot of mixed-media works we discussed how the observations of the artist as he worked were going to take place. Some working consensus was established after which I was taken through some gallery displays of work that was produced by some of the artists. Pictures of the centre were taken including some of the artist’s work that was on display.

\(^9\) Ordinary Level. The intermediate level of education between Zimbabwe Junior certificate and Advanced Level.
After the informative tour I thanked him and departed. I later made four subsequent visits to observe the artist at work. Dzimbanhete Arts Interactions is situated in the bushy and hilly Snake Park area about 20 kilometres along the Harare- Bulawayo road. The centre was built against a backdrop of balancing rocks on which an artists’ performance stage was under construction. The centre consists of one main wooden structure with several compartments that include some gallery space, a workshop, a kitchen and storerooms. There are also traditional hut structures and a small wooden cabin for the resident caretaker. The two galleries are fairly spacious and are painted in bright contemporary peach. In the passages and galleries were displays of a variety of artworks from prints to paintings, sculptures, textiles, and mixed media work. Also on display were commercial samples of packaging products and post cards designed by some of the artists. In the veranda were artworks on display. The yard was adorned with a variety of works that included thrown pots, wood and stone sculptures, and mixed media constructions. Dzimbanhete offers facilities for workshops, seminars, exhibitions, discussion fora for artists and studio facilities for practising artists. The centre is connected to electricity, enabling artists to practise weld art and other multi-media constructions.

A Visit to Zimre Park Art Studio

I visited Charles Kamangwana at his Zimre Park home that he also used as a studio. Zimre Park is located about 15km to the east of the city of Harare. It takes about twenty minutes to get there. It took me about five minutes to locate his house as I had never been there before. As per our discussion, Charles was waiting for me. Charles welcomed me and led me to his living room that he had temporarily converted to a studio since his house was under renovations. After a drink and after a couple of minutes we got to the business of the day. The
purpose of the interview was elaborated on and the interview then proceeded after which I was then accorded the chance to see some of his artworks, mostly paintings. Charles also indicated that there were currently other researchers also writing about him with the intention of publishing a book. A schedule for the observations that I intended to make was discussed. However these visits were not always as planned. On a number of occasions there was rescheduling of planned meetings because the artist had other commitments. After thanking the artist I was accompanied to the main road where I got a lift back to town.

The interview yielded valuable information about the artist. After completing High school in Chitungwiza, Charles joined the School of Art at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe from 1992 to 1994. He started participating fully in exhibitions in 1994. By 1997 he was an accomplished artist. From the Visual Arts School he joined the Harare Polytechnic for a Diploma in Fine Arts. He then did printmaking at Cavershan in Petermaritzburg in South Africa. He has also done a number of workshops in painting, ceramics and metal sculpture. Charles works in painting, printmaking and mixed media and his area of strength is printmaking. His work is mainly expressionist, although it is sometimes realist. He works mainly from observation while at times he does imaginative work. His work has attracted attention of tourists and art collectors, both locally and internationally because it has what people can relate to or identify with. He is inspired by other cultures, as well as old Western masters like Van Gogh and Rembrandt. He has been an instructor at the BAT. Currently he is an art teacher at the Harare International School.
A Visit to the National Gallery of Zimbabwe

Doris Kampira was one of the targeted artists. She has a strong art background that dates back to 1995. I visited her at both her office and studio at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. When I got to the Gallery around 1000 hours, Doris was waiting for me in her office (one of the apartments in the Gallery) as per our arrangements. I explained the purpose of the interview and showed her the consent slip that she had to sign if she was agreeable to the study. After all the rituals the interview commenced. As with other interviews the interview was recorded using an audio-tape recorder. She later took me to see her studio where I was to later visit five times to do the observations. An operational schedule was discussed but was never actually followed because of other commitments on her part as an artist. I thanked her and left the Gallery. Later that day, the transcription process of the interview commenced. Fortunately, like in all other interviews, the recording was audible and clear making the transcription process relatively easy.

Doris did art at ‘A’ level at Malbereign Girls High School and then went to join the Visual Art School (BAT) from 1995 to 1997. She majored in printmaking and metal sculpture. Her art is abstract expressionist and she believes she is the voice of the voiceless, particularly women and children. She has won several awards. In 1996 she won a highly commended artwork award. In 1997 she got a certificate of appreciation from the American Embassy for participating and assisting the under-privileged, and a distinction for the best metal sculpture, while in 1998 she got an award of merit. She attended several workshops and participated in numerous exhibitions locally, regionally and internationally. She has a studio at the National Gallery where she interacts with visiting school children, students as well as other practising artists.
A Trip to Highlands: David’s Residence

Highlands is one of Harare’s low-density suburbs located on the eastern side of the city. It is here where David Chinyama, one of the fast growing artists lives. I made a telephone arrangement to meet David in town so that we could go together to his residence where he operates from. He came to town around 1200 noon and we got a lift to Highlands, which is just a few minutes drive from town. We dropped off and walked to his home. After introducing me to his family, David then showed me several of his paintings, which were mostly abstract and done in a contemporary style. Afterwards we sat down for an interview, which was audio recorded. David narrated his art background. After ‘O’ level at Pareriwa High School, David joined the BAT for three years (1997-1999). He then joined the Harare Polytechnic where he did a diploma in fine arts. In 2001 he joined the Victorian Art Centre for eight months. In 2001 he had his first solo exhibition, which opened many opportunities for him. A lot of publications started to be written about the artist and his work. From then he had invitations from all over the world. He was awarded fellowships in the USA. He attended several workshops around the world in countries such as Germany and the Netherlands and had several solo exhibitions locally and abroad. In 2004, the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NACZ) awarded him the most outstanding artist of the year award. He has represented the country at several symposiums regionally and internationally. After the interview modalities of how the observations were to be operationalised were discussed. The researcher then left for town.

A Visit to Kingsdale Teachers’ College

On the 7th of July 2007 I travelled to Kingsdale Teachers’ College, Masvingo. I had made some prior arrangements to meet all art lecturers in the art department for a discussion with them.
Prior to the visit I had collected all their curricula documents for a preliminary review that assisted me in directing the main questions that would guide the discussion. I got there in the afternoon around 1400 hours. After some welcome remarks by the Subject Head, the other members were invited. In all, three lecturers attended: two females and one male. Two were absent due to emergence college business, but that did not compromise the other lecturers’ views. The team went into one of the studios, which seemed to be a convenient environment for the discussions. The discussions were centered on the college art curricula against the backdrop of contemporary art practice in Zimbabwe. During the discussions members were free to interject as the need arose. The audio tape recorder was used to capture the discussions. I had micro cassettes enough to accommodate the entire discussions. After the discussions I thanked the participants for the invaluable information. That night the transcription process started ensuring that the interviews were recorded verbatim.

As a college, Kingsdale was established in 1981 and was granted Associate Status at its inception. Accredited diploma programmes at the college are: Diploma in Education (Junior level); Diploma in Education (Infant); and Diploma in Education (ECD). ECD was a new programme at the college taking over from the infant programme, which was phased out in 2006. Similar to other primary teachers’ colleges, art education is offered in three areas of: Academic Study; Professional Studies Syllabus B; and Professional Studies Syllabus C.

All the programmes run on a 3.3.3 model although the 2.5.2 is also an approved programme. A few students (~30) take art as an Academic Study, (~80) as PSB and (~25) as PSC. Unlike in other colleges PSB is an elective when students are in their final third year. It is one of the seven subjects that has to be passed in a cluster of subjects.
At the time of this study there were five lecturers in art education, all qualified as shown in the table below.

Table 3.3: Lecturers’ qualifications and teaching experience (KTC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Academic qualifications</th>
<th>Professional qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching experience (years)</th>
<th>Art teaching at college (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>‘A’ Level</td>
<td>Dip Ed; B.ED</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>Dip Ed; B.ED</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>CE; Dip Art; B.ED</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Grad CE</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>CE; B.ED</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Visit to Riverton Teachers’ College

A similar discussion was conducted at Riverton Teachers’ College on 20th November 2007. After making prior arrangements with the Subject Head, I travelled to Bulawayo on University business. After work, at 1630 hours as per arrangement I visited the art department. After his welcome remarks, the Subject Head then invited his colleague. The third member was absent on that day. We went into the Subject Head’s office where I elaborated on the purpose of the visit. Like in the other discussion at Kingsdale Teachers’ College, this discussion focused on art curricula vis-a-vis contemporary art in Zimbabwe. The discussion was audio recorded and the transcription process started that very night. The major questions were premised on the discussions that took place at Kingsdale.

Initially, Riverton was a Whites only teachers’ college. It was established in 1956 and attained Associate Status at inception with the University of Zimbabwe (University of Rhodesia then). It is one of the two secondary teachers’ colleges offering art education. For a long time the college was offering Post ‘O’ level art programmes but has since shifted after ministerial directive to offer two-year Post ‘A’ level programmes. However, the majority of students who
opt into art have no relevant art preparation such as ‘O’ and ‘A’ levels. They follow a two-year programme. The subject offers studies in the following three areas: Academic study; Professional Studies Syllabus B, and Professional Studies Syllabus C.

Academic study and PSB components are embedded in one syllabus document as will be discussed in subsequent sections of the study. Students are free to choose art as their main subject even if they do not have art education as a background. Most students first opt into other main subjects, which they studied at ‘A’ level. This is because they have the content and confidence in the subjects, and it is the most logical option for the students. A few who have art at ‘O’ or ‘A’ level or an aptitude for art select the subject as their first choice. The majority only comes to join art after having failed to secure positions in other main subjects. This has implications on the students’ proficiency and ability as well as a host of other variables such as the quality of the student upon exiting the programme.

At the time of carrying out this study there were three lecturers in the department with the following qualifications:

Table 3:4: Lecturers’ qualifications and teaching experience (RTC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Academic qualifications</th>
<th>Professional qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching experience (years)</th>
<th>Art teaching at college (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>‘A’ Level</td>
<td>B. TECH (Hons); Dip Ed; NC; Dip Art</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>M.ED; B.ED; CE</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>NC; B.TECH (Hons); Cert in Adult Educ</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Visit to Mapango Teachers’ College

I also travelled to Mapango Teachers’ College in Harare with the intention of collecting their curricula documents for analysis. This was because I had challenges in trying to organise a departmental meeting with lecturers in the subject area. Several curricula documents that include syllabi, course outlines, teaching programmes, internal and external assessors’ reports, students’ practical work, etc. were handed to me by the Subject Head to take home and were to be returned at a later date. The documents were analysed for evidence of inclusion of contemporary art, teaching approaches that could be consistent with contemporary art and use of contemporary approaches, styles and techniques in studio art.

Mapango is an associate college of the University of Zimbabwe (Paper AST/23/96), which means, the UZ accredits all college programmes. It was established in 1981 and was granted the Associate Status in 1982. The responsible authority is the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. Among the twenty curricula subjects offered by the college is art and design which is offered in three areas, namely:

- Academic Study;
- Professional Studies Syllabus B (General Course and Early Childhood Development)\(^\text{10}\);
- Curriculum Depth Study (CDS) (Professional Studies Syllabus C).

The college follows the 2.5.2 model\(^\text{11}\) of teacher training for the general programmes and a 3.3.3 model\(^\text{12}\) for the ECD programme.

\(^{10}\) Early Childhood Development. A programme for pre-schoolers who are between 0-8 years.

\(^{11}\) A three year model of teacher education in which students spend two terms in college, five terms on teaching practice, and the last two terms in college.

\(^{12}\) A three year model of teacher education in which students spend three terms in college, three terms on teaching practice, and last three terms in college.
The accredited programmes are three: Diploma in Education (Junior primary); Diploma in Education (Infant); and Diploma in Education (ECD).

For admission into academic study programmes it is not mandatory that the student should have some formal art background, but an inclination towards the visual arts would be an added advantage. The college has facilities for art education such as art studios and display space. Four lecturers whose qualifications and teaching experience are as follows manned the art department:

Table 3.5: Lecturers’ qualifications and experience (MTC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Academic qualifications</th>
<th>Professional qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching experience (years)</th>
<th>Art teaching at college (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>CE; Dip Ed; B. ED</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>CE; Dip Ed</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>CE; B. ED</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>‘O’ Level</td>
<td>CE</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ethical Considerations

Denzin and Lincoln (2011), Silverman (2011), McMillan & Schumacher (2001), Bennette et al. (1994) and Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) identify research ethics as informed consent, which involves giving participants adequate information and the disclosure of the nature and purpose of the study and procedures, and confidentiality and anonymity, which protect participants from both physical and psychological harm. Basing on that understanding, I deemed it necessary to inform the artists, art teachers and lecturers of all considerations underlying the study.

All participating artists were asked to consent to their participation right from the outset of the study. Fortunately all the five artists who I, as the researcher approached, accepted to
participate and were asked to sign informed consent slips, which I had designed (Appendix 1). They also agreed to have their identities known instead of using pseudonyms. The artists were then informed of their right to withdraw their participation at any stage of the study (Nyati-Ramahobo, 1996). However, because of the collegiality that I had established with the artists, they all agreed to participate up to the end of the study.

Data collection involved analysing artists’ works. It involved photographing some works for visual content analysis later after exiting the sites. Large canvases and heavy artworks such as sculptures were analysed at the study sites while some were photographed for analysis later. The participants were again informed of their right to refuse with any work and to stop photographing any particular episodes.

Artists were observed working in their studios. The observations also involved capturing particular episodes using a still photo digital camera. It also involved my participation in activities such as organising equipment and setting up in the studios. I once more informed the participants of their right to limit my level of participation. Interviews were recorded using an audio-tape and pen and paper. Participants were free to stop the recording at any stage. They had the right to keep confidential information to themselves. Despite all these possible levels of possible limitations, the artists did not impose any constraints on me in terms of participation and volunteering of information.

Participants were also assured that they would also have access to the thesis after publication. They also agreed to have pictures of their artworks taken as part of the thesis and some are documented in the appendices. All participating art teachers and lecturers decided to remain anonymous. Therefore, all names that appear in this study are fictitious and do not in
any way relate to anyone who might incidentally have such names as well as their respective institutions.

**Establishing Trustworthiness and Credibility**

There are a number of strategies that were used to attain trustworthiness and credibility of collected data and findings. These are prolonged engagement at the study sites (studios), triangulation of methods and sources of data, member checking and thick descriptions (Sturman 1999 in Opie, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Bennette *et al.*, 1994; Gomm & Woods, 1993; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989). The following sections detail how I ensured credibility and trustworthiness in the study.

**Prolonged Study at the Sites (Studios)**

I had prolonged periods with the artists in their studios. Each artist was visited several times depending on the project the artist was working on. The prolonged participant observations enabled me to learn about the operations of the artists. Informal conversational interviews were conducted simultaneously with the observations. The observations took six months, which was a fairly long time for one to learn the culture and operations of the artists.

**Triangulation**

This is an inevitable notion in qualitative research. The triangulated data collection methods include document analysis, informal and in-depth interviews as well as participant observation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Denzin in Wragg, 1995). I also used multiple sources of data to augment the methods. These were complemented with appropriate data collection instruments. I was the key instrument in this study (Tuettemann, 1999). Data from interviews were verified
with those from observations as well as from analysis of artworks and curricula documents. Other complementary data analysis methods peculiar to the visual arts that were used include critical, semiotic and iconographical analyses (Cheetham et al., 1998; Belsey, 2002; Fernie, 1996; Barnet, 1997), and photo elicitation.

**Member Checking**

It was important that I reassured myself that the information I got from interviews with artists was verified. At the end of each in-depth interview and before the next interview during participant observations, I picked on critical issues that were liable to multiple interpretations and asked for verification and clarification to ensure that what the artists said was exactly what they meant. This verification process was done both informally and formally with the participating artists during observations in their studios.

**Thick Descriptions**

I as the researcher collected as much detail as possible during each data collection process. Visits to artists’ ateliers yielded data on available equipment and materials, working space and procedures, evolution of the artworks, style and subject matter. These were recorded as detailed field notes using pen and paper. Still photographs were taken. In-depth interviews which were relatively long in duration, were audio-taped to aid analysis later. Such detail assisted the study in bringing out emic perspectives during analysis, which focused on critical meanings from the cultural participants’ point of view. Documents such as artists’ artwork were critically analysed. Such thick descriptions of data from different sources gave a more objective picture of the artists’ practice.
The Researcher as an Instrument

One of the prime advantages of qualitative research methodology is that the researcher is the principal research instrument. The researcher as an instrument has an adaptable role as he/she can adjust his/her approaches according to the prevailing context. The researcher knows when it is right to ask what questions, can probe, and can member-check to verify issues that can be subject to varied interpretations. He/she can also take note of respondents’ behaviour cues that have significant hidden meaning such as during interviews and observations. Patton (1990) cited in Tuettemann (1999: 12) advises that during interviews the researcher, as an instrument should maintain empathetic neutrality,

Empathy... is a stance toward the people one encounters, while neutrality is a stance towards the findings. Neutrality can actually facilitate rapport and help build a relationship that supports empathy by disciplining the researcher to be non-judgemental and open. Empathy communicates interest in and caring about people, while neutrality means being non-judgemental about what people say and do during data collection.

In this study I as an instrument, adapted my language to suit the artists’ levels of art discourses and art content. I had the chance to minimise what Tuettemann (1999: 12) calls “power and status” by guaranteeing artists latitude for free expression and open views. Replay of audio-tapes after exiting the sites was useful as a reflective process, as I could adjust aspects such as data collection strategies and language during subsequent interviews. English was used as the medium during interviews, and I had to rely on the notion of ‘with-it-ness’ and responded
according to individual informant’s needs. There was, therefore, a lot of probing for clarification of views. All these were advantages of the researcher as an instrument.

However, the notion of the researcher as an instrument poses its own subjectivity problems as Polman (1997) in Tuettmann (1999: 13) cautions “Don’t try to get rid of yourself, try to use your presence as well.” Stranger and Friend in Jackson (1987: 61) note that while a researcher “has developed techniques that give him considerable objectivity, it is an illusion for him to think that he can remove his personality from his work and become a faceless robot or a machine-like recorder of human events.” I had to be cautious that pre-conceptions and pre-dispositions, which have negative impact on data, did not overrule my objectivity. As an instrument, I observed artists working in their studios during which I interviewed them using informal conversational strategy. I was able to ask questions that were context bound. I also analysed relevant documents such as policy documents, schemes, plans and artworks and adjusted analyses according to emerging themes and patterns.

All initial in-depth interviews with artists were recorded using an audio-tape. Subsequent informal interviews during observations were recorded as field notes using pen and paper. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim after exiting the sites and then later typed. All these were advantages of the researcher as an instrument in this study. Tuettemann (1999) advises that the adaptive role of the researcher as an instrument is characterised by what he calls espousing and enabling. In espousing, the researcher reorients his/her personal capacity, for example, from his/her own needs to the needs of the participant, thereby offering supportive presence. Enabling occurs when a participant moves from fearfulness to confidence. The two notions provided a sense of personal security to the artists and resulted in the artists providing reliable data.
Summary
In this chapter I examined the design and methodological procedures used in the study. Ethnography was considered most appropriate to the study, which sought to study how contemporary artists functioned in their studios. The study sought to solicit artists’ views and perspectives about their practice. Authorities such as Lincoln and Guba (1985), Maxwell (1992), Marshall and Rossman (1999) and Tuetteman (1999) view this as a naturalistic inquiry, as artists were studied operating in their ateliers. In the chapter I also explained how data on contemporary art were collected from art lecturers and teachers.

In the chapter, I looked at the study site and justified why artists were all selected from Harare region. Data collection methods of in-depth and conversational interviews, document analysis and participant observation, were discussed and their relevance in this study justified. Issues of gaining access, ethical considerations and snowballing sampling technique were also discussed in the context of the study. Issues of credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative research were discussed and related to the study of contemporary artists. These are thick descriptions, prolonged engagement, triangulation and member checking.

The next three chapters are devoted to data presentation, analysis and interpretation according to the three categories of participants, namely, contemporary artists, art lecturers, and art teachers.
Chapter Four

Contemporary Visual Practice in Zimbabwe

Introduction

This chapter is a collation and corroboration of research findings from interviews with artists, participant observations and analysis of artworks. Analysis procedures were guided by thematic indexing, a process of making sense out of the collected data. The data are presented under Self-imaging, Communication and visualisation; Multi-disciplinary approach to representation; Visual media and semiotic representation; Hermeneutic social commentary; Art and multiculturalism; and Visual media, techniques and object representation. Semiotic analysis of visual productions was done under the cues of media, techniques and visual representation, and visual content and metaphorical representation. Overall, visual practice by contemporary artists is examined in this chapter.

Self-Imaging, Communication and Visualisation

Visual expression was variedly conceptualised and defined by the artists. There was, however, general consensus on its purposes, which artists identified as for documentation, communication and self-expression. In conceptualising visual practice, Chiko tries by all possible means to do away with definitions from academic perspectives, such as aesthetic theories as defined from a Western perspective. He argues,
I try by all means to do away with influence from the outside. So with that understanding I try to define art, which I have not really managed to do from an African perspective, which is like, what is art? I haven’t found it. All I have found is life. So my theories are life theories. I simply deal with life and I think that is the basic principle that I use for creating art.

A pictorial analysis of his work however revealed the subtle influence of Western philosophical and visual ideas in art practice, for example pastiche of visual codes and other post-modern techniques as derived from Western art practice. He however explained that it is difficult to define art in the way Westerners perceive it, that is, the creation of objects that will be put in a particular dormant space. From a traditional African perspective, art is functional. It serves an instrumental social purpose such as in ritual performance. Africans have recently adopted art for art’sake in line with global trends. Art is now exhibited in galleries, which as institutions, tend to dictate taste and Western patronage. He illustrates thus:

It is difficult [to define art] in the sense that, the art that the Westerners talk about, is the creation of objects that will be put in a particular space that would simply wait for a lot of things but we do not create a dormant space that would simply wait for objects to be put in there for people to see. Our objects were always there around us. So this art that is simply for the gallery is kind of alien. We go with it, I don’t see anything bad by putting things in a gallery but I also think the art that was done or created by Africans is still a form of art. This art we do now might actually be inferior to the type of art that we used to do which we don’t have the type as yet.
Contemporary thinking, particularly post-modern thought, is that there is no superior art. Even art of the other minority cultures and groups, is significant in contemporary practice. Chiko, however, believes in the fundamental role of self-expression, as evidenced by how he practised in the studio. An analysis of Chiko’s work demonstrates an individual approach that is in tandem with these post-modern ideas and philosophies. There was mixing of visual codes, media and materials. Thus an artist considers his/her personal emotions and feelings first before the audience as he espoused:

Visual expression is there throughout for as long as somebody has thought about the idea of seeing an object. Seeing something and especially those in the making of the objects that are to be seen, I think you are already into expression. You are expressing yourself in there. Whether the next person will accept it as you want it to be is something else, but you will have put it into consideration. You will have put yourself into consideration and your feelings. So you are expressing yourself visually. And that also means the strength of images cannot be just left out loosely. That also means the images that we look at, the images that we deal with, we need to understand who creates them, who and for what purpose. Like when I am creating an image, for whom, and I also anticipate certain reactions. They may not be so direct, but the reaction that somebody will carry with them after having seen my work because of my visual expression.

It would seem that Chiko views art from a philosophical viewpoint, which embraces contemporary thinking that cuts across cultures. His Baselitz approach to art characterised by an up-side down orientation and naivety of visual symbols is clearly a post-modern view.
Baselitz’s approach is unconventional (also called bad art) particularly when one considers how an artist uses balance, form and other artistic conventions. The work can be viewed from two view angles. Besides being a means of manifestation of the inner self, art can be an effective vehicle for self-conscience as Chiko explained:

I would describe it as art. I would describe it as a vehicle for my own messages, what I want to say to the people. My voice is not loud enough. I cannot leave my voice without me being there, but I can leave my art for people to see even in my absence. So I use art as a vehicle for my conscience.

Charles Kamangwana similarly conceptualised visual practice. In addition to self-expression, art serves a social role. Morphological analysis of his work showed that his poetic approach to visual narratives indicate self invented approaches. He uses metaphoric content and approaches to symbolic representation. He explained that:

The purpose of art is to educate and also to document. People have to know how they are living and how to live. It’s a way of communication as well. When these artworks go overseas, people can see the impression about Zimbabwe, life in Zimbabwe because of our visual work. I think people can read our minds through that because what I paint is what is on my mind. People should know what I am thinking about. We become open rather than closed.
Art as communication has been a dominant philosophy since the fall of the expression theory. This has been debated by aestheticians such as Collingwood and Dickie (Thompson, 1995). The major argument against the communicative role of art is the lack of one theological meaning that can be truly communicated by an artist to an audience. Each intended reader confronts the visual text with his/her own culturally determined orientation that subsequently leads to a personal line of interpretation of the artwork rather than perceiving the artwork as envisaged by the artist. An artwork is at the mercy of the textual reader, thus perpetual deferment of meaning. Despite these philosophical debates, Kamangwana’s views are congruent to those of his contemporaries. Art is there for communication as he elaborated:

I am not a very good spokesman should I say, but I feel I can teach and preach through art. So that’s the main reason should I say. [The purpose of art] is also to reach and touch people’s lives, to teach, educate and inform.

Communication was, however, considered at the level of self-consciousness. It served both an intra and inter-communicative function. Similarly, Doris Kampira believes art is about communication of feelings, an innate human attribute. She also views art as serving a self-fulfillment role. In the following exchange, she revealed her conception of the purpose of art.

**Mamvuto:** To what extent is visual expression a means of communicating your feelings to others?

**Kampira:** Art is about communication of feelings and like making people know who you are. It’s a powerful way of communicating because you find that you communicate with a lot of people, some who are illiterate. So you find your art is actually saying something to some people.
Mamvuto: More than a thousand words?

Kampira: More than a thousand words, yaah. The messages being put up in town, for instance, on HIV and Aids which are affecting people. Some might be illiterate and not be able to read what is written about Aids. But I can make an expression about how it affects that person and then that will be me playing the part of informing or giving out messages or communicating.

Mamvuto: To what extent is your art a means of self-fulfillment?

Kampira: I love art, so it’s part of communication with others, but also part of expressing myself. I love art. I am not a very talkative person, so I talk a lot through my art. If I get angry, I paint some more. So that means it’s a language to me. I use it a lot as I give messages to other people.

Visual expression was defined and conceptualised from a Western perspective by the majority of artists. While art was a way of life for the traditional African as argued by McEvilley (1993) and Kennedy (1992), the same could not be said about the contemporary artists who were investigated. Art was detached from daily life to an object of aesthetic candidacy. It adopted a Kantian perspective where it was meant for the gallery space and subject to multiple interpretations. Western aesthetic theories such as attitudinal and institutional were used in the process of conceptualising art. The gallery was the key determinant of style and approach, hence the institutional approach. In addition the artists also considered an individual attitudinal approach in determining what should be considered art and what was worth exhibiting in the gallery space. Thus these two aesthetic theories were used to define art.
David Chinyama also expressed that art plays a pivotal role in information dissemination. He cited areas that do not have access to communicative media and thus art filled in this critical role. He noted that Zimbabweans have, however, not fully reached that level. His paintings such as the crowded high density suburbs and the Great Zimbabwe conical tower communicate social and political issues thus act as vehicles of signification.

Mamvuto: To what extent is art a form of communication of ideas and feelings?
Chinyama: It’s only that in Zimbabwe we haven’t embraced the importance of art. In the first world countries art plays a pivotal role in information dissemination, sending messages across to people. Like here we have areas that do not have access to say print media. Having artists doing different forms of art like play, visual, literary art, we can disseminate information to the people. It’s only that as a society we haven’t reached that point where we have embraced art as playing a pivotal role in our society.

Art also plays a critical role in artists’ lives. Most artists acknowledged its therapeutic function. This has been a critical function at the height of modernism influencing artists such as Van Gogh, a post-impressionist and Edvard Munch, a symbolist. However, art as therapy is not a function of a conscious process (Case & Dalley, 1990). It was, therefore, not clear how some of the artists consciously used art for such a role. Art as therapy has been significantly used in nursing homes and such schools as St Giles (Harare) school for the physically and mentally challenged and St Catherines (Harare) for the mentally challenged. The notion could have been a derivative from literature search, making such artistic expression an imposed attribute. This
function of art was critical during the progressive era (1920s and 1930s) as art curricula emphasised the therapeutic role in most classroom art activities. Pedagogical content and instruction were based on the psychological state of the learner’s mind. David illustrated the therapeutic role of art as follows:

Well, to me art is therapy. On a personal basis art is therapy. When I do my art I don’t do it for monetary returns. I do it for the love of art. It’s something I realised from a very tender age that I was an artist. I remember refusing to do my ‘A’ Level but choosing to pursue art as a profession after my ‘O’ Level which my family couldn’t understand or believe that was what I had chosen. It was not something that I just wanted to do just for the sake of wanting to get something monetary. I felt I couldn’t do anything besides being an artist because it was something that was already deposited in me. It’s therapy. If I am stressed out I do art and by the end of the day I am relieved.

From the in-depth interviews that were conducted with practising artists and observations of their studio practice, it was evident that artists defined visual expression differently. They, however, came to a consensus about its purpose, which includes self-expression, means of recording events, communication and therapy. Such conceptualisation and practice was dominated by academic and visual theories, which were, however, unconsciously applied. Artists were not aware of philosophical intents and their signification. The notion of Afrocentricism that has become a contemporary phenomenon in visual practice influenced the minority of the artists while the majority felt acculturation was unavoidable. The therapeutic
role of art and expression at a self-consciousness level was viewed as a critical semiotic and psychological function of art.

**Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Visual Representation**

It was clear that artists experimented with media, techniques and non-indigenous art-forms that were not initially in the realm of traditional African art. Of particular note were installations and performances by Chiko and Mutasa. The artists also adopted art for art’s sake, a modernist approach that has its origins in the late 19th century Western art. They produced art for contemplation, art meant mostly for the gallery, Western market and patronage as observed by several researchers on African art such as Vogel (1994), Kasfir (1995) and Stanislaus (1996).

In the following exchange, Chiko explains the media he used and the main art-forms he focused on:

**Mamvuto:** What type of art do you usually focus on, you mentioned installations?

**Chazunguza:** Like now I can say I have been working on installations more. My last show was on installations because when you are working sometimes you want to do a series so that you can complete the whole cycle of exhausting an idea. So I was working on an installation in my last show. But now I have moved back into painting and print making both at the same time. So I am mixing the two as I go.

**Mamvuto:** What media do you normally use in your work?
**Chazunguza:** Again that’s difficult because I would use any medium as long as it helps me express what I want in a better way because I take photographs, I do installations, I do print making, painting, I also do sculpture. So it depends on the particular theme and what I would be feeling I would express my feelings better.

**Mamvuto:** In terms of techniques and approaches such as impressionist and expressionist, which ones do you normally use?

**Chazunguza:** I don’t really use those words like impressionist or expressionist and things like that. If you say impressionism it’s like you recall those things from before, people who were called impressionists. But I don’t think I belong there. I don’t think I belong to cubists either. All I think is, I am an African, who is inspired by African ways of looking at images and that’s how I work. I simply try to suck out information from my traditions and my roots.

Although there is abstraction in African art as noted by Herold (1990), this notion was at tangent to the abstraction as practiced in the Western perspective. The abstraction portrayed by the artists was a deliberate adoption of a Western approach, a practice also noted by Murray (1999) in her evaluation of local exhibitions. Some also experimented with a combination of visual forms. The modern and post-modern approaches embraced by the artists permeated all the art genres that were practiced such as printmaking, oil painting, sculpture and mixed media construction. Charles is one artist who bemoaned lack of printmaking materials. On the contrary, the other artists did talk of serious improvisation. This is evidenced in Chiko’
installations such as *Tigere muupfu* (We are living pretty). The improvised materials and media such as mealie meal naturally lend some artworks to abstraction. This notion of improvisation can be effectively taken into the school system, where teachers and students have consistently bemoaned lack of materials. Kamangwana explained the media he used, the art-forms and his approaches:

Charles: Besides paintings I do metal sculptures and print-making. I do quite a lot of everyday life scenes basing on the subjects that deal with three-dimensions. The subjects that I feel come out better as two-dimensional are the ones I do in paint.

**Mamvuto:** What media do you normally use, you mentioned metal sculptures?

**Kamangwana:** The main media which, I use are paint, acrylic paints on canvas and paper. But it’s just that I am still working much on two-dimensions. I will be working equally the same on all mediums because it’s a matter of space. Sometimes I do print-making. My strength is more into print-making but it requires a lot of materials and equipment which I can’t get or which I can’t afford.

**Mamvuto:** What about mixed media?

**Kamangwana:** Yes, I do a lot of mixed media as well. I have lots of work in mixed media. I use newspaper cuttings, which I put together and then make a composition out of that.
Mamvuto: What techniques and approaches do you normally use? Some say Charles’ work is impressionist?

Kamangwana: I would say sometimes it’s impressionist but it also depends actually on how I will be feeling at that moment. Sometimes it’s realistic depending on whom I am doing it for because sometimes I get some commissions. For example, I am doing a portrait of somebody. I would be quite realistic because some people want to see themselves as they are on the pictures.

Mamvuto: To what extent are media and materials a limitation in your work?

Kamangwana: Well, materials are not easy to find. They are also quite expensive considering the market that we have here. One has to always find a way to survive somehow. Sometimes I am so comfortable doing acrylic painting. I work in acrylic, they dry fast, I work fast. But sometimes I have to resort to oil painting as I have that knowledge too. So I use whatever is there. But I use what is there to the best of my ability. I buy acrylics from South Africa. I get one bottle for six or seven rands.

While traditional African art is normally dominated by three-dimensional forms, particularly stone sculpture and multi-media constructions the participating artists were not limited to such visual forms but included two-dimensional art, particularly acrylic painting. The artists used a variety of media and materials and these were not a limitation congruent to what Willet (1993), Efland (1992) and Vogel (1992), among others, found about contemporary African art. Doris explained the art-forms she is into:
Mamvuto: What techniques and approaches do you normally use?

Kampira: Expressionism. I like to express much in my work. And since I touch the subject of women, I also express how they may feel about what they do either in the community, in the evenings or anything happening around this world.

Mamvuto: What else do you do besides painting?

Kamangwana: Besides paintings I do metal sculptures and print-making. I do quite a lot of everyday life scenes basing on the subjects that deal with three-dimensions. The subjects that I feel come out better as two-dimensional are the ones I do in paint.

The absence of a unitary approach to art is a post-structuralist paradigm (Thompson, 1995). Artists are more exploratory as they seek new directions and artistic freedom. An artwork’s uniqueness depends on the level of experimentation and exploration and the creative abilities of the individual artist. This approach resulted in the many modern movements such as Pop art, Abstract expressionism as well as later tendencies in art exemplified by feminist and lesbian philosophies and artistic means of expression. Modern and contemporary art is characterised by improvised materials and media, the same approach seen in this sample of artists. Thus David does not confine himself to a particular medium as he explained:

Well, I don’t have a particular approach. Most of my work is experimental. I believe as an artist living in a modern world now, art is all about freedom, trying
to express yourself. There are elements here and there that make my work at
least consistent with my style. But mainly it’s experimental. Each and every
piece that I do at a particular time is completely different from the others because
I am trying to work with different media. I am trying to work with different
techniques that I am putting together then it’s like I am still learning. I am in the
learning process. I don’t know where that will take me to but basically I use
brushes and I have come up with something different. I also use rollers, scrapers
and palette knives. At least it gives my work different textures, attain a different
feel unlike if I use the usual, like a brush on a flat surface. I am trying to come
up with something that is more creative, something innovative, and something
different at least that can attract the eye of all art appreciators.

Mamvuto: Some artists talk of installations, some talk of abstract art and so on.
How do you classify your art?
Chinyama: It’s partly abstract and I have at least christianed it my style. I call it
visual poetry. But it’s more in an expressionistic way but like expressing myself
in that way. The other styles that have come before me like Dadaism are the
styles that set an artist. So as an artist living in the 21st century I feel like we
have to go on, do something our own Zimbabwean style. No wonder why I
came up with visual poetry. It’s poetry but in visual form.

Mamvuto: So movements like Dadaism and so forth are the basis?
Chinyama: They are the basis, the more traditional forms. We don’t have to run away from them. They set the foundation and from there as an independent artist, grown up artist you have to express yourself in a different way, come up with something that is more independent, more personal that expresses you as an artist from a personal perspective.

Epochal historical modern art movements such as Dadaism, Abstract expressionism and Realism are there to set an artist working. As the traditional movements, artists have used these as the spring-board upon which artists venture into new directions. They act as anchorage forms that set the foundation upon which as an independent artist, one has to express himself or herself in a different way, come up with something that is independent and unique to personal lines of expression. The idea is to appeal to a variety of appreciators through varied visual effects. The artist explained how he used media:

Well, I am that kind of a person I can say I don’t have a particular kind of medium. I use whatever I come across. I am living in a world, which is at cross roads. There are lots of things that can be expressed differently at different times. So anything I feel like using I use. Mostly I work with found materials, found objects, paper, wood, and canvas. So it’s a combination of several things that are brought together.

Doris similarly explored a variety of media in both painting and print-making. This is in line with her contemporaries who also used a mixed media approach to art. The Duchampian philosophy (Honour & Fleming, 1995) about found objects comes into play as artists use
whatever material, natural or man-made, at their disposal. Artists have therefore experimented and explored possibilities rather than bemoaning limitations in media use. Installations and ready mades are a result of such innovation. Media such as wood, glass, ceramics, stone and paint have been used in various combinations as Chenjerai Mutasa explained in the following interview:

**Mamvuto:** To what extent are media and materials a limitation in your work? Are they a limitation?

**Mutasa:** It’s not a limitation. I always see possibilities because there is so much to be done and said. It’s only time that lacks.

**Mamvuto:** What about the media that you use in your work?

**Mutasa:** Usually it depends on the messages. Any found object, any strong medium I can be inspired to use, which could be stone, metal, glass, wood, even ceramics and plastics.

**Mamvuto:** In terms of techniques and approaches, some are realists, expressionists and so on. What techniques and approaches do you use?

**Mutasa:** It’s mainly realism because I feel God created us, the human race, in his own image which is the highest level to my understanding.

**Mamvuto:** What about in terms of the type of art, which one do you focus on? Some talk of abstract, some talk of installations, of conceptual type of art?
Mutasa: I am now into performance and wall hanging installations. It’s now some combination.

Mamvuto: So you combine a number of visual forms?

Mutasa: Yes, like I said, introducing performance, which can be seen as “viewing.” Some say for someone to come and see my artwork is not enough. But if I kind of unveil that part of my performance people might enjoy my work.

Chenjerai is into performance and wall hanging installations. This entails use of different materials, which also inspire him. Artists also experimented with materials found in their localities such as soil pigments, leaves and newspapers. These influence the techniques and approaches such as collage and the resultant archeological structures of the visual forms as defined from a modernist or post-modern perspective. Similarly, Chiko has no limitations as he argues:

I think I long moved from limitations because everything that you see, it means you can manipulate it to become what you want it to be. The only thing that we cannot create as artists is nature, but everything else we can manipulate. We can actually borrow from nature and twist things to make them what we want them to be. There are materials, which over the years have been branded as art materials. But when I look deeper into those materials, I realise that very few were meant for the artist, designed for the artist. Be it paint, be it tools that people use, or all those paints. All those materials were meant for other professions and not necessarily art. Let’s talk about print-making, for example. We have lino. Lino was not really meant for artists. Artists actually took it and
then used it and it worked for them, and now art-shops will sell lino. Lino was meant for flooring in ships and buildings, insulation in kitchens, but artists used that. The inks that are used therefore, were not really for us the fine artists. It’s for the printers who work in the industry. That’s the ink they use in newspaper and stuff, but we just borrow those things and start using them and they become ours. So, to be wanting to cry that there is no paint, there are no materials and stuff, is because they would have put themselves in a box where they simply want to be artists, which makes me come to how I define myself. I don’t think I am an artist, but I think I am just someone creative. Because an artist is one at times who becomes limited in terms of materials, but because I flow to other things, like I said, I paint, I print, I take photographs, I do performances, I do installations, I would see myself as somebody who is just creative. But my creativity is stronger on the visual side. So, I manipulate anything that one can see to mean what I want and that is all.

Mamvuto: I remember one of your installations you did long back “Tigere muupfu.”

Chazunguza: Yaah. I simply took mealie meal, heaped it up, and bread. But all I was saying again there was like, at that time, the crisis of mealie meal had not come around. There was mealie meal, there was bread. My main criticism was that we take mealie meal and bread as our metaphors for living good which I didn’t think at that time, even up to now I still think white mealie meal should be done away with, and things like bread should be done away with. Those are the
sources of our struggles sometimes. They bring us problems because we feel, if you don’t eat white bread you are poor. If you can’t afford white mealie meal, you are also poor.

**Mamvuto:** *Ngwerewere?* (refined white mealie meal?)

**Chazunguza:** *Ngwerewere* yaah, yaah. With the Aids thing coming in and stuff, you will realise people are now being encouraged not to eat white and refined mealie meal. People are now being encouraged not to eat refined bread, but to go back to our traditional foods. So that was my idea then, when I made the piece.

In his installation, *tigere muupfu*, Chiko explores a post-modern approach to visual expression. This is the approach also used by many contemporary artists in Africa, Europe, the Americas and in Oriental cultures. It would appear contemporary art follows the post-structuralist direction that has influenced all paradigmatic facets of life including the different forms of arts. Analysis of contemporary visual forms from the various traditions and cultures also reveals that artists have diversified the ways in which traditional media have been used. They have come up with innovative approaches such as pastiche instead of relying on the conventional ones as illustrated in Chiko’s work. Painting has been combined with sculpture, printmaking and photography. Artists have explored contemporary issues indigenous to their experiences using such media. Because of her open approach to media use, Doris similarly has no limitations in terms of materials and approaches. She elaborated:
Media is not a limitation to me because I believe anything is art, everything is art. So when there is no paint, I use soil pigments, different types of soil. If there is no paper I can use leaves, I use bark of a tree. I have no limitations because art is everywhere. It just needs me to be creative. That’s why there is installation art where you fill up a space which was originally empty. So even at home you can do something in an artistic manner. So it’s also part of art.

David similarly used anything at his disposal including found objects and thus had no limitations in terms of materials:

Mamvuto: To what extent are media and materials a limitation in your work?
Chinyama: To me its not. I try by all possible means to work with whatever that I have at that particular time. I don’t limit myself to certain mediums whereby like if I don’t have that medium then I cannot work. To me any day it’s a working day. Whatever I find at that particular time I can work. I can make art through what I have at that particular time. So I don’t have any limitations when it comes to materials.

Mamvuto: You can use anything?
Chinyama: Anything, yaah.

An assessment of artists’ operational parameters revealed that each of the artists who were observed had some working space. The space varied from a communal space (at Domboramwari Village and Arts Interactions) to individual studios. However, there was a general inadequacy of proper studio space. Charles Kamangwana used his dining room as a
studio space because his house was under renovations. Doris rented a studio at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe (though strategically located for marketing purposes) while Mutasa and Chazunguza had individual studios. The available space limited equipment that could be installed such as painting easels and printing press hence a lot of improvisation. This also limited the size of artwork one could work on. However, at the village artists took advantage of the open space and worked under trees. The main thatched structure provided the gallery space and was ideal for workshops. The artists’ use of the open space was in line with the massive nature of some artworks artists made such as wood, stone, metal and mixed media constructions, some of which were as tall as 1.5 metres and obviously required open space.

Although basic equipment was available in most studios, these were limited and artists had to improvise in some cases. Artists had to carry their weld art to where there was electricity. The recently established Domboramwari Village had no electricity and thus modern equipment such as electric grinders and drills to work on hard stones and metal could not be used. Artists had to use rasps, glass paper and hand drills as improvised substitutes. In all the studios that were examined, there were fairly adequate commercial art materials. However, the artists lamented the prohibitive costs of both equipment and materials despite the fact that artists improvised in most cases as also evidenced in interviews. The common materials and equipment include oil and acrylic paints, textile inks, different drawing media, a range of soft and hard bristle brushes, stone working tools such as chisels, saws, hammers and mallets, drills, found objects for constructions for example, pipes, metal sheets, and other discarded iron pieces, easels, canvases, and primer paints. These varied from studio to studio. Accessibility to a variety of media fostered experimentation, exploration, and innovation in the work that was produced. There was, however, no evidence of traditional materials such as the anthill clays.
The diversity of work observed reflected the diversity in the available materials, equipment, skills artists possessed, techniques and artists’ originality.

**Visual Media and Semiotic Representation**

Analyses of artworks involve the hermeneutic disciplines of semiotics and iconological analysis (Fernie, 1996; Barnet, 1997; Cheetham *et al.* 1998; Belsey, 2002; Eichelberger, 1989). According to Preziosi (1998) the analytical method of iconography (which first appeared in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century) is the precursor of semiology or semiotics, a post-World War II phenomenon developed in the 1970s. It derives from the term icon meaning an image. Iconography therefore according to Arnold (2004) connotes writing about images - interpretation of representations with apparent or symbolic meaning. This approach was useful in the visual analysis of participating artists’ works as visual images were subjected to deconstructive processes and procedures (Barthes in Thompson, 1995). Similarly, iconology is the study of images. Comparative Panofskian iconology and semiology, which is a tripartite system of signification-preiconographical, iconography and iconology, also focuses on visual symbol/sign systems and how these relate to social meanings or referential content attached to artworks (Preziosi, 1998). Chanda (1994) identifies four categories that are used in interpreting artworks. These are the primary meaning, the iconographic, the iconological and the metaphorical meaning. Both iconography and semiotics involve analysing how artworks, as visual symbols, yield significant meaning. These analytical processes were not an easy task as individual artists whose work was analysed portrayed their individuality consistent with post structuralist tendencies. As artists develop, their art also matures and becomes more complex requiring Panofsky’s intrinsic or iconological level of analysis (Cheetham *et al.*, 1998; Preziosi, 1998). Artists were observed
working on different art-forms such as paintings, prints and mixed media constructions. The work showed varied sources of inspiration and influences. The sources varied from local cultural influences to modern and Western inspiration. However, all work that artists were working on showed deliberate use of contemporary African idioms. These were, however, approached using pastiche of media, concepts, techniques and other visual codes. This is characteristic of the post-colonial project in most countries that were once colonised (Vogel, 1994; Stanislaus, 1996).

**Visual Media, Art-forms and Techniques**

Media and materials used by the artists were not restricted to the traditional oil paints and stone. Chenjerai Mutasa was into sculpture, both stone and wood as well as multi-media studies. He used a variety of stone: granite, serpentine, verdite and marble. He, however, used the hard stone (serpentine and granite) more because of its durability, availability and aesthetic appeal. Whilst most of his sculptures were free standing, he also carved high and low bas-relief sculptures. Besides exploiting the natural form of the stone, he banished and polished selected parts of the sculpture to bring out the contrast between the main image and its integral, supporting frame. He sometimes painted the sculpture using acrylics to create contrast or harmonise the various planes although he often exploited the natural colour of the stone. Chenjerai was also into multi-media constructions using mostly found objects such as discarded shovels, exhaust pipes, iron rods, car wheel rims, and axe blades. These were combined with wood and stone to come up with expressive constructions using welding, drilling, gluing, tying and bolting as some of the techniques. The work below exemplifies the multimedia approach that he used.
Chiko did painting in addition to sculptures and installations. However, his approach was a combination of painting media, acrylics and oils on canvas or card with found objects such as old car number plates, combs, wire and string. In addition, he used appliqué, collage, threading, screen-printing, junk printing using found objects, block printing and tearing and sewing, collaging of burnt paper and rolling. His approach was, therefore, a mixture of media and a combination of techniques. This is illustrated in the figure below.
David adopted a self-invented approach to painting. While he used acrylics on canvas, his approach involved thick application of wood glue, including splattering in both abstract and semi-abstract manner. Found objects such as combs were then used to serrate designs into the wet thick glue application before actual painting using hard bristle brushes when the glue was dry. The result was purely abstract and semi-abstract paintings such as the Victoria Falls, The Great Zimbabwe’s conical tower, township and squatter camp. The technique also involved applying soil granules onto the canvas using wood glue before painting. He sometimes collaged hessian or gauze material and card strips onto the canvas before painting. This helped create buildings and other organic forms and structures. He also applied glue granules using a palette knife creating low relief biomorphic forms.
Kamangwana and Doris painted directly onto the canvas or card. They rarely combined their paintings with any other technique. However, their techniques involved using sharp implements such as wire to scribble details on thickly applied paint. Artists were inspired by the environment as in Kamangwana’s landscape, which was similar to Monet’s canonical work *Impression sunrise (Le Havre) (1872)*, although in this case, Kamangwana’s landscape did not portray the sea.

The contemporary artists were also inspired by other historical artists, mainly Western. This was evident in approaches, media and styles. Not all modern art movements inspired artists. The predominant ones were however Impressionism, Dadaism and Abstract expressionism.

Fig 4.5: Charles Kamangwana. *Sunset* (2009). Acrylic on canvas. 45 cm x 90cm

The artists also experimented with various techniques and approaches to painting. However, the majority were semi-abstract painters and impressionists. Charles’ *Shoppers* was characteristic of Willem Dekooning’s work (abstract expressionist) while other works were impressionistic. This was also evident in Doris’ *Supper time* and *Plight for the rains* where there was arbitrary and expressive use of colour and techniques. Emphasis was put on communication of feelings through subjective colour use and individual techniques rather than accurate rendition of objects and forms.
Visual Content and Metaphorical Representation

Subject matter can be equated to iconography. In order to determine iconography, formal and stylistic qualities were analysed. Form is the primary vehicle for the essence or meaning of a work of art. Most works that were analysed revealed that iconographic meaning related to the Zimbabwean context and artists’ experiences. There were particular iconographic images peculiar to social classes. For example, some pictorial images were reflective of the disadvantaged social class in society and this was depicted in paintings such as *The vendor* by Kamangwana and *Home bound* by Doris.

The human form was the predominant subject that was depicted. It was depicted in various linguistic forms, from representational to abstract images as suggested by semioticians such as Roland Barthes and Umberto Eco. Most of Chenjerai’s sculptures, whether in the round or relief, were either representational or semi-abstract. Old men and young women from African settings were mostly portrayed. The men were generally depicted white bearded and grey haired while women were bare breasted and were either naked or half dressed, emphasizing male gaze, authority and possession over women, a phenomenon prevalent in most African cultures. This is illustrated in the sculpture below by Chenjerai Mutasa. The subject matter was based on social commentary and rarely did artists portray mythological themes and subjects in the manner the first generation artists such as Joramu Mariga, Richard Mteki, John Takawira and Thomas Mukarobgwa did. The subject matter in Mutasa’s stone sculpture was more direct and surface deep, at least in terms of visual images.

However, in the multi-media constructions the content was more complex as reflected in the unusual combination of materials, techniques and approaches. The rough, unpolished and crudity of materials left in their original state, added character and expressiveness to the visual
forms. In most of the constructions, human body parts such as feet, hands, eyes or the head were metaphorically represented. These were often in abstract form. These elements have cultural significance in most African cultures. For example, the vigilant eyes and shut mouth in the Don culture normally portray alertness and watchful guardian spirit (Herold, 1990). Chisel incisings, wavy-lines, and straight lines were left to add character to the unpolished sections of the stone.

Fig 4.6: Chenjerai Mutasa. *Rib of Adam* (2007). Green Serpentine. 50 x 30 x 30 cm
Modernity was portrayed in Mutasa’s construction of modern musical instruments such as the guitar, which combined a car wheel rim, shovel and cupboard door handles. A violin was constructed combining a stone human head, iron rods, wire and cogwheel. The techniques employed varied with subject matter. Female figures showed agility and free flowing feminine gestural lines, curves and contours while male figures portrayed masculinity and humility. Facial expression was approached in some conventionalised way with wide open eyes and an alert look.

In David’s canvases, the subject matter was either abstract from everyday scenes such as landscapes, townships or semi-abstract human forms. The rusty browns, yellows and golden tinted blue or orange sunset skies depicted the African light, an aspect he said he fully exploits. An almost similar approach and subject matter was portrayed by Charles. Charles’ work is social commentary where he depicts people drinking opaque beer, vending, squatter camps as well as landscapes and cityscapes. In her canvases, Doris also portrayed social issues such as gossiping and travel by foot, for example, *Home bound*. She however incorporated abstraction to further express herself about the marginalised groups. Her approach to multi-media constructions was similar to Chenjerai’s where she used wood, stone, metal and found objects.
Fig 4.7: Doris Kampira. *Home Bound* (2007). Mixed media painting on paper. 24 x 24 cm

Fig 4.8: Charles Kamangwana. *The Vendor* (2009). Acrylic on paper. 40 x 60cm
Chiko dealt with African beliefs, social issues and myths in abstract forms. His works included silkscreen prints, which were realistically presented as in Andy Warhol’s *Marilyn* (1962). In other paintings, he used Baselitz’s up-side down orientation. The predominant approach in his articulation of social issues is the automatism in child art similar to Paul Klee, De Kooning and Kandinsky’s approaches. Chiko also portrays war issues as evidenced in screen-printed refugees in transit and the inclusion of the inscription “Yangu Africa” (My Africa) as well as skeletal figures. In some paintings, he portrays rural life through conventional images such as the cockerel, abstracted cattle kraal and the bull as in Picasso’s *Guernica* (1937). Picasso’s work depicts in visual form, the suffering of the Spanish people through images that transcend human imagination and consciousness. To achieve this, he used fragmented human and animal body parts with a symbolic eye represented by the sun and a characteristic bull’s head. Similarly, Chiko uses a parallel technique and approach of fragmentation.

Colour schemes, although personally derived, were congruent to those used by his colleagues—browns, golden yellows, blues and reds. However, black tended to dominate his paintings.

From a semiotic and morphological analysis of artworks by the artists, the following summary of observations was made about their studio practice. The art-forms revealed that individual artists were not restricted to a few selected particular art-forms nor their areas of specialisation. An artist would venture into visual forms such as oil painting, printing, metal sculpture, wood sculpture and installations. For example, Chiko is a photographer, graphic artist and sculptor while Charles is a graphic artist, print-maker and sculptor. Metal sculptures were characterised by abstraction, although certain features were discernible such as in Doris’ *Mother and child, Hoola hoop and The Drummer*. Found metal pieces that were used include oil filters, exhaust pipes, pistons and pulleys. Semi-abstraction marked the majority of artworks that were analysed, particularly, weld art. Chiko was into multi-media and paintings. David was predominantly into painting. Doris had prints, paintings, wood and metal sculptures as well as mixed media constructions. Charles was predominantly into painting, printmaking and sculpture while Chenjerai produced stone and metal sculptures. Chiko and Chenjerai also experimented with new art-forms- performances and installations that have not been in the realm of African art.

Artists produced art for art’s sake- a form of Western aesthetics as traditional African art was mostly functional. The artworks were meant for the gallery. This was semiotic change from the traditional functional art to the gallery narrative, in which complex symbolic work was produced. All artists had exhibited internationally and had received formal art training. This seemed to point at Western aesthetics influence and patronage. To some extent, Western taste dictated iconography as these works were not wholly African, Zimbabwean in particular.
There was deviation from traditional concepts and iconography in favour of more eclectic contemporary ones. There was less portrayal of ethnic cultural identities. A new approach to mixed media is combining visual media such as bones, horns, stone and metal. Although this approach is not new in African art, the media that were combined were, however, uncommon in African visual expression. There was limited use of traditional and indigenous materials.

The artworks were diverse in terms of visual forms, styles, approaches, techniques, media use, subject matter and sources of inspiration. The diversity also reflected the different factors and paradigms of symbolisation that impacted on artists’ practice. The majority of artists seemed to have been significantly influenced by Western perceptions about art than African ways of perceiving it. Although some artists were not aware of some of the underlying theoretical bases as evidenced in the interviews, these artistic theories and orientations had profound impact on their practice. Thus, modern art historical epochs such as Abstract Expressionism and post-modern discourses, for example, pastiche and bricolage impacted on visual styles, media use and ways of interpreting a visual form. This could be traced to the effect of acculturation since all artists who were studied were widely travelled and had participated at various international fora. They could have adopted some of these styles during their visits to different places. Most works that were analysed embodied symbolic meanings and portrayed some emotional import. They were not descriptive of objects as observed in nature. Most were semi-abstract, where objects such as the human form could be clearly identified, but the meaning remained personal and symbolic. Subject matter based on social, political or economic influences were depicted at the self-consciousness level.

Only two artists depicted the landscape, which could still be interpreted as portraying the artist’s level of aesthetic experience of the landscape. This is the complexity involved in
understanding expressive visual forms leading to relativity of meaning. Some artworks showed the influence of Afrocentricism. The role of Zimbabwean tradition was evident mainly in themes and subject matter although the subjects were eventually treated using Western approaches. It was, therefore, difficult to separate Western and local influences in most works. Since the artists are living in a country “at cross-roads”, according to David Chinyama, the impact of syncretism could not be avoided. The artists experimented with non-indigenous art-forms such as installations and performances, and with the use of non-traditional media and techniques such as welding and mixed media. Despite all the influences, some contemporary hegemonic Zimbabwean influence was evident. From the images, themes, subject matter and styles, the artworks could easily be identified as modern Zimbabwean expressive forms.

**Hermeneutic Social Commentary**

Data revealed that artists used a variety of themes and diverse sources of inspiration. However, general themes emanated from artists’ daily life experiences, what happens in society particularly the economic, political and social issues. Some artists also drew their subject matter from how they relate to other artists and their interpretation of social phenomena. The themes Chiko works on normally depend on what will be inspiring him at the time. He, however, normally deals with everyday issues, in particular things people discuss and things that deal with their lives. These oscillate between social and political issues as he explained:

> It depends on what will be inspiring me at that time, but normally I deal with everyday issues and in particular things that people discuss at that particular time. And if you think about what is happening now it will most probably be
what deals with people’s lives which then becomes maybe more political to a certain level, but normally I deal with social issues.

He, however, denied being a social commentator, for according to him, a commentator “would actually say what is happening, but I can sometimes show solutions.” He illustrated his source of inspiration:

Mainly social issues and the imbalances that go with it. People have their aspirations kind of blocked by others or other systems and I think for me, I kind of bring out issues that might not just narrate what is happening, but that might also incite that mentality of wanting to move on to something better.

Mamvuto: So, can I call you a social commentator?

Chazunguza: Not a commentator. A commentator would actually say what is happening but I can sometimes show solutions. I am more into solutions. I expose certain things as happening and I give solutions rather than just criticising what is happening or saying out what is happening.

His work, to a certain extent, depicts societal issues and offers solutions rather than just criticism and description of what would be happening. He also believes that he is not an artist, but someone more creative on the visual side. This is a contemporary philosophical position defining an artist and his practice. Chiko is also inspired by the notion of Afrocentricism as he espoused, “All I think is I am an African, who is inspired by African ways of looking at images and that is how I work. I simply try to suck out information from my traditions and my roots.”
Some artists were also inspired by their local environments and surroundings. In her work, Doris normally dealt with ‘mother and child’, women in society, and in the business sectors. She however, denied that she is a feminist:

**Kampira:** No, I am not a feminist but I feel I am a voice for others who cannot say much for themselves or that kind of work which is important and is not recognised or is taken for granted and people say it’s men’s stuff and never get appreciated. I believe that people need time to relax and get to know how women also contribute in the world.

**Mamvuto:** What themes do you normally deal with in your work?

**Kampira:** The themes I normally deal with are mother and child, women in society, in the business sectors and also in the community.

**Mamvuto:** And generally what is your source of inspiration?

**Kampira:** I get most of my ideas from the community and as I move from place to place. Sometimes I attend workshops around the country, other countries, regionally and internationally. So you get to have a different look at situations in different countries but I am mainly focusing on the mother and child.

Like other artists, Charles is generally inspired by his environment that includes people around him and his daily routines which he articulates thus:
My general source of inspiration is my surrounding, where I come from, the people I live with, or where I go to work and all my daily routines. I really observe a lot about what is happening, why people are doing that, postures of people. Human character is my main source of inspiration.

**Mamvuto:** Some people say they dream before they do their work, what about you?

**Kamangwana:** I don’t dream, I would be quite honest. I actually paint what is in front of me, what I see. Of course, I sometimes do a lot of imaginative work, scenes I have seen before but not really like working from dreams.

**Mamvuto:** So you mostly work from observation?

**Kamangwana:** Most of my work I do from imagination. I do some sketches sometimes but I don’t normally paint as it is on the sketches. Sometimes I just combine the sketches to come up with the composition.

Charles’ themes are based on daily scenes, be it rural or urban settings. He mostly works on what will be in front of him, that is, what he sees and observes. Sometimes he works from imagination of scenes he has seen before, but not from dreams as claimed by some traditionalists.

The aspiration to reveal what is happening in society, is a driving force to most artists. Their own cultural beliefs and experiences as Africans also inspire and influence their work. In order to understand their future, they needed to understand and reflect on their past. Chenjerai normally deals with social issues relevant to his religion, what people say and the testimony of
yesterday’s life. His general source of inspiration is, therefore, life as it manifests itself through people. It is about people’s lives and the mistakes they make so that they can correct the future. He argues:

Mutasa: I touch mainly on social issues, which are normally relevant to me, my religion, what people say, the testimony of yesterday’s life.

Mamvuto: What is your general source of inspiration?

Mutasa: It’s life that manifests itself through people. That’s where I get my inspiration.

Mamvuto: How would you describe your art, is it commentary, self-expression or documentary?

Mutasa: It’s social like I said in the beginning. I touch on people’s lives, mistakes we make so that we can correct the future.

Similarly, David has developed his own Zimbabwean style that he has christianed visual poetry. It is abstract, expressionist and experimental as he works in different media and found materials such as paper, wood and canvas. His work focuses on social, religious and economic issues as sources of visual phenomena. He also sees his work as more of a commentary of what happens within society- a social fact. His own life also has effect on his work. It’s like a story of what is happening within the society:

Normally my work focuses more on social, religious and economic issues happening around me. I see my work as more commentary of what happens within the society I am living in every day, the people’s lives, people around me.
My life itself has effect on my work. So it’s like a story of what is happening within the society I am living in.

The artist also gets his inspiration from a political dimension:

Sometimes I feel like the ordinary man out there cannot be heard. So that gives me the platform to be the voice of the people. Since I live with the people I hear what they say everyday. So through my art I see it as a medium that I can use to put across the message that I might have heard from someone in a visual form, in a visual way.

Thus the main inspirational issues David identified were economic and political because Zimbabwe, according to him, is at cross-roads:

Well, I think everyone within our society especially in Zimbabwe right now and the world over can tell that, well, economically and politically there has been a lot happening in Zimbabwe. So to me I feel like the other people out there especially the ordinary people, the ordinary man cannot be heard. That gives me the platform to be the voice of the people. Since I live with the people I hear what they say each and every day. So through my art I see it as a medium that I can use to put across the message that I might have heard from someone but in a visual form, in a visual way. That is a place that can at least attract each viewer unlike just saying it verbally, sometimes some people won’t give you a chance. Maybe in a visual form, in colour. A picture can attract somebody’s attention.
Visual expression by the artists was inspired by social, economic, religious and political issues congruent to what Vogel (1994) observed. Such diverse sources of inspiration also resulted in diverse art-forms and interpretations. Chiko acknowledged the role of commodification of art in his practice. Although visual practice is supposed to be directed by individuals producing unique pieces, the issue of the market directing one’s production cannot be completely dismissed. A market-driven approach to art is not an unusual phenomenon among artists. Moustapha Dime cited in McEvilley (1993) explains how he attempted to have his multi-media works on the international market. He went to the extent of asking the Minister of culture to facilitate an exhibition for him to attract an audience. Galleries, museums and art collectors are part of the large matrix of the market-oriented debate. Succinctly, artists are also there to earn a living out of their work (Freeland, 2001). Similar to Chiko’s installations are graffitists Jean-Michel Basquiat’s and Barry McGee’s art that is usually done in subways, under bridges and in public places such as walls. Such work has also eventually got a market orientation. According to Freeland (1993), the German artist Hans Haacke has made commercialisation the prime motive behind art production.

The artists were also influenced by the Western avant-garde. Modernist approaches and techniques such as those practised by Western artists like Pablo Picasso, Wassily Kandinsky and Piet Mondrian inspired artists. Charles argued: “…I will give an example of the old masters, Van Gogh and Rembrandt. I am inspired by them in a way…” Western influence was also noted in the art-forms that were practised and diversity in media and approaches. Influence of the West on African art is not a recent phenomenon as early missionaries to Africa influenced artists who were under their workshops and schools in most countries such as Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe (Kennedy, 1992; Willet, 1993).
Art and Multicultural Expression

Doris is inspired by her culture. In addition, she sometimes attends workshops around the country and in other countries - regionally and internationally. These places have offered her a different look at situations and have subsequently inspired her. She is partially influenced by other cultures as she explained:

I look at other people, how they do their things and that adds up to my type of art. I sometimes experiment with other people’s cultures, how they look at things in their communities, their type of art. I mix it and experiment with my own type of art. And so I like associating myself with other cultures so that I get new ideas or I get a fresh mind to work on something different. I don’t want my art to be stagnant and use one technique or type of art. You will find that my first and early prints I did them plainly, now you will find that sometimes I mix them with other media. I feel that I need to speak out through different types of media. You will find that my prints are now in mixed media. I also get influence from other artists from other countries or their art beliefs.

Intertextuality in art is a post-modern approach that has become popular among artists. Various media, cultural codes and meanings are superimposed in the process of creating and interpreting phenomena. Such inter-cultural learning as echoed by most contemporary artists who believe one’s culture is insufficient to fully express oneself. She gave an example of sculptures she made while in Zambia which she refers to below:
Yes, sure because you find some interesting images like last time I was in Zambia and I made a sculpture. I was inspired by the Zambezi river from that side. They have much belief in the Nyami nyami (a snake river god). Most of my sculpture I was doing there were sort of Nyami nyami as well. Even the titles I was giving these were more of whatever they have belief in.

All artists in this study acknowledged the undeniable influence of acculturation on visual practice. Some even denied that there was anything like truly African art and, therefore, artists should have the latitude to borrow from other cultures. Vogel (1991) calls this cultural plagiarism. It therefore means art is never static. It is always in some state of transit and can be located on an elastic continuum. Art therefore has some temporal designation as it is transitional. In elaboration of his point, Chiko argues that:

When they [images from other cultures] mean something in my art I borrow them. Like when you say borrowing we might talk of something simple and direct like say collage. I can pick a picture from a magazine and use it depending on what is on that picture and what it means. I would pick it and use it directly. But I rarely create images as they are portrayed in other cultures. If I want it I just get it as a picture, I get it as an object and use it directly. I don’t want to be involved in the making of it because I don’t feel for it.

Visual codes should, therefore, not be culture bound. In case of appropriated codes, these should be used according to how individual artists would like to express themselves and should not be used directly as they are understood in their cultures. Chiko believes that no one is
insulate of acculturation as we live in a society where we mix with other people and other cultures. The artist himself went to Eurocentric schools and had his art training in Bulgaria. He argues that everything around us is not really reflective of our thinking. It is ideally Western. He, however, argued that he tries to minimise this influence as much as possible when he notes:

No one can really avoid acculturation. We live in a society where we kind of mix with other people and other cultures. And besides, being Zimbabwean, I went to euro-centric schools. And I was trained outside, in European schools again. Everything around us is not really reflective of our thinking, it’s more Western. So, that influence is already there in us. But the fact that I have realised that, I try and use as little of it as possible. If I could, I would actually rub it all off but because that would be like drastic change, that would be dangerous. I try not to use that which I am consciously aware to be like foreign because it's there. I still use paint, I still use objects that are of European descent that I have mentioned. It’s there.

Regarding visual images, Chiko deconstructs the cited pictorial examplers and does not use them as they are portrayed in their cultures of origin. He only uses them as they help him create his own visual form. Artists generally adapt conventions and practices from other cultures rather than take them wholesome. They balance imitation of other traditions and their own inventive capabilities. An analysis of art from many African cultures shows the influence of Westernisms that were creative and selectively adopted. Commenting on the influence of acculturation on his art, Mutasa elaborates thus:
Mutasa: To me I feel in every race or culture there is a crystal in there. So it could be interpreted in different languages but to me it’s all one. Like there are so many kingdoms so I feel it is one language.

Mamvuto: So you are basically saying you are influenced by other cultures because it’s basically one language?

Mutasa: I try and search for a common denominator. At times I see it and I feel like twelve tribes coming together again and not being scattered.

Chenjerai’s comment came from his religious affiliation, which he shares with several other artists the researcher found at the village. Influence is not always from outside. Sometimes it is intra-cultural and this has always been the springboard to inter-cultural learning. Art is a reflection of the beliefs, norms and values of a culture. There is, however, doses of incremental changes in cultural assimilation as artists practice their art. As he elaborates, Chenjerai is influenced by his own African traditional culture,

Yes, it does play a big role because for me to know my future I need to know my past and I do give some titles to my work in my mother language which proves that it [my culture] plays a big role.

David believes that his culture has a significant role to play in his art and the art industry in general. However, as much as he would want to confine himself to his culture, Western culture also has a significant part to play in his art and provided below is his explanation:
Chinyama: Well, culture has a lot of effect on my work even the way of living itself. It’s like we Africans have other things that we believe in as a society. As an artist living in that society there are other things that influence my work. I try to bring out those aspects of our lives. So culture has a big part in the art industry. It’s like they are intertwined, they are inter-linked. You cannot do away with the culture aspect as far as art is concerned.

Mamvuto: Are you influenced by the Western culture? If so, how does it show in your work?

Chinyama: Yes it does. I have travelled a lot. Each and every place I have travelled to has some effect on my work. It might be the environment or the language itself. The type of art sometimes does inspire me. It has effect on my work. So I try to bring nearly everything, as people are now living in a global village. So I believe there are no barriers now whereby people call this African art. It has to be appealing to everyone.

It was noted that Western culture had more influence than other African cultures. This was because as observed by most artists, our lives as Africans are significantly influenced by Western ways of life. Some artists even studied Western art history and this has had a direct bearing on their approaches and use of media. Acculturation had influence on visual imagery, media and materials, techniques and approaches as evidenced in the semiotic and linguistic analysis of their work. Artists, therefore, experimented with non-indigenous art-forms such as
installations as they produced contemplative art. Modern Western art seemed to have greater influence on how artists practised. Kamangwana elaborates on this:

**Mamvuto:** Does your culture play any role in your art?

**Kamangwana:** I would say to a certain extent because when you look at our culture, for example, we are not a people who are pornographic. The way you were brought up is reflected in your work. I can refer to my fellow artists who are Christians. In their paintings you can see that they grew up in church.

**Mamvuto:** To what extent are you influenced by other cultures, by acculturation, be it Zimbabwean or non-Zimbabwean?

**Kamangwana:** The influence which I see from other cultures is like, I will give an example of the old masters’, Van Gogh and Rembrandt. I am inspired by them in the way they depicted how they used to live during their times which I want do a lot. They are like diaries and recordings that will be seen in the days to come. So I really want to make sure that I record properly how people are living. We are going to lose all these people who are around. We are going to lose all the landscapes and buildings. So it would be nice to have these recordings.

Most of the artists interviewed had formal art training and this impacted positively on their practice. All of them went through the National Gallery of Zimbabwe and were significantly influenced by the institution. This shows the centrality of the national art institution in
determining art practice in the country. Because of their participation in exhibitions, workshops and symposiums, most artists had been significantly influenced by their contemporaries and other cultures. Acculturation was, therefore, a critical factor in visual expression. Several studies from the 1970s to the present such as by Roberts (1979), Arnold (1980), Rogers (1986), Moyo (1989), Osegi (1991) among others, acknowledge the pervasive power of Western cultural artistic practices on African art including Zimbabwean. Art was not found to be restricted to traditional art-forms: sculpture and painting, but artists experimented with new non indigenous art-forms.

**Visual Media, Techniques and Object Representation**

It was observed that most artists experimented with abstract expressionism, impressionism and realism, not as epochal notions but as approaches to visual practice. The techniques and approaches, however, depended much on what was inspiring the artists and the available media and materials. A commission, for example, would require particular techniques and media to be used, which might not have been the artist’s choice. Charles’ work is mostly impressionistic although not limited to such an approach.

**Kamangwana:** Well, I would describe [my art] as impressionistic but it’s also quite versatile. I do change depending on the subject matter I am dealing with. Sometimes I am working in a very fine mood and you find that my colours are happy and more colourful and sometimes I use dark colours depending on the mood.
Mamvuto: But when I look at your work in terms of colour, you are on the brighter side. I see reds, primary colours and so on?

Kamangwana: Yes, actually I mostly use primary colours, red, yellow, blue and black and white. Those are my colours and all the other colours come out from them. I like to mix my own colours.

Mamvuto: How do you mix your colours, on the canvas itself or on the palette?

Kamangwana: Sometimes I mix on the canvas and sometimes I mix on a palette and apply on the canvas depending on the kind of tone or depth of the colour, which I want. Some colours need to be mixed separately and sometimes on the canvas.

Charles sometimes works from sketches although he does not paint as rendered in the preliminary studies. He also sketches using drawing media on painted canvases to come up with mixed media and approaches in the final compositions. His work is versatile. When working in a fine mood, his palette tends to be bright and colourful as opposed to when he is down and the colour scheme is subdued. He usually paints directly on the canvas although he also mixes paints on the palette. Some patrons would want artwork that they can relate to, mostly realist, and that has influenced Charles’ choice of media, techniques and approaches. This was mainly because his approach made it easy for people to relate to it as he explained:

My work has attracted a lot of attention in other people. It’s not only attracting attention to tourists or art collectors from overseas but also from local people,
because they can actually see themselves and can relate to my work. This is much stronger because people want to see what they can identify with, what they know and feel. This makes it much stronger unlike if I am completely abstract because our people are still coming to learn about art. They don’t know much about what it is, why someone would paint like that. If you paint something very abstract, you have something too advanced. It’s not the thing here because people here did not do art appreciation or art education. They are not adequately exposed to that abstract art.

Some artists produced experimental art outside the traditional sculptures and paintings. They were also not confined to specific art-forms, techniques and approaches. These varied depending on what was inspiring them and their feelings at the moment. For example, Doris’ work is abstract expressionist. This is evident in the following comment:

**Kampira:** I focus on Abstract expressionism. So you find my work is half abstract. Sometimes you can visualise women and children but it will be very abstract in the way I represent.

**Mamvuto:** How then would you describe your art?

**Kampira:** Well, I can say my art is to do with the community. It’s supposed to be humorous. Sometimes you find I might make a painting or a print of a woman carrying a baby. You find the baby is like falling on the back, just to make it a bit humorous, just to make it funny, to attract the eye. Or I make a
print of an ordinary woman doing ordinary things. People say what’s funny about that, we see it everyday, what is there to tell? So you have to add a little bit of humour on what you really want to say.

Since she focuses on the subject of women, she likes expressing how they may feel about what they do in the community.

The artists that were visited and interviewed were generally influenced by attitudinal, expression and institutional theories of art where art is defined by social institutions, and is seen as a social fact or phenomenon. Some were influenced by the theory of Afrocentricism similarly observed by Mc Evilley (1989), Vogel (1994) and Kennedy (1992), among others. Such theories influenced the artists’ perception of visual expression, the art-forms they produced, techniques and approaches as well as media and materials which tended to favour locally available materials and African interpretive themes.

**Mamvuto:** Do you have any artistic theories, which you think influence your work. Like some say anything can be a work of art.

**Chinyama:** I tend to believe the same thing that anything can be a work of art. For it to be what it is, it shows someone is thinking. As a painter, I believe everything around us has colour and the beauty of everything that I see in an artistic way. It might be clothing, the environment, landscape, and buildings. To me it's art. I see art in everything. The way our life changes is art.

**Mamvuto:** Do you have any artistic theories, which you feel influence your art?
Kampira: Whatever I was taught at the Visual Arts School, I sometimes use that in my work. Especially in workshops I can use anything that I find interesting. You just join it here and there and you come back to the theories that you have been taught at school… Sometimes you also need to follow the principles so that it will become art for others not only for me because I enjoy art but for others it won’t be so. You need to create good ground for everyone to actually appreciate it also using the theories in order to have your art appreciated.

Visual practice was also characterised by the unusual handling of media. Their value for money influenced their practice of art hence the approaches they employed. Chiko argued that artists have to make a good living through selling their artworks. This comes out clearly in what he observes:

Chazunguza: Well, I am one of those people who don’t really follow what other so-called artists have said before or what kind of drove them into certain things in certain areas. I feel artists have to make a good living. One has to sell because you are not doing things for charity. Even pastors make money. So artists have to as well. Personally I feel I need to make money from my art, but as much as I say that I don’t let the market control what I do. I have realised over the years what really propelled my development in terms of how I manipulate and how I deal with images. If I sold something I would in my mind subconsciously say I want to do something that they might not buy. I twist that thing, I want to twist it some more. So I keep twisting things some more and people keep buying. So my work develops faster in my images and style. So I
am not really controlled by the buyer, I am not controlled by what people are buying. I simply do things and put them there. If people buy them, that’s fine. If they don’t, I twist some more. That is how I developed. I would not simply do things because people are buying them. I would actually do things which people mostly don’t buy like installations. Installations don’t really sell. But I feel I express myself much more in installations and that would give value to my other work that might be saleable.

The fact that he ventured into installations shows that he was also into art for art’s sake, as installations do not really sell. Chiko does not necessarily repeat themes that sell well except in print-making where one can make editions. His industrial approach to production is congruent to what popular artists such as Andy Warhol did during the 1960s when he produced several screen-printed portraits like *Marilyn Monroe (1962)* assisted by several people. Clement Greenberg however construed this repetitive art as ‘kitsch.’ Freeland (2001) quotes Clement Greenberg as saying this low art, emanates from application of prescriptive methods and processes in art production and does not result in a masterpiece. While the work might be popularised under the auspices of the avant-garde, it can have several editions and series such as Andy Warhol’s *Brillo boxes*, and Kinkade’s commercial designs like calendars and tapestries.

Art is matter of choice. There is really no high or low art in the postmodern perspective.

**Chazunguza:** No, I don’t [repeat themes] but with prints you know you make an edition of those prints. At times, one is limited by the resources needed to make the print. I can take it to someone who can then reproduce it like two fold, what I could have produced myself. I don’t see anything bad about that. I take it to a
company. This company does screen-printing. They work according to my specifications. So instead of making six prints with my hands, those people make like twenty or fifty prints for me.

The majority of the artists, however, stated that they valued self-expression more than financial gains. Doris argued, “I believe art is not for money but for self-expression and so money comes second.” All artists, concurred that though money was important, it should not be the sole determinant of one’s visual practice. Themes should not be wholly client driven. Art should not be repeated if it is to be considered authentic.

The issue of commodifying art sometimes has influence on David’s art. He sometimes repeats artworks that he is commissioned by clients:

Chinyama: Yaah, sometimes you are forced [to repeat]. Like clients may come to you and say, “I saw that painting at somebody’s place, can you do it for me?” Well, I tend to do kind of follow that but I try by all means possible to make each and every piece different. There might be similarities in some way but I want each and every piece to be unique and different.

This was one of the determinants to visual practice among some artists, although a few did it for monetary gains as Charles expressed. Charles believes a good work of art should be considered first before monetary considerations and given below are his reasons:

Kamangwana: As much as you know everyone needs to get something. But what actually comes first is good work. If I make a nice painting, that nice
painting is going to create three more interested people. So if you only look at the money the painting will not last. They may buy it today but will throw it away. So I would want to have one nice painting that will generate ten more customers because it’s good.

**Mamvuto:** If you produce a good painting that fetches good monies, are you likely to repeat that painting?

**Kamangwana:** Well, repeating is not very much encouraged. Artists do that sometimes but it’s not recommended. What I would do if I were so much into that painting is, I would change it somehow, alter it so that it is not the same. It could be a series but not exactly the same.

**Mamvuto:** Like some of the sculptures that we normally see with the theme “mother and child?”

**Kamangwana:** Then it has lost its touch and value, because there is too much repetition.

Charles was against repetition of themes or works that seem to have sold well as this leads to artists producing crafts. He suggested that if an artist was so much into a particular painting, he or she should change it somehow, alter it so that it does not look the same. He cited an example of the “mother and child” theme which he felt had been over explored. On commodification of art, Mutasa was against the notion saying:
I don’t believe in that [commodification of art] because you don’t grow. Every piece should be original. It should say its own story not to be graded by the buyers or why this one was sold faster than these ones.

Summary
Views from contemporary artists about their studio practice have been discussed. The artists had diverse experiences in visual practice. Having gone through the BAT and having been exposed to international art, their art emerged to be diverse, pluralistic and eclectic. Western influence played a critical role in determining the art genres that the artists practised as well as the use of media, approaches and techniques. However, on the whole, the artists were inspired by African themes, particularly Zimbabwean, though, they are executed using modern Western approaches. The artists had no limitations in terms of media as evidenced in the range of media they used and artworks they produced. It was observed that the artists were more open in their approaches to art, that is, art-forms, processes, media and concept of art practice.

In the next chapter I analyse art curricula in teachers’ colleges in search for evidence of infusion of contemporary art.
Chapter Five

Contemporary Art in Teachers’ Colleges

Introduction

In several countries, contemporary art is a phenomenon that has pervaded educational institutions at various levels. In colleges of education in particular, contemporary art has been integrated into the curriculum as lecturers prepare student teachers majoring in art who in turn are expected to teach it in schools. Both schools and colleges of education have on various occasions interacted with contemporary artists, particularly during exhibitions and guided tours to artists’ studios. In this chapter, findings on the teaching of contemporary art in the colleges of education in Zimbabwe are presented. These are presented under two major sources of data, that is, document analysis and interviews with art lecturers. The documents are analysed college by college. Findings from art lecturers are presented under themes, such as, Western oriented art curricula mapping, resource needs marring scaling up infusion of contemporary art, impediments to implementation of contemporary art programmes, and curricula relevance an eclectic pedagogical framework. A summary of the major findings from the two sources is then presented, collating all the findings.

Curricula Documents from Riverton Teachers’ College

The Syllabus Preamble

The preamble indicates that it is a two-year post ‘A’ level pre-service course. However, the majority of students who got into the subject did not have relevant art background such as “O”
or “A” level qualifications. The preamble also puts emphasis on development of “skills of appreciation, versatility and media handling, interpretation and manipulation of the visual aesthetic environment focusing on the concepts of art and design.”

**Syllabus Aims and Objectives**

The aims focused on classroom practice, the environment and development of general creativity, and the society’s appreciation of art. It would appear there was no deliberate attempt to focus on local, traditional and contemporary art in Zimbabwe. Such aims would have helped focus the objectives, content, methodology, and assessment procedures.

There were twelve broad objectives that could be categorised as follows, based on their general thrust:

i) Understanding the discipline

ii) Practical appreciation (Studio practice)

iii) Classroom practice (Methodology)

iv) Subject appreciation

v) History of art and design (chronology)

It would appear that not much was reflected about local art, both traditional and contemporary. The objectives were supposed to direct the content.

**Syllabus Content**

The content can be categorised into four broad areas:
1. **Art and design theory and education**: The focus was on concepts and constructs found in the discipline. It encompassed aesthetics and criticism, child art and current curricula approaches, such as DBAE and Critical Studies.

2. **Art history**: Of the six areas, five were on Western art while only one was on African art (Egyptian, Southern African art, Zimbabwean Art). This is the content found in the ‘O’ level syllabus and tested in the theory paper.

3. **Studio courses**: These included creative crafts, textiles and fabrics, ceramics, sculpture, drawing and painting, printing, graphic design and lettering, Craft, Design and technology (CDT).

4. **Professional Studies**: This focused on classroom domains such as syllabus interpretation, scheming, planning, assessment and research, and teaching methods.

**Teaching Approaches/Strategies**

These were many and diverse. They included visits to museums, galleries, art centres, industrial and commercial centres, fieldwork, resource persons, project work, video and films, and practical demonstrations. The methods relate very well to teaching of contemporary art and studio practice.

**Examinations**

The structure of the theory examination was such that there were two sections: art education and art history. Most questions were on art education and classroom practice, analysis of artworks and classroom organisation. Few questions were on art history, particularly Western. Very few were on Zimbabwean art such as the following:
• Evaluate how Zimbabwean stone sculpture mirrors the society that spawned it; and
• Using two canonical works by the artist Picasso, describe the impact that Cubism has had on modern trends, giving specific examples from Zimbabwe.

The structure of the paper was such that concepts and constructs outside art education and art history were not tested. There was a host of these concepts as reflected in the syllabus.

No practical examination questions related to contemporary practice.

**Curriculum at RTC Versus Contemporary Art**

An analysis of curricula documents at RTC (Syllabus, examinations, teaching programmes) revealed that there were several disciplinary concepts and constructs related to studio skills. These were reflected in the aims, objectives and content and implicitly in the teaching methods. However, it was also evident that there were few concepts and constructs related to contemporary art in Zimbabwe. These were clearer in examination questions than in the syllabus. The teaching programmes were also not explicit as to the extent of coverage of aspects relating to Zimbabwean art. For example, in the 2007-2008 projected programmes covering five terms, only one topic implicitly related to contemporary art and was stated as ‘Art history (African)’ which was too broad for the projected programme. Visual aesthetics and criticism as listed topics could imply African aesthetics, but there was no deliberate attempt to state it as such. The other topics appeared to be too general and did not give an indication as to what concepts could be drawn from contemporary art, for example, philosophy of art and design, language and expression in art and value of art and design. The topics could have been more precise.
Curricula Documents from Kingsdale Teachers’ College

Academic Study Syllabus Aims and Objectives

The aims were stated covering philosophy and history of art and design, development of creativity, appreciation, art criticism and exploration of materials and media. The objectives were reduced to five. These did not adequately address the content implied in the syllabus aims. For example, philosophy and history of art and design were missing in the objectives.

The aims and objectives could be categorised as follows:

i) Philosophy and history of art and design;

ii) Development of creativity;

iii) Exploration of materials and equipment;

iv) Development of art appreciation;

v) Development of appreciation of art from past and present cultures;

vi) Development of craftsmanship; and

vii) Analysis of artwork.

An assessment of aims and objectives revealed omission of contemporary art. One could only infer, for example, in the objective: “use acquired knowledge to appreciate and value art from the past to present cultures.”

Syllabus Content

Nine content items were listed as drawing, painting, print-making, textiles, graphic design, three-dimensional studies, photography, Zimbabwean art, art movements (pre-modern, modern, post-modern). It was clear that there was a thrust towards studio practice as only two topics were related to theory. Each of the seven areas was, however, elaborated on, for example,
painting (still life, human figure, landscape, colour composition, perspective, historical and cultural studies). Such elaboration could have been done for Zimbabwean art and art movements to show the extent of coverage. Reference to Zimbabwean art could imply sociology of art, crafts, stone sculpture, art education, chronology of art education, etc. This was not clearly articulated. The same could be said of art movements. Do the theoretical constructs of pre-modern, modern and post-modern relate to Western or both Western and African such as Zimbabwean stone sculpture movement? Which movements are critical and worth studying?

In summary, therefore, there appeared to be some mismatch between the aims, objectives and content to be covered. The content could be better articulated. There was very little on contemporary art implied in the aims, objectives and in the content.

**Teaching Approaches**

Seven approaches were listed that include: seminars, educational tours and inviting resource persons. Content requiring such methods was not listed. For example, resource persons would assume the participation of contemporary artists and crafts-persons. Historical and critical studies were listed as content under each of the seven studio topics. Their position was not clear as pedagogical approaches.

**Professional Studies Syllabus B**

This was a syllabus that focused on classroom practice. It focused on “acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge that will enable them to effectively and confidently teach a wide range of art and design activities in the primary school.” The many aims and objectives of the syllabus could be summarised according to the following grouping:
i) Appreciation of the relevance of art in the primary school;

ii) Development of cognitive and psychomotor skills;

iii) Use of the environment;

iv) Development of teaching skills;

v) Development of creativity;

vi) Development of observational and perceptual skills;

vii) Experiment with a variety of tools and media;

viii) Application of child art; and

ix) Integration of community craft and art lessons.

It appears there was no deliberate follow up on some content areas of coverage in the aims and objectives. The objectives should also reflect all content suggested in the aims.

**Syllabus Content**

There were sixteen topics to be covered, six being practical (drawing, painting, printmaking, fibre-craft and textiles, modelling, construction). Drawing and painting in this syllabus covered the same sub-concepts as in the Academic Study. The other content areas covered classroom skills such as syllabus interpretation, scheming and planning, testing measurement and record keeping, teaching methods, role of art education and child art. One topic, “Zimbabwean art and crafts” related to contemporary practice. More content related to contemporary art could be listed. In summary, this syllabus can be adopted in its entirety in any part of the world save for the topic “Zimbabwean art and crafts.” Its relevance to our local context can, therefore, be questioned.
Examinations

Table 5.1: Focus of examination questions for 2004 and 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of questions</th>
<th>Section A</th>
<th>Section B</th>
<th>Section C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General theory and art history</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical knowledge related to practical</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western art history</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwean art history/art education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table it is clear that questioning was skewed towards general questions related to theory and practical work. This was followed by Western art history and lastly questions related to Zimbabwean art history and art education. Examples of questions in the last category include the following excerpts. The questions, however, focused on art history aspects of the 1950s to the 1970s.

1. To what extent did the following schools of art contribute to the development of art education in Zimbabwe: Mzilikazi, Cyrene, Tengenenge, BAT?
2. Compare and contrast the art of Cyrene mission and that of Tengenenge.
3. Who among the following artists trained at Serima?
   - Nicholas Mukomberanwa
   - Kingsley Sambo
   - Zephania Tshuma
   - Pablo Picasso
4. In 1963 Alex Lamberth established an art school in Bulawayo called…
5. Briefly explain the claim that Joramu Mariga is the father of stone sculpture in Zimbabwe.

An evaluation of examination questions indicated that there were more questions on Western art and general art theory. While there were some questions on Zimbabwean art, the teaching loads and programmes did not reflect coverage of such content neither did syllabi reflect that content. An analysis of practical examination questions and marking guides...
reflected that there was more emphasis on technical skills, design, composition skills, media handling and general presentation/impression. Only in drawing was there an attempt to assess personal qualities (expression, innovation, creativity, and imagination). From an analysis of teaching programmes covering 2004-2006, only one block related art theory and Zimbabwean art as shown below:

Table 5.2: Extract from a teaching programme (KTC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Ending</th>
<th>Topic/Content</th>
<th>Assignment/Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25/03/05</td>
<td>The development of stone sculpture in Zimbabwe</td>
<td>Lecture and discussions on the schools that developed sculpture in Zimbabwe: Vukutu, Tengenenge, National Gallery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary on Document Analysis at Kingsdale Teachers’ College

Document analysis showed very little infusion of contemporary art in the college curriculum. The aims, objectives and content in both academic study and PSB syllabuses were not clear on incorporation of contemporary art. Instead, they focused more on acquisition of studio skills (for Academic Study) and mastery of subject pedagogics (for PSB). There was also a limited range of activities related to contemporary art, which mainly focused on stone sculpture. While stone sculpture was evidently taught, it was, however, limited to informal institutions such as Vukutu and Tengenenge as well as the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. Nothing was identified to illustrate current practice, for example, by the third generation of sculptors and from other art-forms. An interesting observation was that while very little was implied in the syllabi and teaching programmes, examinations satisfactorily reflected contemporary practice. Some
examination questions focused on how the early establishments such as Cyrene mission and practices influence current practice by artists. One wonders as to when and how such content was taught, and from where it was drawn. Most examinations focused on stone sculpture and art education in mission schools. Some questions, however, linked well with contemporary practice, which was unfortunately omitted in syllabi and teaching programmes.

**Curricula Documents from Mapango Teachers’ College**

**Syllabi**

There were three syllabus documents: Academic Study, two PSB syllabi (one for the general course and another for ECD Expressive Arts). The analyzed syllabi spanned from 2004 to 2006.

**Academic Study: Aims and Objectives of the Syllabus**

Out of the seven aims only one implied incorporation of contemporary art which was created as follows:

- Acquaint student teachers with an appreciation of the role of art and design in the development of the society.

The rest of the aims and objectives focused on studio practice such as the use of technical skills and improvisation. Three objectives related more to contemporary art although they could have been more precise in articulating contemporary art. These were:

i) Respond to the needs and interests of the society through art and design;

ii) Appreciate the value of art and design both locally and abroad; and
iii) Demonstrate the preservation of Zimbabwean contemporary art through the use of traditional designs.

**Syllabus Content**

Eight studio topics were listed. The theory topics included colour (formation, theory); history of art (Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism) and Zimbabwean contemporary art (pottery, sculpture). There appeared to be a misunderstanding of what constitutes contemporary Zimbabwean art as evidenced in the two listed sub-topics (pottery and sculpture). Basically content on contemporary art was inadequate. However, the seventeen approaches listed implied more extensive teaching of contemporary art. Thus there appeared to be a mismatch between aims, objectives, content and the pedagogical approaches to be used.

**Professional Studies Syllabus B - General Course**

**Aims and Objectives**

Similar to the academic study, only two aims somewhat related to contemporary and traditional Zimbabwean art. These are:

i) Familiarise student teachers with the role of art education in the primary school and the community; and

ii) Promote in student teachers self reliance by making use of local and community resources.

One objective directly related to contemporary art, “Show a sound knowledge of art education as an integral part of cultural history.”
Syllabus Content

Content that relates to contemporary art was listed under theory as cultural history. The rest focused on methodology aspects.

PSB: Expressive Arts

There was nothing specific to contemporary art in the aims and objectives of the course. The theory and practical courses also did not reflect deliberate attempt at infusing contemporary and traditional Zimbabwean art. Topics focused on western theories of learning in visual art education (cognitive theories, psychological, perceptual); developmental stages in visual art - the Piagetian model.

Examinations

Out of twenty multiple choice questions in one examination paper, only one related to contemporary art. Out of thirty-five fill-in questions only three related to traditional art such as traditional pottery, Great Zimbabwe and stone sculpture, for example, “Which Zimbabwean art has found the most international recognition?” Two out of four essay questions related to Zimbabwean art (sculpture and pottery). One was specific to contemporary art: “Discuss the major characteristics of Impressionism and how it has contributed to contemporary art in Zimbabwe.” The majority of questions focused on theory that related to studio courses. Questions that relate to Zimbabwe tended to focus on two main areas of stone sculpture and pottery as well as colonial art education such as that offered at Cyrene, Serima and Tengenenge. However, there were more questions relating to Western art history, chronology and traditions. The following are the questions that related to Zimbabwe:
i) Briefly describe the traditional method of firing pots in the Zimbabwean rural area;

ii) List three major problems facing the Zimbabwean artist today;

iii) Discuss the origins of stone sculpture and show how they have influenced contemporary Zimbabwean art;

iv) Discuss the value of clay pots to a Zimbabwean woman;

v) Explain how Tom Blomefield helped in the development of sculpture in Guruve’s Tengenenge community; and

vi) Discuss the design, decoration and value of traditional pottery in Zimbabwe.

**Practical Examinations**

Out of three papers, with a total of fifty practical questions, eight (16%) related to Zimbabwe. The relationship was in terms of colour and traditional motifs and patterns. The following are excerpts from the papers:

i) Using shapes, patterns and colours taken from the Zimbabwean traditional art, design a pattern printed on fabric, which will be used for a garment. Show the pattern on a fabric measuring 1 ½ m in length;

ii) Illustrate a Tonga woman smoking from *gonamombe* on a wall hanging measuring 60cm x 60 cm;

iii) Make a wall hanging to promote tourism in Zimbabwe on the theme “Wild Life”, measuring 60 cm x 60 cm. Use yellow and green.

**Teaching Programmes**

An analysis of five teaching programmes revealed that only one block (5%) focused on contemporary art as shown in the table below:
Table 5.3: Extract from a teaching programme (MTC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic/ Content</th>
<th>SOM</th>
<th>Student Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Zimbabwean contemporary art: pottery, sculpture | -Syllabus material  
-Material culture of Zimbabwe | -Take notes  
-Compile a pottery and sculpture folio |

Internal Assessors’ Reports

After gleaning through available assessors’ reports, it emerged that nothing was reported on contemporary art. The only three comments that somewhat related to contemporary art were:

“The portfolio project shows great improvement in the cultural history section.”

“There is need to buy stone sculpture tools and stone to cater for the stone sculpture programme” (November 2006 report).

“Most candidates that attempted the Tengenenge community question did fairly well and had the necessary background” (November 2004 report). Again the focus was on stone sculpture of the 1960s. There was need to elaborate on what was contained in the cultural history section and make it more explicit.

Summary of Documents from Mapango Teachers’ College

Like in the other two colleges, contemporary art at Mapango was limited to sculpture and pottery of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s as well as to San art (rock paintings). Some of the aims on contemporary art were not addressed by this limited content. The teaching programmes and examination questions also confirmed the limited conceptualisation of what contemporary art is. There was also limited teaching of contemporary art as evidenced by the 5% blocks in the teaching programmes. There was inadequate detail and focus on contemporary art in the aims,
objectives and content to show adequate and deliberate attempt to broaden the concept of contemporary art.

Lecturers’ Views on the Teaching of Contemporary Art in Colleges

In this section, the study analyses views from lecturers about contemporary art in colleges. Vignettes have been significantly used to illustrate lecturers’ perceptions.

Western Oriented Art Curricula Mapping

The following conversation highlights views by lecturers on the extent to which contemporary Zimbabwean art is taught in colleges in comparison with Western art. They also explain the extent to which their curriculum is Westernised. This emanated from an observation of how their curricula were organised in the operational documents.

Mamvuto: To what extent do you incorporate contemporary Zimbabwean art in your curriculum? We are looking at Gutsa, Kamangwana, Chiko and all other artists. To what extent do you also try to teach local art?

Masara: When it comes to local art we don’t study it as intensively as we study western art. The major reason being that there is no literature or the literature on our own artists is extremely scanty. We may have brilliant artists but they have been appreciated elsewhere not here. We don’t have local writers writing about our artists, explaining what our artists are doing. It would be naïve to expect us to explain what they are doing because we also don’t know. For instance when
you look at Picasso, you need what different authorities have to say about
Picasso in order for you to understand the artist. You look at the history and then
you look at the opinion of the critics of Picasso, what detractors say, and you
come up with your own assessment of the artist. But with our own artists we
have not been given that privilege of assessing what critics say, what the other
artists say. So at the end of the day all we have is all we say about those artists.

Mamvuto: Which is not authentic?
Masara: Which is not authentic. We don’t open our eyes to everything. I can
go out there and see their paintings but that tells me nothing about him. I would
need to understand the artist’s history. I need to understand what influences
him. I need to understand what he says about his own paintings. Some artists
are late and some are operating outside the country while some are operating
under different conditions. I cannot go to Harare just to have an interview with
an artist in order to understand him. And I cannot rely on gallery magazines
only. That is usually where we get most of our information from and I cannot
solely rely on that. That will be my only point of call for information. So as
much as we would like to incorporate contemporary art within our curriculum
we are now doing it on a very scanty basis because we are comparing our local
artists with Western artists and their influences. So we are not really looking at
our contemporary artists. We look at them in terms of African art, African
sculpture. We study them yes, but we study them as groups. What this group
says, like what the group from Cyrene, say Paterson’s influence and those
influences and what they have done. But we have not looked at our own artists, and I think that’s sad because most of the literature on African artists is written by Europeans and we have not written about our own artists.

**Mamvuto:** Now basing on what you have said, to what extent is your curriculum Westernised? You have said you teach more Western art because you don’t have adequate literature on our local art.

**Masara:** I think it’s Westernised in the sense that even our syllabus and our techniques that we look at are Westernised. We look at observational drawing, still life drawing. I think it’s Westernised. I cannot conceptualise it as African as such. We have Africanised a Western system. That’s what we are doing. We are Africanising it because still life drawing is Western. Instead of drawing cups and plates and things like that, we should be drawing bowls, pods and pots, headrests and masks. I have noticed that African art is simplified geometrical shapes, but we don’t recognise that as much because when we ask students to do observational drawing, we expect detail, we expect shading, tones, three-dimensional shapes, things that have been absent in African art. So we are analysing our African art through Western eyes because when we look at Western art we never look at it on its own. We look at Western art history and how it affects us.

Masara pointed out that Zimbabwe has brilliant artists, but these had been appreciated elsewhere. There are no local writers, she claimed, writing about our artists, explaining what the artists are doing. This is evidenced by the little reflection of local artists in lecturers’
curricula documents such as teaching programmes. However many books on Western artists are available in colleges also evident in the teaching programmes and examinations. Lecturers were therefore teaching the history of Western artists than the local artists. In the end one has a balanced understanding about these international artists, “But with our own artists we have not been given that privilege of assessing what critics say and what the other artists say. So at the end of the day all we have is all we say about the artists” (Masara).

Masara cited several challenges associated with trying to understand contemporary artists. Local artists were often studied in terms of the broader domain of African art, particularly African sculpture. They were studied as groups like those from Cyrene and how Paterson influenced their art. These have been widely documented. While stone sculpture has attained international acclaim, very few texts have been published about it. Another challenge was that most of the literature on African artists was written by Europeans, such as Zilberg, Roberts (1979), Winter-Irving (2004) and Arnold (1980; 1981; 2004) and there haven’t been many local writers. Basing on the preceding views, college syllabi are therefore Westernised in the sense that theoretical components are Western as well as the studio based components. These observations support Masara’s views when she says “I think it is Westernised. I cannot conceptualise it as African as such. We have Africanised a Western system.” Subject matter and objects for painting are not being drawn from students’ cultures or experiences. Instead Western concepts and ideas are introduced and reinforced. They have become an integral part of the curriculum content and pedagogical instructional strategies. For example, what we consider as an ethnic print is what the West perceives as an ethnic print. Masara explained why as she elaborated on the indigenisation of their examination as captured in the interview below:
**Mamvuto:** In your examinations, to what extent do you try to indigenise your questions, areas of study and so on?

**Masara:** We do the same like what we do with the curriculum. We incorporate a lot of African aspects, but like I said I don’t know if they have done any research on what is truly African because, I think, most things we are doing we are Africanising a Western system. We are sort of plaster-painting over a Western area. For instance, let me take an example whereby I say we do an ethnic print. What defines an ethnic print, and what do we associate with an ethnic print? If you look at it closely it’s what the West perceive as an ethnic print. It’s not necessarily what we perceive as an ethnic print. If you look at how Africans appreciate like Ndebele beadwork, the use of primary colours, use of yellows, reds, greens, bright colours and a lot of black and white and the use of patterns. That would be Ndebele beadwork, isn’t it? And now you ask someone to do an ethnic print, what are they likely to produce? They are likely to produce pots and other solid shapes. Those are the pictures, and they are also likely to produce elephants, donkeys and things like that. But is that really what we use as a decorative print? An ethnic print would be something more colourful, something that uses basic colours like red, yellow green, like I said that uses white and black. That would be what most Africans would associate with their local environment. Yet we would focus on what we would have been taught to be going with ethnic colours like the browns, the yellows, yellow ochre, black and brown. That’s not quite ethnic if we really wanted to look at it.
Masara defined ethnic as something that has been acculturated and has been engrained in us. This has gone to the extent of influencing our colour choices that we have conventionalised. We have colours that relate to our own practices such as red, black, white for ancestral worship. These have been ignored in favour of Western conventions. It is important that we discover our own heritage and then we spiral it out as we explore other traditions in the process of assimilation and integration. On the contrary, Paradza had a different perception about incorporating contemporary art. He claimed he taught contemporary art as evidenced by his remarks:

**Paradza:** We incorporate contemporary art to a large extent. Focusing on the courses or subjects that I teach right now I teach African art and like now, I am teaching Zimbabwean art and we are looking at Zimbabwean stone sculpture in particular. And there we look at contemporary artists like Mukomberanwa, Dominic Benhura and others. We use galleries like the National Gallery as our reference point. We talk about these local artists. Sometimes if we have pictures of these from magazines and from other sources we use them. We use contemporary art to a large extent.

There were, however, constraints such as unavailability of resources. They could not visit different artists, buy books and magazines on contemporary artists, subscribe to journals, and invite contemporary artists. His views generated an interesting exchange with, Masara, which the researcher felt revealed contrasting and parallel perceptions about incorporating contemporary art by the two. In fact, the researcher noticed that what lecturers claimed they
taught could not be adequately substantiated in their curricula documents. Their exchange was as follows:

**Mamvuto:** What challenges do you face in terms of trying to teach contemporary art?

**Paradza:** The challenges like I mentioned earlier on are mainly the resources. We cannot move about seeing different artists and artworks. We don’t have the resources like books and magazines on contemporary artists. We can’t buy these, we can’t subscribe, it becomes difficult. We can’t invite those contemporary artists simply because of lack of resources. But we try as much as possible to improvise. But the major challenge lies with resources though literature is there. Many people are writing about contemporary art.

**Masara:** Zimbabweans?

**Paradza:** Yes, unless you want to talk about contemporary art in the West.

**Masara:** Who is writing about Zimbabwean artists?

**Paradza:** Winter-Irving. She has a modern book. I can’t remember the title.

**Masara:** She is from Europe.

**Paradza:** Yes, but it’s contemporary art. Well, I was using examples from the areas I teach.

**Masara:** I am saying how many of our local writers are writing about local artists? African writers writing about African artists? Let’s look at that woman, White, who wrote about Zimbabwean painters. What kind of view would a local authority take on the same kind of paintings? We cannot find people we can
compare with. She can come and say this is wonderful, this is splendid. But where are the African writers, like at the University of Zimbabwe, those professors who talk about politics, Africanism, African art and spiritualism?

**Paradza:** I think what she is referring to are books. We have a shortage of books. My point is, we have a lot of art critics who write a lot about contemporary art, though they are not publishing books but we have a lot of literature on contemporary art. If you request your students to research on a certain topic or one artist, known artist, and you give them enough time, they will bring a lot of information. Some of the information you will be surprised that it’s there. If they go out there, they always bring a lot of literature. And that is what we use because we don’t have textbooks. We rely on these modern writers, modern critics, television, radio and stuff like that.

Divergent perceptions from the two lecturers revealed interesting observations on the shortage of materials. Both lecturers lamented shortage of books despite the fact that there were African writers who could write about African art with an African perspective. From an analysis of lecturers’ qualifications and experience, it would be expected that lecturers should be able to generate papers and other literature material for their students. Paradza also pointed out that if asked to research on particular topics or contemporary artists and given adequate time, students could bring out a lot of available literature. They could gather the information from the internet, modern writers, critics, television and radio.

On the contrary, lecturers from Kingsdale Teachers’ College indicated that they used locally available resources as part of their pedagogical strategies.
Mamvuto: To what extent do you incorporate local art and make use of locally available resources and materials in your teaching?

Makore: We are accommodating it to a large extent. We are not only focusing on theory. We do practicals as well. For example, we have got fibre craft, macramé, mat making, sculpture and construction. We make use of resources available within the locality. So we use the environment to a large extent in many areas. Sometimes we use local resource people in the community especially in sculpture since we do not have a specialist here in the college. We sometimes visit the Craft Centre. There is a sculptor Hatugari. So we always make use of the society and the environment and resources.

Nyathi: To add on, you will find that recently we have been to Great Zimbabwe and we had a study of the Great Zimbabwe, how it was built, the patterns that are there, the shapes that are there, the meanings and importance of the Great Zimbabwe. We are making use of the locality. The Great Zimbabwe assists us a lot especially that we are close to it, we always make use of it.

Visits to a local craft centre where there are sculptors is an instructional strategy that incorporates contemporary art. The Great Zimbabwe is another local resource that is often studied because of its locality. A lot has been written about it including the art of Serima and Cyrene and stone sculpture. However, little has been said about other contemporary artforms, art institutions, artists and contemporary practice. This was what was lacking in the lecturers’ curricula documents. Lecturers however “… appreciate reducing the quantity of content from Western art and emphasize more on Zimbabwean art” (Makore). Lecturers’ views on
improving interaction between colleges and schools and contemporary artists were also raised by the artists themselves.

The artists suggested the need to improve the interaction between schools and practising artists, which is currently minimal. The improved interaction will benefit students. This could be done through mounting workshops and seminars where schools can participate. An example is a workshop that was once held at the Domboramwari Art Village whose aim was to facilitate such interaction. Students would be exposed to what inspire artists, the media they use, artistic processes and the evolution of the various art-forms. Students would therefore get inspired by these artists as Chenjerai explained:

**Mutasa:** We have this programme in mind whereby we are going to invite schools to attend the Black History Month, which is held in February whereby each school would come and see the artists working and then they also take part. We are also trying to have one week workshops whereby certain chosen schools will come and camp here, do certain workshops here, the stone, the wood, ceramics and give them the exposure where the artists reside and get motivated.

**Mamvuto:** What weaknesses have you identified in terms of our education system paying particular attention to the visual arts?

**Mutasa:** I feel it’s the promotion part whereby we don’t have grants or monies set aside to cater for art as an industry. So once the older people appreciate the importance of artists then the upcoming will also value what artists do.
The Domboramwari initiative was established to assist both the established and upcoming artists. The artists would apply on a self-programme or would be invited on a one-man workshop or a group can come and rent the whole workshop for their individual or designed programme. The village offers accommodation, food and materials to work with. Schools are invited to attend the Black History Month held every February so that they would come and see the artists working and they can also take part. The aim is to enable school children to come and do certain workshops and give students the exposure on where the artists reside and get motivated. Chenjerai explained the objective behind the Domboramwari Art Village as given below:

Yes, it’s called Domboramwari Art Village. Here we are trying to offer room to established artists, upcoming artists whereby the established artists would apply on a self programme or would be invited on a one-man workshop or a group can come and rent the whole workshop for their own individual or designed programme. So here mainly we offer accommodation, food and materials to work with.

The initiative, however, faces challenges of capital to buy art materials. David had similar suggestions on the interaction between artists and schools.

Maybe encourage schools that have art in their curriculum to have workshops where students meet with practising artists, get to know what inspire the artists, what happens on the part of artists. From that one to one communication with the artists they can be inspired. They see that it’s a profession they can take.
David believes Zimbabwe has very artistic and innovative people, but the prevailing economic environment is rather discouraging for artists. He appealed for funding for artists. He suggested that the school curriculum should strongly consider art as a profession. This comes out in the excerpt that follows:

Chinyama: I believe Zimbabwean art compared to other countries like regionally, internationally, we are stepping somewhere. We have very artistic and innovative people here. Its only that the environment we are in sometimes is discouraging, more so for artists. Given the chance that things get well and artists have some funds at least they can work with all their heart not thinking of where they can get food the next day or where they can sell their work. At least they can work with all their minds thinking mostly about their work. And I believe Zimbabwean art has that strength and depth to compete with other forms of art from other countries. And it’s my wish to see more young artists coming out. Its like the young generation is not given that chance to express themselves in different art forms. So I believe the education system should embrace art as a form of profession whereby they encourage school kids at least to venture into art and take art as a profession. At least our artists will keep on going. We have a lot of young artists out there. They need to be encouraged at least to take art as I said before.
Mamvuto: Something emanating from what you have just said, looking at our education system, in what way can we improve on it so that it’s more promotive of art?

Chinyama: Maybe encourage schools that have art in their curriculum to have workshops where students meet with practising artists, get to know what inspire the artists, what happens on the part of artists. To have that one to one communication with the artists they can be inspired. They see that it’s a profession they can take.

Mamvuto: How do you see the future of your project? Any challenges so far in terms of this project that you are having?

Mutasa: Yes, the obvious challenge is capital. Because we need to make sure that people who camp here are taken care of, in terms of injuries, any falls, snake bites and stuff like that. Mosquitoes are a problem although we bought mosquito nets for each bed.

David advocated for the inclusion of contemporary art in the school curriculum, which is one of the objectives of this study. The education system should embrace art as a form of profession whereby schools encourage students to venture into art and take it as a profession.

Chenjerai emphasized this point in an interview, an excerpt of which is provided as follows:

Art is life. You live it. It’s not a career whereby you put on a suit or tie and after a certain number of hours you remove and become another person. It’s
continuous. You have to live it. You have to keep on researching, creating, you
know, having that drive. That’s being an artist.

He thus recommended the teaching of art as a profession, which students can actually pursue. Currently, this is minimal as evidenced by the few schools offering art as a subject in the curriculum (Abrahams 2000). Students should see art as an industry worth pursuing. The artists felt that there were many young talented people who needed exposure to this discipline.

**Resource Needs Marring Scaling up Contemporary Art in the Curricula**

Due to the unfavourable economic environment, the lecturers were forced to rely on locally available materials. They used substitutes such as indigenous clays, traditional dyes and ceramics. They have resorted to traditional means of firing clay products. However, sometimes looking at the African option has its own challenges. For example, there are certain stigmas that are attached to male students making pots the traditional way. They would rather use the pink commercial clays than the traditional red clays. In as much as the lecturers tried to use local materials, the Western type of material still dominated. There was, however, a limit to which lecturers incorporated both locally available materials and their foreign substitutes. The following exchange elaborates on this:

**Mamvuto:** To what extent do you incorporate locally available materials and resources in your teaching?

**Masara:** Due to the fact that our economic situation has forced us just to rely on locally available materials, that’s all we are relying on. Most of the inputs in
most of the topics that require us to use foreign inputs, we have either done away with or we have looked for available substitutes simply because that is what is available.

Mamvuto: Can you cite examples of materials that you use?

Masara: Pigments. The pigments that we use are locally available, even the dyes we use.

Paradza: When we are doing three-dimensional artifacts we use clay because it’s easily available.

Masara: Yes, even materials we use for textile design, we would encourage students to use things that are from the local environment. They have experimented with traditional dyes and ceramics. We have looked at African ceramics more that European ceramics simply because we don’t have a functional kiln. We have looked at all those options, but unfortunately sometimes looking at the African option has met with some resistance. Say you want to teach African ceramics, there are certain stigmas that are attached to men making pots and stuff like that, the traditional way. They would rather use the pink clay rather than the red clay from the natural environment.

Paradza: Though we use local materials the Western type of material is still dominating. You find that we use poster paint, and HB pencils instead of
charcoal. So we are using locally available materials although we cannot run away from Western type of media.

Both lecturers claimed that they incorporated a lot of African art aspects in examinations. Such claims cannot be substantiated in curriculum documents. Document analysis revealed that there is limited infusion of African aspects contrary to Masara’s claim. A few aspects on African art, Zimbabwean in particular, are on stone sculpture by the first generation of artists and early art education institutions in the country. As noted earlier, an analysis of some past examination papers revealed the contrary. The greater percentage of concepts that were tested were foreign based.

**Mamvuto:** What about making it [the curriculum] more African, more Zimbabwean, are there any suggestions that you would want to make?

**Makore:** So far our curriculum as it is, we are accommodating Zimbabwean art. The areas where we focus on Zimbabwean art like stone sculpture, the Great Zimbabwe, Serima art, Cyrene art, we are taking art from Zimbabwe. We are also of course accommodating Western Art but not to a large extent. Of course I really appreciate reducing the quantity of content from Western art and emphasize more on Zimbabwean art. But the other problem is of literature. Literature is there but it is so limited. It’s only available in areas like National Gallery of Zimbabwe and some few galleries here in Masvingo. In our libraries there is no literature to help us teach the students.
Sigauke: Literature is really a problem. No matter how much we want to teach them African Art, we have limited literature. Even when we look at literature about Great Zimbabwe, it’s the same books Peter Garlake and so on. It’s a problem. So we resort to western art because there are books.

This is contrary to earlier claims that lecturers taught more African art than Western art. Few books, such as *Materials Culture of Zimbabwe* by Ellert and other literature materials were cited as only available in places like the National Gallery of Zimbabwe and a few galleries in Masvingo. The college library had few relevant books. It would seem lecturers would want to see contemporary art incorporated, but they however felt incapacitated by the inadequacy of relevant literature. Innovative approaches could, however, be sought such as integrating artists in residence programmes to counter the shortage of appropriate literature. Asked on the extent to which the curriculum was Westernised, all lecturers contradicted their earlier claims.

Mamvuto: So since you are lamenting the shortage of materials, to what extent is your curriculum Westernised?

Nyathi: I would like to believe that to a greater extent because I want to think the problems probably is with us African educators if not Zimbabwean educators. I have realised that we have a problem probably with tertiary education. If colleges implement a system found in most universities I think it will be of great benefit to colleges. I have realised that in universities it is compulsory that after a certain period lecturers produce, be it pamphlets or booklets pertaining to their subjects. Having some researches and findings pertaining to their subjects or departments. So I would like to believe that probably if the department of Art and Design in each college make it
compulsory for lecturers to produce even some pamphlets, making researches
towards their own subject. That will make literature available. Right now when
we talk of drawing or painting, what we are doing is Westernised. Even the
theory that we use, is Western, the kind of painting that we would like to do is
from the master painters of western art. We are mainly taking it from Western
literature. We don’t have what is specifically ours. The literature that we have
is to a certain extent fused with Western literature. That is why I am saying if
we make it compulsory or it’s made compulsory by whoever is supposed to do
it, be it DTE, to make it compulsory for college lecturers to produce researches
after a certain period. I think that can make literature available.

Mamvuto: Do you have to wait for DTE to say you now produce pamphlets for
students?
Sigauke: No, I don’t think that will be the issue. I think the onus is on us to
really do something, to write. We have to sit down as a department and say what
do we need here. We start off with our college, we write modules for our
department and perhaps it will flow to other colleges and in the end we might
come up with something. But I think that that idea is a very good idea but
perhaps it should not be compulsory as such.

Mamvuto: You teach Picasso, you teach Renoir, Da Vinci. What stops you
from teaching Gutsa, Kamangwana, Chiko and so on because these are our local
artists? Do you have to wait for books in order to teach contemporary art?
Makore: We always try our level best to accommodate all those areas. But one thing I discovered is that, maybe it’s our personality or our character. People have a tendency of considering Western art as more important than our local art. Maybe it’s because they understand local art much better and easier than Western art. Because when you talk of Mukomberanwa they take it for granted just because you know him or maybe he is Zimbabwean. But when you talk of Leonardo Da Vinci you find out that they take it more seriously and it sounds more difficult to them than the way they understand African art. We try by all means to assist them but the problem of what we said about literature. We need something to base on which has authenticity. Because some of the information we collect from resource persons is exaggerated because the sources are not that reliable. For example, if you go to the Great Zimbabwe the people you find there are always exaggerating some of the information and the truth part of it does not come out clearly.

While contemporary art is art that we experience daily, it has been difficult to implement in the curriculum. Such views are also shared by Prentice (1995) who argues that people find it easier to teach canonised art than that which is yet to be historicised and categorised. Likewise, in Zimbabwe, the aspects commonly taught are stone sculpture and colonial art education that have been clearly documented and historicised like Western art history. A closer analysis of curricula documents and lecturers’ views revealed that they have challenges in conceptualising contemporary art. Ms Makore claimed that the lecturers:
always talk of these contemporary artists. Sometimes Joram Mariga as the father of stone sculpture, Mukomberanwa, Hatugari, but physically we have never come into contact with them, which I think is more important to get that information from reliable sources, the horse’s mouth.

This is because some local sources are not providing accurate information on these artists. A number of challenges were cited as hindering incorporation of contemporary art in the curriculum. Limited resources made it difficult to visit contemporary artists. Inviting them as visiting artists or artists in residences was also expensive. The nature of the timetable where students had one-hour lectures per week also made it difficult to visit or invite artists. There was also no specialisation, which could have allowed for visits and invitation of contemporary artists.

**Impediments to Implementation of Contemporary Art Programmes**

The lecturers indicated that they used a variety of teaching methods. These were, however, mainly determined by the workload students had and the availability of time. Critical Studies is an arts curriculum model that draws its instructional methods and pedagogical content from various sources to enrich the practical domain. Contemporary art can, therefore, be effectively taught using such a model. The ideas are elaborated in the following interview:

**Mamvuto:** Can you comment on the teaching methodologies that you use as a department?

**Masara:** Because of limited time we are forced to go for the lecture method but we have started being a little more creative since the introduction of the green
syllabus. Since the introduction of the green syllabus we have introduced environmental education. The methods that we are using are always the old ones. Basically we want to be more creative in our approach. For instance we give them folio work, project work. We deliberately use Critical Studies. I was teaching Critical Studies at the beginning of the year. What I did was, we did it in class. We used one of the methods, Taylor’s model to criticise an artwork. And then when we criticised that artwork we came up with an assessment instrument that would be most appropriate. The students themselves came up with the instrument. We discussed it quite extensively and then they went and looked for a picture they could think of and they criticised it in one page using the model. After they criticised the picture on their own, I marked the criticism and that’s when we moved to the next level where we said let’s take the skills we practised and criticise this specific painting and they went on to criticise the painting. To me, I thought that lesson was more successful than if I had simply come to the class and said this is how you criticise, this is what you should do. So that practice session that they had actually assisted them. I wasn’t even there. I actually left the assignment on the board. I wanted it at the end of the 45 minutes, a criticism of the picture. They did it in 45 minutes. I didn’t have to be there. They managed to do quite a good job. When they finally did criticism of other artwork I didn’t have anyone failing. That made me think that maybe they need that extra prompting. But such methods take time. You need a lot of time because you have to mark, all that marking. The load of marking that we have
will end up a discredit. The group is too big, 56 students to use the method that I have just given.

**Paradza:** The first one is the lecture method, then we also use the demonstration method, then sometimes exposition and rarely excursion. By excursion we mean moving around the college and the immediate environment. But basically those are the methods that we use, the traditional ones.

**Masara:** I don’t agree.

**Paradza:** You don’t agree? Which ones have I left out?

**Masara:** Peer assessment, peer teaching, project, research and project. We use it for craft. Remember, for craft they do a project. They researched on different craft areas and they presented the 3-D figure plus the write-up. They defended their projects. We give them an opportunity to do a viva whereby they will defend their project they will have made. We use different methods, lots of different methods.

Lecturers from Kingsdale College also suggested having areas of specialisation so that students would go to a particular lecturer who is good in that area for assistance. However, because students were overloaded, they rarely went to these respective lecturers. The lecturers explained the methods they used as follows:

**Sigauke:** Basically we use the lecture method. But we do demonstrate, and then because the students are really overloaded in various areas, what we would want to do is have students come to individual lecturers who are good at certain areas
to individually assist them. We try that as much as possible especially in the area of drawing. There are very few of them who can draw. We have suggested or employed a method of having areas of specialisation so students would go to a certain lecturer who is good in that area and get assistance.

But because they are overloaded all over, they rarely come. So in the end we use the lecture method, that of course with demonstrations and students doing the practical work. The problem with the discussion method about our local art, is that we don’t have much time to talk about artists. Most of the time we are trying to give them skills to do basic practical work, production, because in the end they look at production as art. So we give them the basic skills. It takes so much of their time and we can’t give them much theory.

**Nyathi:** In terms of teaching methodologies, we are very much limited because we lack resources that’s why we are not involved in a number of methodologies. You find that here we very much rely on the lecture method and to a certain extent the discussion method and also demonstration. We cannot be involved in such methods like the seminar method, the field trips, why, simply because we don’t have resources to take students to different places. We are limited to what can be done within the classroom environment, because we do not have resources. The last time we wanted to have a trip to Great Zimbabwe, I think that decision only took about two terms to come to fruition. So you can see that it is really a problem. The administration does not have enough money to support us.
Makore: I agree with my colleagues. Because of lack of resources and working space, mostly we resort to the lecture method. With some of these methods the resources are so limited. So we can’t afford to use them.

Because of the scarcity of resources, lecturers used limited methodologies. Such methods left out visiting contemporary artists and concentrated on studio or classroom based activities. For example, a field trip that was made to Great Zimbabwe took about two terms (8 months) to come to fruition because of limited resources. Some of the methods that are not implemented would be more relevant in implementing contemporary art such as visits to contemporary artists’ studios.

Mamvuto: To what extent do you incorporate some of the contemporary artists? Is it feasible to incorporate some of these contemporary artists in your curriculum, say academic study?

Sigauke: I am sure it’s quite feasible. Of course we have not tried it. The main problem is lack of materials. Students may want to practise sculpturing but we don’t have a single tool in that area. So that is a set back.

Makore: Theoretically we always talk of these contemporary artists. Sometimes Joramu Mariga as the father of stone sculpture, Mukomberanwa, Hatugari, but physically we have never come in contact with them, which I think is more important to get that information from reliable sources, the horse’s mouth. Maybe it’s because of the distance from us. Because inviting Joramu
Mariga or to visit him, it needs a lot of money. The college cannot even afford to sponsor us. But theoretically we always look at their work. But it will be more meaningful if we could pay a visit to one of them where we could get information from the horse’s mouth.

**Nyathi:** I would like to think that it goes back to the set up of our curriculum. At times in the syllabus you find that we are forced to have one lesson with the students probably in textiles or in drawing. At times to call a resource person or a contemporary artist for only one hour and then you ask him to go back, the college will look at it as a very expensive event. Yet that particular person was not of benefit to the students just because he will be here for one hour. What we are looking for is probably a week or two with some students. But you find that the syllabus does not allow that and the time that we have does not allow that. But if say we were having specialisation and someone was looking at textiles for the whole year, to ask those textilists and have them probably for a week or two the college wouldn’t say it’s expensive because that particular artist will be benefitting the college at large.

**Sigauke:** After this discussion, I feel what my colleague is saying is crucial and that the students do everything in the first year and in their third year they look at one area of specialisation and this to be stipulated in our syllabus. I think only then, can we have students tackling these areas. Because when they come in they will be doing the basic things. They don’t know themselves. They don’t know what they can do. Sometimes you may find after students have selected
their areas, someone comes and says, “I didn’t know you would accept someone who can do sculpturing. I thought you wanted only people who can do drawing.” So they have to explore their own skills in the first year and see where they are good at. That means lecturers need to give students the basics in all the possible areas, even in sculpturing. But I feel strongly that this problem emanates from the primary school.

I think if art is taught at primary school, examined at Grade 7 Level, then when students come up, they know people like Mukomberanwa. They will have no problems when introduced to those areas at college level. They would know which areas to take up. They would know which areas they are good at if they have done it before they came to college.

**Nyathi:** Just to add some more. We have realised that when it comes to tertiary education, because of the problem that starts probably at Grade 1, Form 1 or A Level, we in the art department are not asked to select students who are good in art and design. Why, simply because art is not examined in most of the schools. And when we take students at tertiary level, we just say 5 ‘O’ levels including Mathematics and English. We don’t say 5 ‘O’ levels including art and design, especially for those who would like to join the art department. So in the art department you find that those people who come to art and design do have the mentality that art is only drawing and it is one of the easiest subjects. The students flock to art and design because we don’t have a grading system or a recruiting system that we need people who specifically did art and design at ‘O’
or ‘A’ level. We just take anyone who comes to the department. So that becomes a very big problem.

**Mamvuto:** Which lowers the status of art?

**Nyathi:** Yes, which lowers the status of art.

**Makore:** Just to add onto what Nyathi has said. What I have discovered is that pupils themselves have the love for art. But the problem is with the art educators. They are not taking art seriously particularly in primary schools because it is not an examinable subject. But I really appreciate what is happening in Group ‘A’ schools where they have specialist teachers for art, physical education and music. I think if all schools could manage to do that, to have a specialist teacher, especially for art. That’s when these people could have the opportunity to express themselves especially in art. Also art can be taken seriously and can be accommodated. Because if you go to other schools like Masvingo Junior or Kyle, all group ‘A’ schools, they are doing art quite well. I have been observing their shows, where pupils are displaying their work. I really admire it. I appreciate it. If there is something that could be done in other schools especially in rural areas, this problem will be eradicated completely.

**Nyathi:** So the whole curriculum needs to be revamped starting from primary education to make art and design compulsory even at Grade 7. Chance should be made available to every pupil starting at Grade 1, and at Grade 7 art becomes examinable and at Form 4 art should be there. If art is revamped from primary
education and secondary education it is easy for us to develop a skill that has been started even at Grade Zero. At tertiary level it becomes much easier. So if we change the curriculum at this stage without changing it at primary level the problem remains the same.

**Sigauke:** It affects our students when they go out to teach. The syllabus is there but it is not examinable. There is a Form 2 syllabus but it is not examinable. At form 4 it is examinable. If it is not examinable at Grade 7, so they don’t teach. So the students don’t find it of any importance even when they come to college. Why should I learn a subject that is not examinable at Grade 7?

**Nyathi:** Even in the classroom you cannot accuse any teacher as not doing his best. That teacher knows his subject won’t be examined at the end of the year. So no one will say you were teaching art and design or you were not. No one will ever say that at the end of the year.

**Mamvuto:** So, possibly having art and design under the general paper as one possibility?

**Sigauke:** Yes, like what they have with Home Economics and other practical subjects. They are incorporated in the general paper. Home Economics is examinable.

Teaching of art at primary level could ensure the introduction of contemporary art as there is cultural studies in the syllabi at all grade levels, which specifically require teaching of local art. Cultural studies entail visiting local artists, collecting and talking about local artifacts and
heritage, and demonstrations by crafts-persons, among other activities. An analysis of primary school teachers’ schemes of work and lesson plans revealed that teachers tended to focus on productive skills at the expense of theoretical dimensions, which can actually feed into studio work. Teachers do not make use of the rich cultural experiences, knowledge and skills that only require appropriate pedagogical strategies.

**Curricula Relevance: An Eclectic Pedagogical Framework**

Most lecturers who participated in the study felt that the curriculum was relevant to Zimbabwe.

**Mamvuto:** Can you just comment on the relevance of your art curriculum to society. Is it relevant to Zimbabwe?

**Masara:** I think the curriculum that we have is very relevant to Zimbabwe but, unfortunately, relevant as it may be there are many factors that seem to fall short. It’s appropriate for us to teach all topics that we are teaching but we are not given the time to teach them. In actual fact it’s about 4 or 5 terms in which to teach a broad spectrum of topics to someone who might not have done some art before. And just as one is getting used to a certain skill, getting used to drawing and painting on a regular basis to get the basics, we have to tell them “stop and let’s start on something else.” The effects of time start to render ineffective most of the efforts that we make. We have the basic will and the curriculum. Our syllabus is designed in such a way that it definitely meets today’s standards. For instance we have computer-aided design in our syllabus but we don’t have the time slot in our timetable, and we don’t have the relevant software for us to
teach. So by the end of the day it becomes just a statement that we should do computer design with our students because we don’t get that opportunity to do it.

**Mamvuto:** Would you want to add anything in terms of relevance of the curriculum?

**Paradza:** It is relevant and it’s like we draw our syllabus from the community. We look at what is happening out there and in the schools and what we want our children to learn in schools. That’s what we bring here. Though like what she said, time is not adequate to cover what we plan for. But as for the relevance, I think it’s quite relevant, it’s OK.

Art, among other practical subjects, was viewed as one of the most expensive subjects at the college. It was equally recognised as one of the academic subjects by students. Although most students who join the subject have no art background some of them ended up appreciating the subject. A few who did not really appreciate art was as a result of ignorance and misinformation about the subject. The lecturers’ claim that the syllabus was based on what was happening in society can be interpreted to mean teaching of contemporary art as well.

Both lecturers claimed that the art curriculum was quite relevant to the needs of society. However Masara cited limited time as the main contributory factor to the ineffectiveness of the curriculum. The four or five terms required to teach the broad spectrum of topics to students who might not have done some art before was viewed as inadequate. Paradza also concurred that in drawing up the curriculum they considered what was happening in society, which includes contemporary art. There was general consensus between the lecturers that the curriculum was relevant as it was drawn from the needs of the community. However as alluded
to earlier on, an analysis of college curricula revealed limited inclusion of contemporary art and topics presumed to be drawn from the society.

The aim of the PSA syllabus is to equip the student with pedagogical content. Unfortunately, the teaching of art in schools is minimal such that students do not adequately implement methodologies learnt at college. The component on child art (graphic art) was cited as relevant. Lecturers only hoped that their students would teach art when they go into the schools. All lecturers agreed that the CDS project, which is action research oriented, was relevant. They argued that some of the pedagogical learning problems emanating in art were being solved through the CDS. In the following exchange the lecturers elaborated on the relevance of the curriculum:

**Sigauke:** In PSB our aim is for students to teach pupils who live in the community. But when they go to the schools they don’t find art being taught. In Academic Study we also have a portion of child art. It will assist the student in teaching in the classroom. Our problem in colleges is because in primary and secondary schools art is not being taught. They come here, and they start it at this level. You ask them what is art, they think it’s drawing. They only come because they have to do an academic study. So we hope that these students will teach art. We only hope that they have the skills to teach.

In CDS they research. We do also hope that the students will find problems in the classroom about the teaching of art. We hope that they will discover problems and be able to assist the pupils. They will develop further somehow in the teaching of art.
**Mamvuto:** So basically you are saying the curriculum is relevant, but there are problems in implementation.

**Sigauke:** Yes.

**Makore:** Well, looking at the issue of CDS, since we are now focusing on action research, our aim and the aim of the syllabus, it to find a problem among the pupils in that class and solve that problem. So we are assuming that some of the problems which are emanating from art are being solved through the CDS since they find problems in classes during their TP and solve the problems whilst on TP. So we hope the problems of art are being eradicated through the CDS.

**Nyathi:** Let me probably reiterate the point said by Mai (Ms) Sigauke, which is the problem of implementing what people learn from tertiary education. You find that most schools, especially those in rural areas, you don’t even mention the name art and design because even the administration or the headmaster himself believe art periods are times for revision or times to go out for extracurricular activities. Art is not taken seriously by some of the schools. Even in town they don’t take art and design seriously. Some of the students we produce in tertiary colleges when they go out, that is the day they forget about art and design. So they don’t implement what they learn from colleges. In most cases you find that those skills that we try to develop just die a natural death. Some of those students, because they are not practising art, are even afraid to go for further education in art and design, be it at the University of Zimbabwe or other
universities. We have in the country universities that advertise for degrees in art and design. They are afraid to go and take up those programmes just because they are not practising that art and design. You find that as soon as they leave college, art and design dies a natural death. So in other words you find that to some extent the curriculum becomes irrelevant to the community because they don’t have anywhere to practise what they will have been learning. Only those people who are doing craft have a ground to practise their skills.

Nyathi lamented the lack of understanding of the subject by school heads and other teachers. As a result, the subject has not been taken seriously. It is also quite common in schools and colleges that art is marginalised and has been labelled using derogatory names. This attitude also extends to the community, which does not value the subject. In the primary schools art teachers believed art periods were times for revision or times to go out for extra-curricula activities. As a result no serious art content or concepts are taught. Children are simply given the latitude to draw their favourite subjects. A popular theme in the primary school is “My favourite pet.” Art is also time-tabled right at the end of the day’s activities further revealing attitudinal problems levelled against the subject. Such practice emanates from the long standing belief about the cathartic and therapeutic role of art, where after a day’s work in so called core subjects, children need to release the pent up energies through activities such as drawing and painting. Student teachers also had the same misinformation about art lesson times. This has tended to compromise the significance and relevance of the subject in schools. When art students graduate, they do not go out and teach the subject. This has made the subject a nullity because student teachers have nowhere else to practice the subject. An assessment of student teachers’ practice during teaching practice by DTE team of external assessors over the years
has shown that rarely are students assessed teaching practical subjects, art being one of them. Teachers’ evaluations in both schemes and lesson plans mostly indicate varied excuses for the non-teaching of art lessons. These range from unavailability of art materials, general manual work during art times to interferences by sporting activities.

Academic study was cited as very relevant to the needs of the teacher and pupils. This is contrary to Ndawi’s (2002) observations on relevance of subject studies in teachers’ colleges in Zimbabwe. He found that main study was the least relevant subject in the college curricula.

**Nyathi:** The academic study is very relevant especially when we look at what is embedded in the syllabus. Usually we are talking of art forming the basis and background for teaching each and every subject, for example, child art. The stages that are embedded in child art can make a classroom practitioner understand the pupils that he is teaching and thereby you find it is very easy and simple for that kind of a teacher to understand the pupils that he is teaching and also to deal with their problems even individually. He can deal with their problems having an understanding of what child art is. And even when we look at pupils’ work, how they perform, be it in Geography, History, Mathematics, Shona or any other subject, you find that the teacher can understand pupils better. So you find that academic study is quite relevant.

**Sigauke:** We had two students who got distinctions last year and these students have gone up well. One is teaching at a secondary school because of his main study art, which he did. The other got a good job in Zambia as a manager of some company. He is directing decoration of buildings because of his academic
art. He was gifted and because he had his boost at college, I think it assisted him. Most of them do not go on with their art. They can’t practise it.

While lecturers articulated the significance of academic study in the college curriculum, its role was not properly conceptualised as evidenced from the practical examples they cited. Teaching art at secondary school level was viewed by all the lecturers as an achievement for someone who is primary trained!! They also expected students to divert to other careers upon graduating from college. These efforts seem to be misdirected here considering the purpose of teacher education art curriculum.

Art Curricula Review Framework

All lecturers agreed that there was a great need to review the current syllabi in order to accommodate contemporary art.

Mamvuto: What suggestions would you make in terms of changes to the curriculum?

Masara: If we are to change the curriculum the first thing that we have to change is the ‘O’ level curriculum. The ‘O’ level curriculum currently requires students to write three practical papers and one theory paper. I believe it doesn’t make much sense because there are certain students that might be skilled in practical work only and there are certain students that might benefit from the theory section. It is unfortunate for people to lump all art into one area. Art is such a wide and diversified subject. We are sort of limiting it when we say art. Art covers a wide area. We cover graphic design and commercial design. When students complete the programme they can go into graphic design, commercial
design, fashion design, ceramic design and publication. They can go into actual fine art and design. So the areas are just too broad. Maybe we should split the ‘O’ level paper like the mathematics paper, say we have Option A, which is practical only and then Option B which has the theoretical component. That way we can cover most areas of art and we can give children who have a chance of passing either option. We can give the benefit of the doubt so that they can pass that practical section. When it comes to college we might have a structure whereby we accommodate students that we would want to be inclined to the practical paper. We have students here at college level who are very good on the practical side but sometimes, somehow things are lacking on the theory side. When you bunch it altogether you grade a student as distinctive yet their practical work shows natural talent and ability.

**Paradza:** In schools the headmasters or school administration tend to discriminate those pupils they think are not academically bright. Those are the pupils who do art in schools. Art should be made optional because it doesn’t mean that if a pupil is good in Physics and Mathematics then they cannot do art. It also doesn’t mean that if the child is not good in Maths then they can do art. You find some of these brilliant pupils all round, Maths, Physics, even art. So art and design should be made optional. That’s where we get this negative attitude especially in schools. It’s different here because these students have the same points. Therefore they can’t be discriminated.
Mamvuto: How are they selected into your area? Don’t they choose other main studies and those with nowhere to go, take art?

Paradza: That is what they do at the end but there are those that come by choice and those that come by default because they couldn’t get into Geography and stuff like that. We face problems with such students. Like I indicated earlier on they obviously change. Most end up appreciating art. Coming back to the change in curriculum, I want art to be optional for pupils. The way it is being taught is, I think is alright. It’s OK. The different components that are in the art curriculum in schools, are fair and fine though we have to change and move along with the changing times in terms of technology, in terms of the other methods of teaching.

Masara: I think we are now involved in a vicious circle in that at the same stage our college started taking people who were not interested in the subject, who did the subject as last minute choice. And then that person carries that attitude. And our situation is that we are so understanding that there are people there who might not have the love for the subject or topic. And they manage to meet the standard. They are the 50%, the average student. They go out and they are the teachers who are extremely reluctant to teach the subject. And we have teachers in the rural areas who avoid the subject until they get to a stage whereby there is an opening in town and that person wants to move from the rural area into town. They are now forced by circumstances to teach art. Now we have teachers who are out there who are damaging the students because they never
had any interest in art whatsoever. They are now going into the schools without
the love for art, without even the inkling of what they can do with art. They are
going out there so that they can meet the grade. I can give an example of the
head of Tsholotshlo. He was complaining bitterly about a student from Hillside
who got a place at his school. The man got a place at the school because of his
art. The young man came in and promised heaven and earth that he would teach
the students art. The head agreed even though he knew he would be over-
staffed. So the man came purely to introduce art. The community and school
poured in resources into the subject area. The first year students failed. They
got U’s and E’s. No one passed above a C. The students failed again the second
year. The third year they failed again. The man was eventually transferred to
another school because the parents were threatening violence. I am telling you
the calibre of teacher that go out there because he did art as a second choice
whereby he was doing it just for the sake of it. Unfortunately we are still, and
it’s sad, as an institution we are still releasing them half-backed and
unenthusiastic into the system. And you are hoping that they don’t teach art.

Mamvuto: So you are saying there are problems with the system itself, the
programme, duration of the programme related to the background of the
students?

Masara: Yes, I can compare the programme with the one I underwent at
Chinhoyi whereby it was a class of 12. There were 3 females and the rest were
male. We went through 3 years of art. We really did art in textile design and
ceramics. First year some of us were experiencing problems but by the end of second year everybody was quite competent in the subject. By the end of third year honestly I can vow for everybody in my class, we had done it over and over, so often that we had reached a stage where we were saturated with it. We had reached a stage where we had improved our skills. Maybe not producing brilliant artwork to make us world renowned artists, but a point where anyone from our class could be competent to stand in front of an ‘A’ level class and teach them the basics of art and guide the students to be able to assess and criticise. And I think those are the things that are important. We mustn’t lose sight of art education because it is important for the teacher. What is important for the teacher is to be able to do the basics. They must be skilled. They should be able to draw, maybe not masterpieces but to draw, to understand the art elements, to understand how to apply the different skills whether in painting etc. They should be able to criticise and be able to assess. Those two things are very valuable for a good teacher. Then from there what they need is the content to be able to teach whatever then comes. Without those two skills an art teacher is, I believe, quite useless.

Mamvuto: And then, what changes in terms of content and methodology would you suggest for the curriculum, be it PSB, PSC or Academic Study?

Nyathi: For the academic study I would like to reiterate the point that I have already made, that is specialisation especially at the end of the course, in the final year when students come from TP. During the first year students will be
looking at art and design in general and doing almost everything that is in the syllabus. But when they come back from TP, I want to think if they specialise in areas that they are interested in, the curriculum will be more relevant than what it is right now.

**Sigauke:** We have included computer graphics in our syllabus. We hope that we will be able to get relevant software. Maybe DTE could assist us to get such software.

There was agreement amongst lecturers that the whole art curriculum needed to be revamped from primary school to tertiary level. In teachers’ colleges, syllabus review is done every three years and this has not been consistent at the other two levels of education. The primary school syllabus is dated and is long overdue for such review. Art needs to be recognised and examined at all levels. At primary school, it was suggested that there could be specialist teachers who teach the subject across grades. The subject should also be examined at grade seven. At secondary school level, art could be made an optional subject and not confined to the low ability classes as currently is the practice in most schools. The suggested changes, however, do not seem to draw on contemporary art but modern trends such as computer aided design. This could be a reflection on the lecturers’ limited content about contemporary art. The lecturers also suggested specialisation at college level as it would also help enhance the status of art. Students would become more specialised, focused and competent in both the theory and practical aspect of art.
Multi-value Systems Towards Art as a Subject in Colleges

Art was reported to be accepted as one of the major academic subjects in the college curriculum and it was being treated equally with other subjects by most lecturers. As academics, lecturers know the role of academic subjects in the curriculum. The subject, however, faced resistance from the college administration when it came to purchasing of materials and equipment that the department used. Because of the nature of the subject, there are lots of equipment and consumables needed for the subject unless both lecturers and students reconsider their concept of art to include improvised media and technologies. That way, there will be less strain on the college budget. Paradza and his colleague explained these issues in an interview the researcher had with them:

Paradza: Let me start with acceptance by lecturers. I think they have accepted art as one of the major subjects in the college curriculum and it’s treated equally the same with other subjects. The lecturers I relate with take it as any other subject though sometimes we face resistance from the administration when it comes to purchasing of materials that we use simply because they are quite expensive. It’s not that they don’t want the subject, but it’s the expense part that they are not comfortable with. And looking at the students, when they come here they don’t know much about what art and design is. They are blank, so to speak. But we teach them to appreciate and understand art such that by the time they leave this place most of them will be in a position to talk about art, and to be proud of themselves as art and design students. We have seen that even our best performers are not the ones who come here with say ‘O’ or ‘A’ level art, but they start it here, learn it, and understand it and develop themselves. So I think it
is being treated fairly though we might have one or two people who don’t really appreciate art because of ignorance. They just need to be taught to appreciate it.

**Mamvuto:** Can you comment on the status of art education in your college? What is the position of art education in terms of acceptance and value in your college?

Sigauke: At this college I think it’s not accepted by most students and lecturers. For example, students don’t come to take CDS project in art. We don’t have lecturers coming into art. Though surprisingly this year we had lecturers advising students to take up art. It was quite surprising. Normally they say we give students too much work. And in a way that gives students a negative attitude towards the subject. It comes from the lecturers to the students.

The administration does try to give us materials but we still find that they are not adequate, whether its attitude, I don’t know. Maybe it’s because of the economic situation right now, but we have to beg. Otherwise in some cases we do get positive response. For example, we wanted to make a trip to Great Zimbabwe. It was well taken and we did go. I think we are the only subject that went on a trip.

**Nyathi:** What I have realised about art and design especially in tertiary education is that what most people expect from us is probably not what they are getting. I have realised that when we talk of art people expect the craft that they see beside the roads, probably to be done here at this particular college. You find that when we talk of art and design we have a lot of components, which
include art history, craft itself and quite a number of other things. But when they talk of art from the layman’s point of view, they talk of craft not art and design. So what we produce in actual fact, they do not see the immediate benefits, to the community and even the college at large. They expect us to produce the craft they see beside the roads. But that is not exactly what we are producing because we have a different value of what we call art and design from what they regard as craft. So that is where the problem is.

And some of the lecturers do have that particular problem because when we talk to someone, you hear them saying “in your department where you do drawing.” Everyone whom you talk to in terms of art thinks art and design is drawing only. But they don’t understand the detailed aspects included in art. That is why most of our colleagues, that is, lecturers, don’t accept it as an academic subject, that one can have a bright future through art and design.

**Makore:** To add onto what my colleague has said, we cannot completely divorce the negative attitude from colleagues. There is however a lot of support especially from our principal. Whenever there are Shows like the Masvingo Agricultural Show, the principal first consults us, if the Art department and Home Economics departments could display their things. The same applies when we want to have educational tours, we are consulted. Whenever we talk of an educational tour, they always give us big support. And even on staffing itself, in the art department we have good staffing. We are five compared to other areas.
What I can say is that from these other subject areas, some of our colleagues don’t understand art, what it means in educational terms. They have a negative attitude towards it as a major subject. They don’t know how we operate. What they expect from us has been said by Nyathi, and we are not offering them. So these people need some sort of education because they don’t understand the other approaches of art like DBAE. They are only focusing on production and yet in educational terms we don’t only focus on production. We sometimes focus on aesthetics, criticism and art history. They lack information. But the administration especially the principal, is supporting us quite well.

Nyathi: I want to say that one other problem I have realised especially with our curriculum is that when we talk of art and design, that one is really an umbrella term that includes a number of components and aspects. Of which I would like to believe if we consider specialisation and take it to greater heights, than what we do, I think, will be of help especially to the teachers we train. We do drawing, construction, painting, and print making, but one thing I have realised is that at the end of the course, such kind of a student will have knowledge which is distributed among those particular components. What we are exactly saying is, can’t we produce a student who is best in a particular component say drawing or printmaking? So I would like to think that our curriculum should look into the issue of specialisation, that probably half of the year or in the final year when students come back from TP, they specialise in a particular component they are interested in and develop that particular line so that when
they leave college they have something to do. But with our students, if you ask them say, what have you been doing, they will say we have been drawing, painting and print-making, but he is not an expert in any of those components.

Mamvuto: So that will raise the status of the subject?

Nyathi: I would like to believe that it will raise the status of the subject. By the end of the day we will say like we talk about people like Mukomberanwa or people trained by Mukomberanwa, that they are best in sculpture. So these people have their own line and they can survive along that particular line. So people we produce from tertiary colleges, don’t have a particular component that they are well versed with. They don’t have expertise in any of the components but know art and design in general. They can’t say they can draw well neither can we say they can do anything satisfactorily.

Art and Design as a subject may appear to be expensive if people do not shift from the traditional approaches. There is therefore, a need to reconceptualise the subject and integrate readily available materials and resources the way contemporary artists are doing. The artists did not bemoan the shortage of materials as they could use improvised substitutes. It was clear from the lecturers’ views that they equated material support and provision with acceptance of the subject. They did not take into cognisance financial constraints that could hinder maximum material support to the subject. The fact that there were five lecturers in the subject area, was also viewed by all lecturers as an indication of a positive attitude.
The lecturers cited several reasons for the negative attitude towards the subject. Lecturers from other subjects did not fully understand how art lecturers operated in the subject area. People expected the craft that they saw beside the road to be practised at the college. They were not aware that Art and Design has several disciplinary components, which include art history, aesthetics, criticism and curricula models such as DBAE. They only saw the craft component as constituting art. Makore cited lecturers and students who were only practically oriented as failing to appreciate art as a subject, lack of specialisation in art components has also resulted in negative attitudes among both lecturers and students. Over the training period students do a variety of studio courses but without specialisation. Upon graduating they still do not demonstrate expertise in any of the components and yet they claim that they are art specialists. Such skills limitations are cause for concern requiring serious consideration during the curricula review process. There are now three universities in the country offering art and design as a subject. Some of the courses on offer deal with pedagogical issues in addition to the subject-based content. It is hoped that exposure to such bodies of knowledge will translate to improved teaching in colleges and changes in both lecturers’ and students’ attitudes.

Consolidated Ideas on Teaching of Contemporary Art in Colleges

The general emerging themes can be summarised as follows. At Riverton Teachers’ College art was generally positively viewed by both lecturers and students. It was accepted as one of the core subjects in the college. The curriculum was also viewed as relevant as its content reflected what takes place in the community. Lecturers indicated that they were now relying on locally available materials although Western materials could not be completely substituted. Conversely, lecturers indicated that the scarcity of resources, both financial and material,
limited incorporation of contemporary art into the curriculum. Contemporary art was therefore not studied as intensively as Western art. Students who were recruited into the subject lacked the requisite practical skills and theoretical disciplinary knowledge about the subject. As a result, they would exit college without the confidence to teach the subject. Lecturers had mixed views about the teaching of contemporary art. One lecturer argued that they taught contemporary Zimbabwean art while the other indicated that the curriculum was too Westernised. The major challenge in incorporating contemporary art was cited as lack of literature by local researchers who were supposed to articulate an African perspective in their writing. Teaching methods were also limited to the traditional lecture method leaving out those that could be effectively used in teaching contemporary art. Both lecturers indicated that their examinations had been indigenised and took cognisance of contemporary art. They however suggested changes in the structure of the secondary school examinations and making art optional for students. They echoed the need for skills-oriented curriculum to enable student teachers to confidently teach the subject upon exiting college, a situation not prevailing at the moment. Inadequate contact time was cited as one of the challenges in trying to incorporate contemporary art.

Lecturers from Kingsdale Teachers’ College had mixed feelings about how the subject was viewed at the college. Some of the negative perceptions by college lecturers emanated from lack of knowledge about the subject. The administration was, however, supportive of the subject although they had limitations in terms of financial and material provision. Members felt that if specialisation, particularly in the final (third) year, was introduced that would positively change both lecturers’ and students’ perceptions about the subject.
Art students’ negative attitudes towards the subject, was reported as resulting from lack of relevant art background when they join the department. Even upon exiting college, they still lack the confidence to teach the subject. The lecturers felt that curricula components of Academic Study, Professional Studies Syllabus C, and Professional Studies Syllabus B were relevant to the needs of the student teacher. Members expressed the fact that they used local resources and heritage within reach. They however had the challenge of limited literature on contemporary art. As a result they taught more Western art which has readily available literature and was viewed by students as superior. They suggested that lecturers should produce materials such as modules for use by students.

The lack of resources tends to limit the infusion of contemporary art into the college curriculum and methodologies that lecturers use. Contemporary art was taught theoretically and was not taken into the studio courses. Lack of time for studio practice imposed limitations on appropriate methods that could be used. Lecturers were unanimous that art should be examined at all levels of education, that is, primary, secondary and tertiary levels, if it was going to be taken seriously by the college students and lecturers. There should also be some specific criteria on how students are recruited into the subject, for example, consideration of students’ requisite art background knowledge and skills or experience in a related field.

The researcher noted some contradictions in lecturers’ views. They indicated that they taught Zimbabwean contemporary art using local resources and materials and yet they also reiterated that their curriculum had remained Western oriented because the subject had books and other forms of literature on Western art and was taken seriously by students. It can be concluded that from lecturers’ point of view there is little fusion of contemporary art in the college curriculum.
The following were the overall themes and views that emerged from the two focus group discussions with art lecturers. There was a general consensus among lecturers that the teaching of contemporary art was limited because of lack of adequate information and limited literature among other reasons. There was also a general consensus on the fact that lecturers taught more Western art. Documentary evidence showed that the number of studio courses actually dominated over other theoretical courses, particularly contemporary art. General visual discourse and constructs also showed Western dominance. The curriculum was Western and the canonical works studied were mostly Western. Despite shortages of literature on contemporary art, an interesting issue raised by the lecturers was the unavailability of literature on local art practice. Their argument was that literature by local writers was likely to have an African perspective or outlook compared to that by Western writers, hence its relevance and suitability. I, however, observed a lack of research culture among lecturers despite the fact that all participating lecturers were professionally and academically qualified to research and produce material for use by their students. Their justification for the lack of literature was, therefore, not convincing. As perceived by two lecturers from the two colleges, the general belief was that universities should initiate the writing of material for students, a view refuted by two other lecturers from Kingsdale who suggested that the lecturers themselves should initiate the writing of material on contemporary art for use by both lecturers and students.

The same views emerged from the two institutions about improving interaction between colleges and contemporary artists. While this was advanced as a possible solution, both colleges lamented the lack of resources to finance such interactive activities, for example, through artists in residences, visits to artists’ studios, and mounting of seminars and workshops at which artists would actively participate. There was also general agreement on the need to
teach less Western art. That, however, contradicted the lecturers’ views that they knew very little about contemporary art and that there was a general lack of relevant literature. This was also confirmed by documentary evidence such as teaching programmes and the examinations. Rather than lamenting the shortage of relevant literature (though some good justification), it seemed the most logical argument was the lecturers’ lack of knowledge about contemporary art and the absence of a research culture among lecturers to produce their own materials. They would rather wait for some institutions to research and write educational materials for them.

The lecturers identified three major challenges in the teaching of contemporary art, namely, inadequate literature on contemporary artists, failure to use appropriate methodologies such as involving resource persons, mounting seminars and workshops and lecturers’ limited disciplinary knowledge about contemporary art. The last one appeared to be the most critical. This was evident in documents such as syllabuses, examinations, teaching programmes and internal assessors’ reports that did not reflect a clear conceptualisation of the construct of contemporary art and omission of such content. One cannot effectively teach something they have a flimsy idea about. There was very little that could be implicitly cited as contemporary art in the aforementioned documents. The lecturers’ perception of contemporary art was art of the 1950s to the 1970s and also limited to stone sculpture, pottery and the prehistoric San paintings. Art education was limited to formal institutions such as Serima, Cyrene, The National Gallery of Zimbabwe and Mzilikazi Art and Craft Centre while informal institutions were limited to Tengenenge and Vukutu sculpture communities. These were the only local aspects on Zimbabwean art that were tested in examinations and vaguely identified in syllabus documents.
In the syllabi, various approaches were listed. However, the lecturers found it difficult to implement all the methods because of limited contact time, large class sizes and heavy teaching loads as one lecturer explained, “But such methods take time. You need a lot of time because you need to mark. The marking load that we have ends up a discredit. The group is too big, 56 students to use the methods that I have just given” (Masara). One could not bring an artist in residence when the contact time was only one or two hours per week for PSB and academic study respectively.

Lack of a proper recruitment system for those students who opted into the subject implied that the subject was inundated with novices who were likely to have a negative and uninformed perception about the subject. When such students come across new and demanding content such as contemporary art, they are likely to develop a negative attitude towards the subject. This was most likely because the majority of students who did art academic study had no relevant art background at ‘O’ or ‘A’ levels. They were doing the subject for the first time.

Both groups claimed that the curriculum was relevant to Zimbabwe and was African in nature as it was drawn from the community. However, there was no documentary evidence to support this claim. Instead, the curriculum appeared more Western than African. The two groups also suggested a complete overhaul of the curriculum starting from the primary and secondary school levels, “So the whole curriculum needs to be revamped starting from primary education to make art and design compulsory even from Grade 7… If we change the curriculum at this stage without changing it at primary level, the problem remains the same” (Nyathi). This was supported by Masara when she pointed out that “If you want to change the curriculum, the first thing that we have to change is the ‘O’ level curriculum.” They could not, however, suggest specific curricula content besides structural adjustments such as introducing
specialisation and making the subject optional and examinable at all levels. Making the subject discriminatory creates a negative attitude among learners. Specialisation would improve student proficiency in the subject. Sigauke notes that “…students do everything in their first year and in their third year they look at one area of specialisation and this be stipulated in our syllabus. I think only then can we have students tackling these areas.” Currently, they claimed, the curriculum was producing a half-backed student who perpetuated a negative attitude and stifled the development of the subject. Masara argued that; “Unfortunately we are still, and it’s sad, as an institution releasing them half-baked and unenthusiastic into the system. And you are hoping that they do not teach art.” It would appear that there was lack of understanding among lecturers of what contemporary art is and how it could interface with Western art to make it more relevant to the Zimbabwean situation.

From the documentary evidence and lecturers’ perceptions, it was evident that contemporary art was variegated conceptualised. Some lecturers had a clear conceptual understanding, but when it came to teaching programmes, it was not what they taught. On what suggestions lecturers could make for the curriculum to be more African, indigenous and relevant, most lecturers displayed limited theoretical and pedagogical content showing limited understanding of what contemporary art entails and its critical methodologies. Instead, they focused on ‘O’ and ‘A’ level syllabus changes which were not directly related to their own curricula and practice.

Too much reliance on Western art by lecturers could imply two possible causes: lack of a clear understanding of what contemporary African and Zimbabwean art entailed on the part of lecturers or inadequate knowledge of contemporary art for them to effectively plan for and teach it. On the other hand, lecturers seemed to have limited knowledge even of Western art
(which they claimed they knew) as evidenced by erratic presentation, particularly of the chronology of historical art movements mainly restricted to Impressionism, and Expressionism. Modernism and post-modernism as historical constructs as well as aesthetics and criticism had been taken from a Western perspective not as they related to contemporary Zimbabwean art. This seems to point at the lack of a clear understanding of how the constructs could actually be defined in the context of contemporary African art. There was, therefore, lack of evidence on how lecturers could start from local traditions, contemporary art and the immediate environment as a basis for art teaching/learning programmes as suggested by Lancaster (1982).

Lecturers lamented the lack of relevant literature on contemporary art, which they claimed had become a limiting factor in the effective teaching of contemporary art. At the same time, the lecturers claimed they taught a lot of contemporary art. Such contradictions were difficult to reconcile through both interviews and documentary evidence. From the list of possible teaching approaches/strategies stated in the syllabi, one would assume that they would be effective in the teaching of contemporary art. Lecturers, however, seemed to lack innovation in terms of how to capitalise on these teaching approaches and how to teach contemporary art. Lecturers could not write materials for students, visit artists (lack of resources), use interactive methodologies because of the rigidity of programmes implementation (no specialisation in some colleges), have artists in residencies (such as the Mkoba experience of the 1970s) and had limited seminars and workshops with resource persons as claimed in teaching programmes.

In some syllabi, there was mention of contemporary art but there was nothing in the teaching programmes as a follow up to such topics. Where there was some follow up, contemporary art had been restricted to the first generation of stone sculptors and nothing on the second and third generations, who clearly fall under the contemporary artists category. The
examinations that were analysed confirmed that contemporary art had been restricted to stone sculpture of the 1950s and 1960s, pottery and San paintings (on the visual arts) and establishment of the early formal schools such as Cyrene and Serima on the other hand. There was also too much emphasis on studio courses that did not take into cognisance contemporary perspectives, discourses, media and materials. Documentary evidence and lecturers’ views also showed that there was more emphasis on contemporary art as being more applicable to academic study than in PSB courses. Lecturers seemed more comfortable teaching academic study, a subject they guarded against relegation. It was, therefore, treated with high esteem, hence greater attempts at infusing new content like contemporary art. PSB on the other hand was given lesser attention in terms of new innovations. Lecturers seemed to have problems on how to make the PSB curricula reflect contemporary art practice.

Summary

The focus of this chapter was to examine the teaching of contemporary art in teachers’ colleges. It has been observed that contemporary art is satisfactorily taught in the institutions, particularly stone sculpture, artists’ biographies and related artists’ visual practice. This was however, confined more to the first generation of stone sculptors. The second and third generations were minimally taught as well as other art genres. Documentary evidence on contemporary art in Zimbabwe was limited. However, it emerged that in the examinations, attempts were made to include questions on contemporary art. Syllabi, schemes of work and teaching programmes reflected little on contemporary art. This can have a negative impact on teaching of contemporary art in schools as the student teachers from colleges are the ones who go and practise in schools during teaching practice and also upon completion. Contemporary art was
normally taught during theory lectures. It was not evident how the notion could be taken into studio practice, which is the predominant component in the subject. Challenges in including contemporary art have been cited. In particular, the lack of literature with an African or local thrust as well as resources are a challenge. However, artists would be happier to have more interactions and dialogue with students so that they appreciate contemporary art practice.

The next chapter is devoted to findings on the teaching of contemporary art in primary and secondary schools.
Chapter Six  
Contemporary Art in Primary and Secondary Schools

Introduction
The study investigated the teaching of contemporary art in both primary and secondary schools. The main approaches used in investigating art teaching in schools include analysing curricula documents at the two levels and interviewing secondary school art teachers. In this chapter I present, analyse and interpret findings from both levels of school. Findings from an analysis of curricula documents from primary school to ‘A’ Level are presented first. This is followed by art teachers’ views on the teaching of contemporary art in schools. These views are presented under the themes Multi-conceptual view about contemporary art; Multiactivity approach to integration of contemporary art; Teaching of contemporary art: Impeding constraints; and The art curricula: Its relevance to Zimbabwe. In conclusion a consolidated summary on the teaching of contemporary art at both primary and secondary school levels is then presented.

The Primary School Art Syllabus, Grades 1-7
The document contained general syllabus aims; specific objectives categorised according to the Grades 1-3, 4-5, and 6-7; and content objectives. The content objectives for all grades fell under drawing, painting, modelling, printmaking, construction, fibre craft and textiles and cultural history. The last section of the syllabus dealt with general methodology that could be adapted by teachers according to specific circumstances or situations. It was evident that the content area of cultural history, across all grades, had content that related to contemporary art.
Most objectives across grades in this component dealt with contemporary practice. Examples of the objectives that reflected contemporary art were:

Grades 1-3

- Watch and talk to local craftsperson at work;
- Collect, name and display cultural artefacts;

Grades 4-5

- Visit local homes and look at the art in the homes;
- Observe and interview a local craftsperson at work;

Grades 6-7

- Write about artists of local or national importance in the past and present;
- Visit art galleries, cultural centres, the market place and national monuments.

The objectives for the studio areas, however, did not show how pupils could make use of the cultural history experiences as enriching domains in their practice. Instead, the objectives simply focused on acquisition and practice of studio skills. An analysis of schemes of work showed no follow up on aspects of contemporary art stated in the syllabus. The teachers, instead, only focused on acquisition and application of studio skills. The cultural history experiences were absent in the schemes of work and daily plans.

**The Introductory CDU Art and Craft Booklet**

The same content areas of drawing, painting, printing, modelling, fibre craft and construction, as in the syllabus, were stated. The booklet dealt more with issues of teaching such as resourcefulness, subject integration and evaluation. The booklet elaborated on how the different
topics could be taught. There was, however, no indication on how teachers could relate the studio areas to contemporary practice. The booklet, therefore, focuses more on practice of studio skills independent of contemporary practice.

**The Ordinary Level Art Syllabus (6015) (ZGCE)**

**Syllabus Aims and Objectives**

These were categorised into two sections: aims for paper 1 (theory) and those for papers 2-4 (studio-based). Two aims for papers 2-4 that could possibly be related to contemporary art were:

To stimulate, encourage and develop;

- An appreciation of the role played by art in the cultural and individual development of the nation;
- Awareness and appreciation of the relationship between art and the individual within the historical, social and environmental context.

The objectives, however, did reflect contemporary practice. The objectives for paper 1 were more explicit about contemporary art:

- …explore ideas and meanings in the work of artists, craftspeople and designers;
- …learn about diverse roles and functions of fine art, craft and design in life past and present times in different cultures; and
- …develop a broad knowledge and appreciation of indigenous and global, historical trends in the visual arts.

Similarly, some theory assessment objectives also reflected contemporary art, for example,
• …identify prominent local visual artists, their works and the contribution to the artistic heritage of Zimbabwe;

• …evaluate how art mirrors society; and

• …make critical analytical value judgment of visual art-forms in formal and informal display of exhibitions.

Syllabus objectives were, however, restricted to sculpture while assessment objectives were more open to other visual art-forms such as paintings and textiles.

**Syllabus Content**

Theory content was split into three areas according to the structure of the syllabus as follows:

Ancient Egyptian art; Art of Southern African countries; and Zimbabwe during colonial and post-colonial eras. The first two, as stated in the syllabus, were historically based and, therefore, did not relate to contemporary practice. They focused on historical art of the stated geographical regions. The third area had objectives that incorporated contemporary practice although the majority of objectives (four) related to stone sculpture. Two objectives were on art schools during the colonial era such as Serima and Cyrene. The objectives that specifically reflected contemporary practice were:

• …identify prominent local sculptors in our times like Nicholas Mukomberanwa, David Mutasa, Brighton Sango, Thomas Mukarobgwa, Charles Fernandos, Joseph Ndandarika etc;

• …describe art marketing trends and their influences on Zimbabwean art;

• …describe the types of media used in sculpture; and

• …state other forms of art different from sculpture.
The content for studio areas had no indication as to how it related to contemporary art. Instead, it focused on acquisition and practice of studio skills. There was, therefore, likelihood that contemporary art was perceived as stone sculpture. This could possibly have emanated from its dominance among the practised visual forms in Zimbabwe.

**The Advanced Level Art Syllabus (9191)**

**Syllabus Aims and Objectives**

Similar to the ‘O’ level syllabus, the aims of the syllabus did not clearly articulate the concept of contemporary art, for example, “…an awareness and appreciation of the interdependence of Art and Design and the individual, within cultural contexts.” However, one objective under knowledge and critical understanding related to the construct of contemporary art; “Make critical judgements and show a developing appreciation and cultural awareness through personal ideas and images.”

**Syllabus Content**

Description of the research paper (Paper 4) clearly stated contemporary art:

“…The historical, contemporary and cultural influences on the candidate’s work should be documented along with any visits to exhibitions, contemporary artists and crafts-persons, architectural sites and industries.”

Similarly, descriptions of some content areas such as textiles, ceramics, fashion design, print-making also referred to contemporary practice. The following excerpts illustrate the links:

- …visits to museums, collections and practising designers are essential to help candidates appreciate…;
• …Candidates should have some knowledge of the work of contemporary designers…; and
• …It is hoped that the candidates will become aware of both the historical development of print-making and the work of contemporary print-makers.

In summary, it was evident that secondary school art syllabi had components on contemporary visual practice. This was the focus embedded in the localisation of the curriculum in the 1990s so that it would be more relevant to Zimbabwe (Abrahams, 2000). There is, however, a need to properly articulate such content in the aims and objectives, which have remained somewhat silent. Likewise, the content could also be properly articulated in the studio courses in both syllabi, particularly the ‘O’ level (6015) one. The content on contemporary art should be clearly stated and be from different art genres. There was evidence in the ‘O’ level syllabus that contemporary art was conceptually confined to stone sculpture, a reflection of how it was perceived in the college academic study syllabi for the participating colleges. There could be a clearer attempt to broaden the concept to include other visual forms such as ceramics, textiles and painting and related discourses.

At ‘A’ level there was a more deliberate attempt to identify such content in the paper and content descriptions. On the whole, there seemed to be a more deliberate attempt to fuse contemporary art in secondary schools than in teacher training colleges. This raises questions as to how colleges can adequately prepare student teachers when their own understanding of contemporary visual practice is limited. One teacher, Mrs Gore, actually conceptualised contemporary art in Zimbabwe as all art practised excluding rock paintings. Such understanding was clearly reflected in the ‘O’ level national syllabus objectives and content. One missing facet of contemporary art in the documents was the crafts. All documents tended
to focus on fine art only as constituting contemporary art. There are many crafts-persons in Zimbabwe who specialise in a variety of crafts at local and commercial levels but these are not studied.

**Teachers’ Views on the Teaching and Learning of Contemporary Art**

The following section articulates secondary school art teachers’ views on the teaching of contemporary art in secondary schools. Excerpts have been included to substantiate their views.

**Multi-Conceptual Views about Contemporary Art**

Mrs Mamutse from Rava College broadly conceived contemporary art as modern, new and up to date in line with what is happening in the world. She also elaborated on the nature of contemporary art as art that expressed the feelings of the people of that particular time. She identified Zimbabwean contemporary art as characterised by expressiveness. It was, therefore, mostly fine art. She explained thus:

**Mamutse:** My understanding of contemporary art is art mainly there to express the feelings of the people. Contemporary art depends on the feelings of the people in general and it’s for a hobby. You find that people express their views of what is happening in society through paintings. Even in sculpture, artists express the views of the society. So I would say contemporary art is mainly to express the views of that certain time.
Mamvuto: How would you differentiate it from fine art because you are talking of expressiveness of art?

Mamutse: Fine art to me is the representation of nature as it is. Someone observes and they see what is there and they represent it in picture form, in pictorial form, but with limited expression.

Mamvuto: Let me come back to the term contemporary. What is the meaning of contemporary in general terms?
Mamutse: The term contemporary means modern. It is something which is modern, new and up to date in line with what is happening in the world.

Mamvuto: Can you give examples of contemporary artists in Zimbabwe?
Mamutse: Contemporary artists in Zimbabwe are artists such as Doris Kampira who expresses herself through prints and paintings. She actually expresses the Zimbabwean woman, how she is viewed by society and her art is so symbolic of human feelings about women. I know of Charles Kamangwana, Funny Ndlovu and Chikonzero Chazunguza.

The teachers had varied interpretations of contemporary art. While Mamutse correctly identified renowned contemporary artists, three of whom participated in this study, Gore from Hilltop High School had misconceptions of the term. While it is difficult to locate as to when contemporary exactly started, a debateable issue really, the idea of the here and now could be a
better conceptualisation than the prehistoric rock art as well as pre-independence Zimbabwe sculpture and art from institutions such as Serima and Cyrene (of the 1930s and 1940s). With such understanding it would be difficult for the teacher to effectively teach contemporary art. Appreciating art from an era does not make it contemporary. The fact that contemporary art is not deliberately and properly articulated at college level during initial teacher training could, as evidenced through the analysis of college documents and through interviews, mean transferring on to the would-be teachers, that same kind of understanding. The following exchange presents Gore’s understanding of contemporary art:

**Gore:** My understanding of contemporary art is art of today and yesteryear and even beyond because we are still appreciating it as art of today. Even if we look at, for example, here in Zimbabwe, pre-independence sculpture, we still view it as art of today because very little changes have taken place.

**Mamvuto:** Even Cyrene art is contemporary?

**Gore:** Yes, it’s still contemporary. I think in Zimbabwe we don’t have anything beyond contemporary.

**Mamvuto:** Do you mind giving it some timeframe?

**Gore:** When dealing with Zimbabwean art, I can’t give it a time frame. I can’t because like I said you are looking at even the art of rock painting. The rock painting, is old art, prehistoric, but everything else is contemporary.

**Mamvuto:** Do you teach contemporary art?
**Gore:** Yes, I teach contemporary art. It’s unavoidable. You cannot avoid teaching contemporary art because that’s the art we are doing now and that’s the art we were doing yesteryear. That’s the art we use as examples, that’s the art we show our kids.

**Mamvuto:** For example?

**Gore:** For example, work done by impressionists, as far as I am concerned we can still term it contemporary because it’s from there that we have borrowed what we are doing today even the sculpture that we have in Zimbabwe. We have sculpture, which was done even before my time, and we still term it contemporary. So you find that that’s the type of art that we will show our children as examples of how art is done in Zimbabwe, which is always done in Zimbabwe.

Further identifying impressionist art (of the 1870s) as contemporary art casts doubts on how she would effectively teach the subject. Identifying a movement such as the Renaissance that impacts on contemporary art does not make that art movement contemporary. Such understanding negates and contradicts definitions by several authorities, for example, Jones (1985) Smith (2011) and Smith, Enwezor and Condee (2008). These authorities view contemporaneity of art as characterised by diversity in means of art production, techniques, art content and significant meaning. Smith (2011) locates contemporary in the second decade of the 21st century gaining ground in the eighties. In Africa countries that were colonised including Zimbabwe, contemporary art is a post-colonial phenomenon.
Multi-Activity Approach to Integration of Contemporary Art

The teachers are making an effort to teach aspects of contemporary art. The main attributes of impressionism that are found in contemporary art include the effect of light on objects, capturing the fleeting moments, and the spontaneous brush stroke. These techniques can be seen in the work by Charles Kamangwana (Today's paper, Headline, Vendor, etc.), Doris Kampira (Supper time, etc.) and David Chinyama (Scorched land, Morning drizzle, Township, etc.).

Further analysis of the participating artists’ work however, shows no sole reliance on the impressionist style. A further analysis of Cambridge reports and ZIMSEC examination results in schools actually indicates that examiners are more interested in this kind of approach. Gallery exhibitions are also inundated with such art, which could imply that both teachers and students are benefitting from such gallery visits displaying the above style of painting. Western art is being used as the primary source for introducing contemporary art. As Mamutse puts it:

I teach contemporary art. After I have taken children through some courses in observation, and practical skills on how to draw, how to paint different things in nature, different things in society, I then introduce that element of expression by referring to other artists like the impressionists. Normally I introduce children to impressionism because this is where expressionism started whereby a child is not just depicting something as it is in nature but they are adding an element of their own thinking to the image that they are producing. So I teach and introduce this expressiveness bit by bit, starting with impressionism up to expressionist period where we find artists like Jackson Pollock, you know, art for art’s sake coming into it and children really love it. They end up exploring things like abstraction.
We also talk about art to show that an artwork is not only there to represent or to depict something in nature but it is there to tell a story.

**Mamvuto:** How do you incorporate contemporary art in your teaching?

**Mamutse:** I incorporate contemporary art in my teaching by organising visits to art galleries and organising talks with artists which is a must in my syllabus so that children are aware of the local art and artists. I start introducing the idea of local art as from Form One where I teach the topic ‘What is art and What type of art is there in our surrounding. I teach children to appreciate our own local art and then Western art. So I introduce the concept as early as Form One and take it up as I teach up to ‘A’ level. In my teaching of practical work, I have some lessons where I discuss local art with the children. I don’t teach them as a theory lesson as such but in my teaching I make sure that I refer to local art so that they continue with that appreciation.

She cited Western artists such as Jackson Pollock as fundamental in the teaching of abstraction—a critical notion in contemporary Zimbabwean art. Pollock is a Pop artist of the 1960s who was instrumental in the popularisation of mass production of art with the help of assistants. Some of his work such as the *Campbell soup cans*, *The Brillo boxes* and *Marylin* show collaborative work as well as the use of mechanisation in art production. That approach has been taken into contemporary art today by for example, Chiko Chazunguza when I interviewed him. Doris, David Chinyama and Chiko have also taken symbolism as key in their work. Visits to galleries and art exhibitions are some of the contemporary methodologies to the teaching of art. The
interactive methodology characterised by discussions, interviewing artists, writing about artists and art production inspired by these artists is used in the ‘A’ Level research paper. It is a useful approach in getting students to master the various styles practised by contemporary artists.

This was congruent with what the researcher observed in his analysis of the teacher’s schemes of work. There was a predominance of Western art, particularly modern art from mid-19th century to the present. Zimbabwean art was taught sparingly let alone the broader concept of African art. Visits to galleries were satisfactorily documented. At ‘A’ level, all students did the research project and it was mandatory that they researched on a particular artist or artists as required by the syllabus. Teaching of contemporary art at ‘O’ level was, however, limited according to her schemes of work compared to ‘A’ level. Mrs Mamutse also infused contemporary art when teaching practical work as she reflected directly by her own words:

I have some lessons where I discuss local art with the children. I refer to local art in my teaching. I don’t teach them as a theory lesson as such, but in my studio teaching I make sure that I refer to local art so that they continue with that appreciation.

This, therefore, meant that contemporary art could be used as an enriching domain during studio practice. An assessment of her schemes of work and lesson plans did not yield anything related to contemporary art. Studio skills were the ones that were schemed for and there was no indication on how to incorporate contemporary art. Her focus was on skills acquisition. This has been the predominant approach since the inception of the expression theory. The thrust was on children expressing themselves and the teacher not much concerned about the theory that can actually inform the production. More contemporary approaches such as DBAE and Critical
Studies focus on the role of aesthetics, criticism and art history as enriching domains to studio practice. The following were her claims:

Gore: The major way in which I infuse contemporary art into my teaching is by way of using it as examples. Taking children out to the art galleries, Chapungu sculpture garden, showing them this contemporary art. That’s how we infuse it. Once in a while you show them pictures but then very little time is spent on that kind of thing because normally you would take it in when you are talking about theory, when you are dealing with the theory component of art teaching. At Form Four level it’s only a quarter. It only contributes a quarter of the total mark. So you find that very little time is spent on that. Most of the time is spent on actual art production. At ‘A’ level, yes more time is spent because at least there you have the project. So you know that your students can actually do an in-depth study of this contemporary art whether it’s in design, sculpture, painting or drawing. I think at ‘A’ level we infuse it more because we use it more than we would at lower levels.

Mamvuto: So are you saying contemporary art is limited to theory?

Gore: It’s limited more to theory because that’s where we have a study of that contemporary art, the actual study. Yet in most cases when we start producing you can mention that there is this and that or maybe you can show a picture, and say this is what we are talking about. For the actual practice in the classroom we
rarely have people taking time to get into that contemporary art. You just concentrate on producing and making sure that children produce.

In most cases you don’t even have examples. In most remote schools there are no libraries, they can’t get books, they can’t get even magazines. So in those cases there is nothing. There is no infusion whatsoever. There are no examples to show. But for those who are able to, it’s the ideal situation but not the real situation prevailing in the classroom. It’s ideal that we should be able to say, ok, today we are doing drawing, or this week we are concentrating on painting. In most cases you just take information from what you know and that’s the information that you are going to use for those kids. You know the basics, you know the skills that you want to teach. So that is what you are going to show the kids. That is the information you are going to give the kids instead of drawing on this contemporary art.

However, there were some challenges. Very little time was spent on teaching contemporary art. She claimed that at ‘O’ level, contemporary art accounted for 25% of the total marks that is, in the theory paper. Most of the time was spent on actual production. Contemporary art was only taught during theory lessons and not as an enriching domain for studio practice. Studio art was, therefore, alienated from contemporary visual practice.

In her view, at ‘A’ level more time was spent on teaching contemporary art because there was the project “so that students can actually do an in-depth study of this contemporary art, whether it’s in design, sculpture, painting or drawing. I think at ‘A’ level we infuse it more because we use it more than we would at lower levels.” Her claim was congruent with what I, as researcher
observed in the analysis of documents. Clear objectives and content on contemporary art were identified in the ‘A’ level national syllabus than in the ‘O’ level syllabus. Similarly, the teachers’ schemes of work reflected more contemporary art at ‘A’ level than it did at ‘O’ level. However, limiting contemporary art to theory lessons had implications on its total inclusion and its probable impact and influence on studio practice.

It can, therefore, be concluded that studio practice was minimally informed by contemporary art. This is implied by Gore. What is emerging from her explanation is that contemporary art was rarely taught. She also cited remote schools, which did not have library books or magazines, “So in those cases there is nothing. There is no infusion what-so-ever. There are no examples to show.” In the majority of schools that had access to relevant materials and resources, that was ideal for teaching at ‘A’ level, but it was not what was obtained on the ground.

**Teaching of Contemporary Art in Secondary Schools: Impeding Constraints**

Mrs Mamutse cited only one major challenge. The challenge emanated from the fact that at ‘O’ level, she chose papers for students, which she felt they could successfully handle. It would appear her selection actually reflected her practical competencies. However, those papers left out contemporary art but focused on observational, interpretive and design skills as she recalled:

> My biggest challenge is that the papers, which I choose to teach, are the papers that I think children will pass. Those are practical papers. I don’t have special time where I say I am teaching theory and I am going to test children in that theory because I want them to do papers which I think they will pass. Especially Paper 1, which is an observation study, Paper 2 is interpretive study and then
Paper 3, which is design study and there is paper 4 which is a research that children are supposed to do, based on local artists. So I find that most children opt for the observation and design papers. I introduce theory but they are not tested in that theory. They just have to show their knowledge. So it’s a challenge in that you don’t have time to really test the children in theory about contemporary art.

Mamvuto: Is it not possible to actually test some theoretical knowledge about contemporary art in some studio courses?

Mamutse: It’s possible but it demands time. Looking at the nature of my programme, I will be aiming to teach the children how to draw because by the end of the day most of them must acquire skills in drawing. So to concentrate on something which won’t be demanded like writing some essays based on maybe Van Gogh or Manet you will be demanding too much.

Although she taught theory about contemporary artists, students were not tested in that theory. Mamutse could not, however, elaborate on how the theoretical content on contemporary art could be reflected in practical work. She indicated that she did not concentrate much on something that was not demanded in examinations like writing essays but on students acquiring manipulative skills that would be tested in the papers she chose for them. This could be a weakness in the current syllabi. Assessment objectives for practical skills could actually demand appropriate reference to contemporary art.
The major challenges Gore cited emanated from the general belief that art was for the academically challenged. As a result, art classes were inundated with such artistically barren students. That impacted negatively on the way such students appreciated and committed themselves to the subject. Trips to art-related centres such as galleries and artists’ studios were, as a result, not so fruitful as Gore explained:

In my case, the major challenge that I face is that, even if I take the children out to the gallery, because they have such little appreciation of art itself, sometimes it’s not a worthwhile trip. They are not even interested in what you have taken them to see. So at the end of the day you find that they have taken nothing in. Even if you ask them questions they have taken nothing in. So it goes back to the basics. Like I am saying, they lack the appreciation of the subject. Most of the time, you are given children who are deemed not bright enough. The academically challenged children are the ones we normally have in our classes. Once in a while you get a brainy child but most of the time you have academically challenged children. And because they already have a problem, it’s very difficult for you then to sit down and try to incorporate or try to make them appreciate contemporary art because they have already agreed to themselves that they are academically challenged. So they won’t give much time to the subject or topic you are teaching them. Even if you take them out as I am saying there is really very little knowledge and appreciation of what you have gone to show them as contemporary art. And because of that, it’s a major challenge. At the end of the day you have not achieved much. You have gone to
show them something, you come back and then you try to go through what you have shown them. And we always see that what a person sees is actually more striking and stays in their memory than something that you do theoretically. But in some cases you find that even if you go with them to the gallery and go back to the classroom there is no impact. They can’t even remember what they saw. They can’t remember what they talked about with the guys at the gallery, if you had someone taking them for a tour. I found that to be a great challenge.

**Mamvuto:** But won’t you be having a schedule of activities to guide you?

**Gore:** We prepare a schedule of activities. You go through the activities, yes. After you have gone through the activities you come back with the kids. They still have very little appreciation of the subject as a whole. So that really affects their ability to understand or to appreciate contemporary art for what it is.

**Mamvuto:** Any challenges in terms of resources to teach contemporary art?

**Gore:** In my case, I wouldn’t say I have any problems with materials or resources as such because I get most of what I need. And I am able to take the kids to where the galleries are, where the work is, where the artists are. When it comes to equipment, the equipment is provided. You find that there are some that are not as lucky as I am, who really can’t get that exposure.

The issue of student selection in the subject has serious implications on student performance and the teacher’s efforts in incorporating contemporary art. However, if innovative approaches
are used, even the academically challenged can understand contemporary art. We need to remember that these are not special learners. The issue was also raised by college lecturers from Kingsdale Teachers’ College who indicated that some such students, eventually end up doing well to the extent of some getting distinctions.

**The Art Curricula: Its Relevance to Zimbabwe**

Mamutse suggested ways through which students would benefit from contemporary art. Firstly, students had to be creative themselves. They had to appreciate the art that they saw. They also became knowledgeable in the field of art as they interacted with different media used by artists. Secondly, they could learn to identify places where art is found. These include the various art galleries, various artists’ studios, institutions, and art centres. They could also become enterprising themselves in the art field. The practical skills they learnt in studio courses could enable them to start their own business ventures. Fourthly, they would learn to see the “relationship between what they are doing in class and the outside world as they get to see people practising some of the skills, which they are taught in class.”

Mamutse further explained how students benefit from contemporary practice or contemporary art:

*Students benefit from contemporary art because they get to be creative themselves, they get to appreciate the art they see and become knowledgeable in the field of art as they interact with different mediums such as TV. When people talk about certain artists, children can really comment. They learn to identify places where art is found. They become enterprising themselves in the art field.*
They also see a relationship between what they are doing in class and the outside world as they get to see people practising some of the skills, which they are being taught in class.

Gore highlighted several benefits that students could derive from the study of contemporary art as follows:

Well, I feel that the greatest benefit for the child is to understand the diversity of art as a whole, the diversity of art and the possibilities of art. Because you are looking at art which is reflecting the world you are living in and which might be reflecting a world that is, maybe not too far in the past but a world they might not have experienced themselves. And not only that, but the diverse areas of contemporary art. It also exposes the child to so many possibilities even career-wise. You are not looking at art as drawing, painting and sculpture which is what most people think about when you talk about art. You are looking at art as design and giving it a function instead of art for art’s sake, instead of just art for appreciation. The fact that you have given it a function helps the children to also appreciate it more. They know that contemporary art can be used for something. It can be of use to them and once they go out there and they see some of it in action it actually helps them to appreciate it more and to be more involved in it.

The immediate benefit highlighted is that students get to familiarise themselves with the different genres of art as practised by contemporary artists. Students would also be exposed to the many possibilities that one can explore with art, including careers. There is also the
broadening of the concept of art, which currently is limited to the major practical activities such as drawing. Students would also learn to give their work a function.

Mamutse described the present curriculum as very relevant from the way it was structured. “It is structured in such a way that children are channelled to different career paths such as fashion design, environmental design, as well as art as a hobby.” Children could also do things like observational study, fabric design and interior design, which are very relevant to the needs of the people of Zimbabwe. She had a thorough scrutiny of the syllabus. She elaborates on her ideas as they are given below:

According to the syllabus that I am teaching, I find the curriculum to be very relevant. It is structured in such a way that the children are channeled to different career paths such as fashion design, environmental design and art as a hobby. They can do things like still life, where they can do observation of things in nature, the human figure etc. They can also do things such as fabric design and interior design. The curriculum is so wide and it offers children with such a wide choice. Therefore I find it to be very relevant to what the children are going to take up in their tertiary education as career paths.

Mamvuto: Are such careers available in Zimbabwe? You have mentioned fashion design, interior decoration, are they available at tertiary level and in the community?

Mamutse: The availability of such career paths in Zimbabwe in the formal sector and tertiary education is limited, especially if we look at some of the
things that are done at polytechnics. They are basically limited to art as a hobby and a pastime. You find that they stress so much on sculpture and the drawing of the human figure and maybe representation of ideas in society in such a way that when the child comes out of that tertiary education they are limited to art for exhibition. So in the formal sector we don’t really find things like fashion design in Zimbabwe. Interior design, environmental design etc. are not there. What we have in Zimbabwe is that art in the community where certain individuals may want to offer some sort of training to people who are interested in things like fashion design. It is not quite formal. We have prominent names in Zimbabwe of people who are into fashion design. We often see them on TV. It’s not something which is formal. People have ventured into design and advertising and things like that. Very limited private colleges offer this and some people may go through some kind of training under the supervision of experts, but it’s not a formal thing.

Relevant the syllabus may be, Mamutse argued that there were limited formal art training opportunities. For example, the few polytechnics tended to focus on art for exhibition (gallery art). There was so much stress on sculpture, drawing, painting and related areas. After graduating from such institutions, students mostly practised art for exhibition instead of practical studio solutions to daily life. Areas such as fashion design, environmental design, interior decoration and advertising, which are practical in life, were said to be limited to private institutions and individuals who had some flair in those areas. There were prominent contemporary designers in the informal sector, who had managed to uphold these critical areas.
Gore from Hilltop High School echoed the relevance of the art and design curriculum. This mainly came from the diverse topics and genres that were taught, which linked well with industry, for example, designing. Design skills were useful in contemporary design practice. Art was also viewed as a foreign currency earner and, therefore, topics such as drawing, painting and sculpture which were emphasised in the curriculum were relevant. She, however, explained some shortcomings with the present state of the curriculum “…we have streamlined the curriculum too much in such a way that there are things that we feel are important that were left out of the syllabus, especially art history in terms of the old masters, Greek art, and aesthetics. It’s not there.” Such areas would enable the child to understand studio practice better and appreciate the subject and art-related careers such as arts management. Lack of appreciation of the subject had been the cause for the limited number of indigenous people who ventured into the visual arts, she claimed. She explained the relevance of the curriculum:

I think the present art curriculum is very relevant to Zimbabwe especially when we look at the fact that we might be underdeveloped in terms of the economy and so on, but over the years we have built a very good industry which is covered by the topics given in the curriculum such as design on paper. Art as a whole is quite a major foreign currency earner in Zimbabwe. So the fact that our curriculum covers drawing and painting, carving, sculpture and so on, makes it quite relevant. The only problem that I can have a look at is the fact that we have streamlined the curriculum too much in such a way that there are some things that we feel are important that are not in the syllabus especially art history in terms of the old masters, Greek art, aesthetics and so on. It’s not there. But at
the end of the day for the child to really understand what’s going on in the production of art even if they want to get into management of art if they don’t have that concept it’s difficult for them to appreciate art as a whole. I think that’s one of the reasons why there are not that many indigenous people in Zimbabwe who are interested in art. They don’t have the appreciation part. So as far as I am concerned, yes, the curriculum is relevant but it’s too streamlined.

**Teachers’ General Views about Contemporary Art**

In summary Mamutse argued that while contemporary art in Zimbabwe was mainly art for art’s sake, it had become too commercialised. People were producing art just to earn a living. She argues:

> My general perception about contemporary art in Zimbabwe is that, yes, it is art for its own sake, for people to appreciate but it is becoming too commercialised. People are doing this art just for a living. The creative part of it, yes, it is there but people are stressing so much on mass production. They are looking for the forex, which everybody else is looking for. So the artists tend to do art that will attract foreign buyers. There are few people who really appreciate art in Zimbabwe.

This meant that the creative and expressive domains of art are not being adequately valued. She believes that the number of indigenous people who really appreciated art was limited and as a result artists were producing art for the international tourist market.

According to Gore, there were so many interesting things about contemporary Zimbabwean art. Artists are showing maturity. Instead of just depending on skills, ideas,
aspirations and abilities handed down by their predecessors, the artists are now exploring new horizons. Artists such as Benhura “fused our local ideas and international ideas. He is exposed.” There were however some budding artists who instead of exploring their own individuality, tended to imitate their mentors as Gore observed:

I find Zimbabwe contemporary art very interesting in that we are maturing as artists, instead of just depending on our forefathers handing down their skills, abilities, and ideas. If we look at sculpture that was done by the first generation of sculptors, it is the same sculpture, which is being done today, because it is handed down through the fathers. It’s the same ideas, thoughts, and the same inspiration, except for a few cases where we have adopted Benhura’s ideas. He has fused our local ideas and international ideas. He is exposed. Even in drawing and painting we have our present artists, our budding artists, continuing on from their tutors. If you see work done by artists who were taught by Kamangwana, they always echo Kamangwana’s style. And because of that it gives it a dreary sort of thing. Which means our artists have a problem of not being fully exposed to different ideas and aspirations. It’s almost like they are afraid to try out something different. They want to stick to what their tutors taught them because they think that is the thing, which is going to sell. They are afraid to bring out their own individuality. Everyone is playing it safe because they want it to sell. None of our budding artists seem to be doing art for appreciation, for their own fulfillment. They are doing it more for the market, the international market. They always believe that artists who have made it on
the international market are doing what people want. They will also try and streamline their ideas the same way.

The budding artists imitated renowned artists mainly because they thought that was the proper art. They did not seem to be doing art for appreciation, for their own fulfilment. They were doing it more for the international market. They always believed those people who had made it on the international market had the right panacea and they would, therefore, “also try and streamline their ideas the same way.” In her comment, Gore only focused on traditionalists whose thrust is on perpetuating traditional art. There are however several college trained, souvenir artists and popular artists whose practice has given rise to the second and third generation artists in Zimbabwe. These are detached from traditional art and some have incorporated art from other traditions, particularly Western.

Summary of Views from Secondary School Art Teachers
Gore described the present secondary school art curricula as relevant to the needs of the Zimbabwean student, particularly in terms of building career. Topics that are useful to industry are embedded in the syllabi. She however viewed them as too streamlined in that topics such as aesthetics that are critical in arts management were missing. She had challenges in defining contemporary art. Her definition embraced old art as long as the art influences or impacts on contemporary art. She claimed to teach contemporary art. Her methodologies include excursions to artists’ studios, galleries and inviting resource persons and guest artists. Some examination papers particularly at ‘A’ level, for example, a research paper, demand that students do research on some contemporary artists. For the majority of students, contemporary art had remained confined to theory lessons. She did not take the art into the studio to show its
impact on students’ own practice. There were a number of challenges that impacted on the teaching of contemporary art. These are, lack of resources for some of the schools, teaching a cohort of students deemed academically challenged and unmotivated, and inadequate contact time. She found contemporary art interesting although up-coming artists tend to echo their masters’ styles instead of being original. She viewed contemporary art as lacking in diversity as it is mostly controlled by patronage, the international market. Overall, her perception was that contemporary art is taking a positive route. She envisaged the critical role of contemporary art in exposing children to the many possibilities and careers in art not just for art’s sake.

Mamutse perceived the current art curricula as relevant as they channelled students into various career paths, for example, interior design, fashion design, and environmental design. However, some of these careers are not formally offered in public institutions such as polytechnics but are offered by individuals within the confines of their private studios.

In her teaching, Mamutse introduced aspects of contemporary art starting at Form I and gradually spiralling the content. In some studio courses, she also taught aspects of contemporary art. Her strategies include visits to artists’ ateliers and galleries. Mamutse encountered some challenges in the teaching of contemporary art. Firstly, she would choose option papers for students, which she thought they would pass in their examinations, This tends to limit students’ options. As a result, most of the options she selected had little to do with contemporary art. Secondly, taking contemporary art into the studio was time consuming. She felt more time should be spent producing art rather than talking about contemporary art, which in most cases, would not be examined. Students benefit from contemporary art in that they can link it with the outside world where it is viewed as a profession. According to Mamutse,
contemporary art had become too commercialised and repetitive and this has downplayed the creative aspect.

The curriculum was reported to be relevant to Zimbabwe as its thrust was towards development of skills needed in industry. These include fashion design and advertising. Art was also there to develop an individual’s creativity and originality as embedded in both ‘O’ and ‘A’ level syllabi. Training facilities at tertiary level were, however, reported to be limited. Both Mamutse and Gore had unclear understanding of what constituted contemporary art- from all art except prehistoric rock paintings to art that was purely expressive. The definition also focused on fine art and deliberately left out craft, which is also part of contemporary art. While contemporary Zimbabwean art was mainly described as expressive, that did not constitute its sole definition. The concept of art of yesteryear, today and modern however emerged. Such understanding of contemporary art could be extrapolated from the range of activities teachers reported they planned for their students. These were mainly confined to visits to art galleries, talks with fine artists and nothing on practice of indigenous arts and crafts. While both teachers claimed that they incorporated contemporary art in their teaching, there was little documentary evidence on such art activities.

Contemporary art was fused more at ‘A’ level than at ‘O’ level. It was also evident that contemporary art would be taught in isolation during theory lessons without a deliberate attempt at establishing its probable impact on studio practice. This missing link was critical if contemporary art was to be of any significance to students’ practice. Both teachers acknowledged the invaluable contribution of contemporary art to students such as understanding art in its diversity and possibilities, establishing links between what students
practised in the classroom and contemporary visual practice, development of appreciation of local and western art as well as development of general creativity.

Some challenges that were reported as teachers tried to incorporate contemporary art in the curriculum include: lack of resources, inadequate teaching time, the belief that art should be an optional subject for the academically challenged and the teachers’ propensity to choose option papers for students. The latter seemed to originate from the number of art teachers in an art department and the range of skills that teachers had to teach. One cannot effectively teach a skill that he or she feels inadequate and incompetent in. As a result, they taught limited papers.

I also observed that the teachers’ own understanding of contemporary art was a challenge in that it limited the range of activities they could do with their students. This could be traced back to college training where the understanding of contemporary art was limited to stone sculpture by the first generation of sculptors and missionary art education of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Finally, both teachers acknowledged the international and commercial outlook of contemporary Zimbabwean art as evidenced in its repetitiveness and modernist approaches. Individuality and ingenuity were however evident.

There was evidence of contemporary art at the two levels in policy documents (syllabi). The aims and objectives reflected the inclusion of contemporary art. At primary school level, the content was under cultural history and not in the studio areas. Similarly, at ‘O’ level, contemporary art was reflected in the theory components only. It was not indicated how contemporary art in theory sections could be married with studio areas, for example, how Gutsa or Mukomberanwa’s art could be taken into the studio. Contemporary art was also restricted to stone sculpture, mostly by the first generation of sculptors. It did not reflect other visual art-forms such as paintings, textiles and ceramics. However, at ‘A’ level, the construct was
reflected in both theory (Project- Paper 4) and the studio areas. There was suggestion of interaction between contemporary artists and crafts-persons in the various disciplines and the use of such experiences in studio practice.

In the analysis of schemes and lesson plans, there was little evidence on the teaching of contemporary art. Although some teachers claimed they taught it, the content was rarely reflected in their schemes, for example, visits to galleries, museums and some artists’ studios. It is my thesis that such important schedule of events and activities should be documented and supported by pupil/student activity during and after the visits to show how they benefited from such experiences as claimed by Gore, “…The major way in which I infuse contemporary art into my teaching is by using it as examples. Taking my children out to the art galleries, Chapungu sculpture garden, showing them this contemporary art…Once in a while I show them pictures.”

The experiences should also impinge on their studio practice. Studio activities should show how students make use of what they learn from contemporary art such as approaches, styles and use of media by particular artists.

Summary
Contemporary art was found to be evident in national documents such as syllabi and the CDU booklet at primary school level. Teaching methodologies and activities were also suggested in the documents, which should make it easy for teachers to adapt according to the prevailing circumstances or conditions obtaining at the various schools. It also emerged that contemporary art was taught more as theory and that there was little integration with studio practice. It is my thesis as has been confirmed elsewhere, that contemporary art can actually pervade both theory
and studio practice using a holistic approach, thus integration of the two domains. At ‘A’ level, contemporary art was infused more as there was the research project requirement where students are expected to research on some contemporary artist(s). It would appear there was more deliberate teaching of contemporary art in schools than in colleges.

The next chapter is a collation of findings from contemporary artists and contemporary art in colleges and schools. The findings suggest the way forward in terms of the implications of contemporary visual practice to art education in Zimbabwe.
Chapter Seven

Conclusions and Implications for Art Education

Introduction

This study was undertaken to locate and interrogate visual expression among contemporary artists with the objective of proposing curricula reforms reflective of such practices in art education. A number of local studies, notably Lancaster (1982), Prode (1987), Williams (1994) and Abraham (2000) observe the lack of thrust towards indigenous arts. The observations made in these studies partially inspired this study. The fundamental goal of the study was, therefore, to promote indigenisation of art education in Zimbabwe. This chapter is a discussion of the major findings from the study. The findings are organised under the following themes: factors influencing visual expression among contemporary artists; paradigmatic symbolisation, image making and iconography among artists; the nature of artistic knowing and visual expression among selected artists; relevance of the art curriculum and syllabus to society; and curriculum reforms reflective of contemporary visual expression. Conclusions and insights derived from the study follow and then the implications to art education are presented. This chapter is a conclusion to the whole study.

Discussion of Findings

Factors Influencing Visual Expression Among Contemporary Artists

The study established some factors that influenced visual expression among artists some of whom as shown in the study include Doris Kampira and David Chinyama. Acculturation was
found to significantly influence the way artists practised in their studios. The artists were widely travelled locally, regionally and internationally. On their trips they came across and interacted with their contemporaries who subsequently influenced their perception and practice of art. This was clearly evident in the approaches they used, the media and general conception of art. The interviews held with the artists also indicated the unavoidable influence of acculturation. As pointed out by several studies such as Roberts (1979), Arnold (1980), Wenger in Kennedy (1992), Kreutzer (1997) and Willet (1993), acculturation has influenced most African artists. The artists adopted Western modernist approaches and art-forms such as installations and performances. These were not originally in the realm of African art. Despite such influence, the artists have tried to maintain their Africanness in the outlook of the final iconographic images as suggested by Bath in Stanislaus (1996) among others. The artists also indicated that international workshops have also influenced their work. Although the artists argued that at some of the workshops they tried to maintain their individuality, they could not, however, insulate themselves completely from powerful artworks from their contemporaries. Similar influences were noted in missionary workshops such as Mbari Mbayo and Oshogho in Nigeria and the Gallery Workshop in Zimbabwe (Rogers 1986; Kennedy 1992).

Western aesthetics such as attitudinal and institutional (Dickie, 1982; Silverman, 1984; Levi & Smith, 1981; Vogel in Mc Eville, 1989; Tolstoy, 1987), saw the majority of artists adopting art for art’s sake as opposed to applied art. Traditionally, artists were mostly confined to three-dimensional forms. Stone sculpture was the predominant art-form. However, the artists who participated in this study reflected diversity in art-forms. They experimented with non-traditional art-forms such as performances and installations as well as techniques such as welding and printing in their quest for self-expression. Renowned contemporary artists such as
Gutsa have installations such as *Hwange* (1997), *Corpse* (1996) (Pierre-Laurent, 1998) consistent with the kind of expression noted among the artists who were investigated.

Contemporary political, social and economic issues were significant inspirational sources for artists. These were the commonest issues depicted in paintings, sculptures, prints and mixed media studies. One could not avoid commenting on the prevailing political and economic issues as they impacted on the social dimensions of all Zimbabweans. It can be concluded that the artists are society’s critics and commentators. Art teachers also observed that contemporary artists have been influenced by the commercialisation of art as well as the international market. While this could be true of crafts-persons who were not investigated in this study in terms of repetition of themes, this was not clearly evident among the investigated artists. The artworks that were analysed were not repetitive but their visual aesthetics was Western in derivation and similar to what studies such as Stanislaus (1996) found out. All artists echoed the need to be original at all times and to create unique pieces and avoid repetition of themes even though they might seem to sell well. They even suggested that if one was so much into a particular piece, he or she should alter it somehow to avoid commodification of art. An analysis of artworks and observations of artists in their studios at work revealed ingenuity on the part of all artists. The commonest approaches used by the artists fall on a continuum between abstract and semi-abstract using a variety of media.

The impact of formal art training was self-evident in artworks that were analysed as well as arguments made by artists during interviews. During formal training, artists are exposed to new techniques, styles and the development of art, particularly Western. Beaton, a contemporary Zimbabwean artist of Malawian parentage made similar observations, “We have to accept it’s a modern world. You cannot deny what the West has put into the East and what
the East has put into the West. So it is like life, civilisation, a mixture of everything” (Pierre-Laurent, 1998: 23). Oguibe (1995: 322) discusses the notion of otherisation and its role in interculturalisation, “…the Other is the Heart of Darkness. The West is as much the Heart of Darkness to the Rest as the latter is to the West.” These cultural influences come from different directions such as cultural nomadism, education and training, and integration and assimilation. As Kamangwana reflected, “I am greatly inspired by old masters, Van Gogh and Rembrandt.” All artists went through the BAT school before acquiring varied qualifications from National Diploma to Masters Degree. Such diverse levels of professional qualifications influenced the way the artists handled media, their perception of visual expression and the general approaches to expression. It can be argued that it was during formal training that artists were exposed to new technologies, world art histories, different techniques, media and approaches. As Arnold (1980) observes, despite the fact that Mc Ewen emphasised the expression of cultural idioms among stone sculptors at the Rhodes Gallery, the gallery set up could not hinder artists from exploring new methods, approaches, interpretation and possibilities. Pierre-Laurent (1998: 28) observes that, “some artists use open and connective approaches welcoming in the ‘other’ rather than confronting or rejecting it.”

The availability of new non-indigenous materials and media in artists’ localities provided possibilities for exploration and experimentation, and this brought new dimensions of art. All artists indicated that materials were not a limitation, a situation lamented by schools and colleges that were investigated. It can be argued that the ways contemporary artists expressed themselves seemed to differ from the ways art students and pupils in schools used materials. Such clear differences in perceiving visual expression could be drawn from the two. Schools and colleges should be encouraged to use media and materials in the manner used by
the contemporary artists so that their art is more diverse and perceptive. The concept of an open
working space adopted by the Domboramwari artists could be adopted in schools and colleges.
This could enable students to venture into new art-forms such as installations and performances
that require bigger working space. Confining oneself to a given space tends to be restrictive in
visual practice. Schools and colleges can learn from the improvisation of media, materials and
tools adopted by artists. Such efforts do not only broaden students’ initiatives, but also ensure
the resuscitation of art departments that have closed down or are at the verge of closure
(Abraham, 2002).

**Paradigmatic Symbolisation, Image Making And Iconography Among Artists**

As indicated elsewhere in this study, elucidating meaning embedded in expressive works of art
involves the use of various visual and non-visual semiotic clues. It should, however, be
appreciated that this is a very subjective process as what an artist might have intended to
produce might not be what the audience will perceive of the work. The audience has the
privilege and prerogative of deconstructing the visual text and constructing their own
interpretation of meaning (Belsey, 2002; Koslowski, 1991; Preziosi, 1998). This, according to
contemporary semiologists and philosophers, signal the death of the author (artist).

An analysis of artists’ work showed that artists had varied artistic orientations to visual
expression. Their views of expression, though generally focused on self-expression and
communication of feelings and emotions, were approached differently. Most artists opted for
total abstraction while some opted for semi-abstraction. These approaches were more open to
expression of the artists’ individualities. Abstraction was congruent with Zimbabwean
traditional approaches where abstract concepts such as justice, beauty, love and power were
depicted in symbolic sculptures such as the Zimbabwe bird, the zodiac bowl, the *Rhinoceros woman* and *Woman changing into a buck*. Matenga (1998) and Garlake (1985) discuss the cultural significance of the bird symbol, which is ideally abstract. In the *Rhinoceros woman* and *Woman changing into a buck*, social justice has been represented in an abstract visual form. A belief about what happens to an individual who steals in someone’s field is represented by this mythological tale of a woman changing into a buck. The same approaches were used by sculptors in the 1950s and 1960s when McEwen encouraged artists to explore their traditions through stone. This is what differentiates the first generation artists from the third and fourth generations. While the first generation focused on myths and legends, the latter tend to focus on more contemporary issues (*Farm yard, Red sun, Keys to heaven, Combing hair, Gossipers* etc.) as reflected in the artists who were studied.

The notion of the gallery space defined visual practice for artists. This meant that all artists produced art for art’s sake with none producing applied/functional visual forms similar to traditional art. Work was produced for appreciation by a wider spectrum of audience. Institutional expectations of the gallery and Western patronage, therefore, determined visual forms, aesthetics and styles. Some artists drew their inspiration from Zimbabwean contemporary life, which was contrary to their predecessors whose themes were on traditional cultural beliefs, African cosmology, cultural idioms and depiction of cultural values as noted in Vogel (1994), Stanislaus (1996) and Willet (1993). As expressed in interviews and as evidenced by works that were analysed, expression of contemporary issues was the predominant paradigm.

The artists explored and experimented with local and exotic media. Exotic media included acrylics, gouache and oil paints as in David Chinyama and Charles Kamangwana’s
work, while local media included wood and some found objects as in David Mutasa and Chiko Chikonzero’s art. Mixed media approaches such as weld art were pre-dominantly used as modern and post-modern approaches. Artists experimented with new art forms that were non-existent in the realm of African art such as performances and installations. Such contemporary thinking was echoed by David Chinyama who argued that, “…there are no barriers now whereby people call this African art. It has to be appealing to everyone.” Similarly, McEvilley (1993), Arnold (1980) and Faggi in Osegi (1991), among others, concluded that African artists acknowledge the supremacy of cultural nomadism and Western patronage. However several studies made findings contrary to this where they suggested hegemonic African ways of self-expression.

Evidence from the work indicated that iconographic meanings implied in the visual images were Zimbabwean in derivation. The images were peculiar to social classes characteristic of communities in Zimbabwe. Various clues such as dress, objects of use and contexts were depicted. These visual codes were, however, used at a personal level.

The Nature of Artistic Knowing and Visual Expression Among Selected Artists
Visual expression was found to be predominantly tacit in nature among the artists who were investigated. Apart from deliberate integration of different artistic concepts such as composition, balance and media handling, the artists focused on self realisation and understanding of phenomena. Visual expression was, therefore, characterised by abstraction and semi-abstraction, the use of cultural idioms and both culturally and personally invented symbols and systems. This resulted in diverse ways of expression through visual forms such as painting, sculptures and performances. Focus was mainly on the self rather than work that was
to be understood from a universal perspective. Self expression was, therefore, more fundamental.

Formal art training was, however, found to have influenced the nature of artistic knowing. The use of semiotic codes, technology as in weld art, and pastiche of visual concepts as part of visual expression showed artistic knowledge acquired in formal training. These aspects were, however, used at an idiosyncratic level of artistic knowing. Thus, knowledge and understanding of world art histories and expression influenced the nature of artistic knowing. There was a lot of symbolism and the use of iconographic images peculiar to individual artists. This showed that artistic knowledge is predominantly tacit in nature.

Relevance of the Art Curricula and Syllabi to Society

Both lecturers and art teachers claimed that their art curricula were relevant to the needs of society. At secondary school level, studio skills that were embedded in studio areas were said to be applicable to industry and at tertiary level. This could be the reason behind having so much emphasis being put on practical lessons and students opting for practical papers, a situation contrary to contemporary curricula models such as DBAE and Arts Propel. The colonial legacy could not be ruled out as there was so much resistance when attempts were made to introduce a theory paper in 2000. There is also the satisfaction derived from producing tangible products in the studio. There was an inadequacy of theoretical disciplinary content, discourses, the sociology of art and art historiography, which could actually be enhancing domains to studio art. The Zimbabwean artistic heritage seemed not to be fully utilised and explored. Although a mandatory theory paper was introduced at ‘O’ level in 2005, its thrust has remained mainly on definition of technical terms, analysis of art-works and chronology of
missionary art education. There seems to be a need for a curricula review in light of such observations including the study of contemporary artists and their work.

The study of contemporary art as part of national artistic heritage could gainfully be incorporated into the syllabi as suggested by Abraham (2000), Winter-Irving (1991) and Lancaster (1982). The little that is there seems to focus on stone sculpture as the dominant visual form being practised. However, ‘A’ level curricula documents such as syllabi and examination papers revealed a greater extent of the inclusion of contemporary art. It was also because of the mandatory nature of the research project that required all students to research on contemporary artists and produce a research report. While this was quite relevant, there was lack of systematic planning and implementation of a wide range of activities with students. Little documentary evidence was unveiled on sequential planning of activities so that students have experiential learning.

There were glaring contradictions between what lecturers claimed they taught in terms of contemporary art and what was obtained through the analyses of documents. All lecturers claimed that they significantly taught contemporary art, but upon further probing and corroboration of data from various curricula documents, it emerged that little was taught save for stone sculpture by the first generation of sculptors and a few contemporary artists. While the few ideas contained in curricula documents were relevant, there was need for significant re-assessment and re-evaluation of syllabi for the inclusion of the rich artistic heritage (Vansina, 1984; Williams, 1994; Murray, 1999; Rogers, 1986). The colleges could take advantage of the autonomy accorded to them by the University of Zimbabwe Scheme of Association (AST/23/96) to include more aspects on Zimbabwean art, thereby making the syllabi more relevant.
Another glaring mismatch was observed between local and indigenous art contained in secondary school curricula and that offered at college level. The mismatch was also reflected in the way teachers conceptualised contemporary art, which was mistakenly restricted to stone sculpture. The impact of McEwen’s emphasis on stone sculpture in the 1950s created a movement that has grown to unprecedented proportions at the detriment of other art forms. This might have been the reason behind so much emphasis on stone sculpture. There is need therefore, to synchronise the content so that there would be continuity and relevance rather than the haphazard and unsequential presentation of contemporary art currently in practice.

From the interviews held by art lecturers and art teachers, it emerged that only fine art was considered relevant. Zimbabwe has such a diverse range of arts and crafts, which could be integrated at all levels of education. There was adequate emphasis on the crafts at primary school level as unravelled in the analysis of documents, but not equally reflected in operational documents such as teachers’ schemes of work and lesson plans. At Grade 7 level, this could be embedded in the General Paper as is the current practice with other contemporary issues. Besides localisation of art at secondary level initiated in the 1990s aimed at including content, which was deemed relevant to society, a critical suggestion by all lecturers was that lecturers could write materials for use by their students. The researcher noticed complacency in this regard despite the fact that all lecturers were suitably qualified for such a task.

The relevance of the curriculum should also be viewed in light of contemporary art rather than only on emerging computer technologies as suggested by some lecturers. As observed in the literature review chapter of this thesis, prioritising and valorizing Western art denigrated indigenous arts (Moyo, 1989; Lancaster, 1982; Lewis & Taylor, 1974). The unavailability of exotic materials and the prohibitive costs forced lecturers to experiment with
mostly indigenous materials. The absence of literature on contemporary art has equally crippled lecturers in terms of teaching contemporary art. Although these appeared to be drawbacks, these could actually initiate the writing of materials that are more relevant to the needs of the country and use of locally available resources that could make understanding and practice of art more relevant. Serious curricula considerations, therefore, need to be made in this regard. That could possibly get rid of statements such as “And you find that we are mainly taking it from Western literature and Western information. We don’t have what is specifically ours” (Nyathi, Kingsdale Teachers’ College).

**Curricula Reforms Reflective of Contemporary Visual Expression**

One of the objectives of the study was to propose curricula reforms reflective of practices by contemporary artists. From the interviews held with artists, the participants proposed that there be more workshops where students would meet practising artists and get to understand and share what inspire artists. The students would get to know what happens on the part of artists and learn some of their approaches to visual expression. They also proposed that in their teaching, lecturers should emphasize the professional aspect of art. This would make students appreciate the contribution contemporary visual practice makes to society.

Lecturers also cited the importance of contemporary visual expression. They suggested that in the structure of their curriculum, it would be useful if specialisation could be incorporated. While that could guarantee the elevation of the status of the subject, it would also ensure the use of innovative methodologies such as having artists in residence programmes, guided tours to artists’ studios, having artists as guest speakers as well as the resuscitation of the Mkoba Teachers’ College concept (Kangai, 1978) where artists would be invited to demonstrate
particular artistic skills, and share with the students the evolvement of their art. Such collaboration would elevate the status of art among students and at the college.

Art teachers and lecturers indicated that they sometimes organised visits to galleries and tours to artists’ workshops for students. Their aim was for students to learn from what practising artists do. However, research evidence showed that students did not benefit much from such visits as their (students’) own practice did not seem to reflect contemporary influence. This does not, however, imply that they would necessarily be required to copy or imitate styles and techniques used by the artists, but that they would show their individual development inspired by contemporary artists.

Students were significantly influenced by Western artists such as Picasso (cubist), Van Gogh (Post Impressionist), Pollock (Abstract Expressionist) and some realists who have been popularised in the history of art. If Western art has such strong influence, why not contemporary Zimbabwean art? Why not adapt Gutsa’s or Mutasa’s approaches to installations that explore in abstract form cultural themes and phenomena? In *African Genesis* (1995-6), Gutsa uses cloth, tree bark, polystyrene, metal and dung. In *Nyika Mukanza* (A Faraway Place) (1997), he combines a horn, metal, granite and wood. A similar approach is also evident in Chenjerai Mutasa’s work and Chiko Chikonzero’s *Tigere muupfu*. Why not use local media and materials such as bones and African ceramics as part of the students’ studio practice? The inspiration drawn from the interactions they have with contemporary artists should be evident in their own practice. Currently, art teaching in some schools is facing the challenge of modern material shortages and yet indigenous media and materials that can be fully exploited are in abundance. What is required is a re-orientation and re-conceptualisation of art as a body of knowledge in an African sense and move from the traditional practice and examination papers.
Masara once commented that, “It would be naïve to expect us to explain what they (contemporary artists) are doing because we also don’t know.” This is a clear testimony that lecturers are also not conversant with contemporary art. It would be recommended that efforts should be made to have it seriously taught and not on a scanty and erratic basis as was the practice. It would be important to Africanise and indigenise the curriculum as suggested by both lecturers and teachers to improve on its relevance. This was the objective behind the localisation of ‘O’ and ‘A’ level art curricula (Abrahams, 2000) in the 1990s, and the autonomy accorded to teachers’ colleges (AST /23/ 96). The interviews with lecturers also indicated that African writers and critics should focus on contemporary art. This would provide the much needed literature for use by students at various levels. The curriculum models suggested by lecturers such as the DBAE acknowledge the importance of indigenous cultural expression as one looks at criticism, aesthetics and production of art by contemporary artists. That way, the curriculum would be more relevant.

The analyses of documents and interviews suggested that art teachers and lecturers would very much want to incorporate contemporary visual expression in their curriculum. However, they ended up “Africanising a Western system [because] people have a tendency of considering Western art as more important than our local art” (Masara, RTC). Such compromise denigrates the value of local art as observed in the literature review. Similar observations were made by Osegi (1991) and the 1987 BV Project. It was interesting to note that despite the lapse of more than three decades after Zimbabwe attained independence, art teachers had continued to uphold the supremacy of Western art. In spite of exposure to various art programmes offered in colleges and universities, not much orientation towards African
curricula was noted. This, therefore, questions the relevance of programmes in institutions of higher learning if there was no ripple effect observable as a result of such programmes.

General Conclusions

Having said all that, I observed very useful artistic skills by contemporary artists. Some of these were African while others were a derivation from their Western counterparts. These were absent in the schools and colleges and it would be useful if these were taught at the three levels. Installations had been adapted to reflect African cosmology and mythologies using locally available materials. The paintings showed African idioms although some techniques were Western. These could significantly influence art practice in schools and colleges rather than seeing it as belonging to the gallery.

This study has revealed the general practice in visual expression among contemporary artists. Expression was approached differently as evidenced by the artists who were interviewed and observed as well as documents that were analysed. It emerged that while artists made deliberate efforts to maintain an African perspective in their practice, the impact of Westernization was, however, significant. This was noticeable in approaches, techniques, media used and the interpretation of visual symbols. Many other factors were also noted to have had a significant influence on how they practised. The artists' own cultures had lesser influence.

It also emerged that while there were invaluable elements that schools and colleges could embrace from contemporary artists, these were minimally employed. This was mainly because contemporary art was narrowly conceived of as stone sculpture of the 1950s and 1960s and the study of art education in early missionary schools. Both curricula documents and
teachers’ views were limited to such a narrow conceptual view. The reasons for the limited teaching could have been the varied conceptualisation of the notion of contemporary art or the mode of training that teachers and lecturers underwent during their own college training. Most teachers and lecturers were not conversant with contemporary visual practice. This was congruent with what Prentice (1995) observed in his study of art education in the United Kingdom. He found that teachers were more comfortable teaching art that had undergone and withstood the test of time than contemporary art that was yet to be judged, categorised and fixed.

There are fundamental practices by contemporary artists that art education could incorporate and benefit from. These could relate to studio skills, visual discourse, sociology of art, art historiography and biographical studies of artists, among others. A review of the current curricula at various levels would make infusion of contemporary art more meaningful. The reviews, however, would need to be properly co-ordinated at the various levels for correct sequencing and appropriate spiralling of content. From these general conclusions, some insights were observed.

**Implications for Art Education**

The preceding section was devoted to major findings about contemporary visual expression as practised by artists as well as the status of art education vis-a-vis the teaching of contemporary art. Although it was not the intention or mandate of this study to prescribe curricula reforms based on the findings, it nonetheless brought to the fore pertinent issues worth of consideration by concerned stakeholders at various levels of art education. The localisation of school examinations, the autonomy accorded to teacher education colleges in terms of syllabus reviews
and the establishment of the NGZ and the NACZ as arts institutions among others, were
government attempts at making the arts accessible and relevant to the indigenous people. The
following insights emerge from the findings.

**Increasing Interaction Among Schools, Colleges and Contemporary Artists**

There was limited interaction between schools, colleges and contemporary artists. While the
teachers and lecturers claimed that they taught contemporary art using interactive
methodologies, their documents reflected the contrary. Where students seemed to have been
taught contemporary art, there was scant evidence of how they actually benefited from
contemporary practice.

It is, therefore, proposed that there be more interaction between schools, colleges and
artists. The artists proposed the mounting of workshops and seminars where students would get
to understand how artists operate, as David Chiyama put it “Maybe we encourage schools that
have art in their curriculum to have workshops where students meet with practising artists, get
to know what inspire the artists, what happens on the part of artists.” The Domboramwari
village concept initiated by Chenjerai Mutasa, where students could be invited to the centre for
individually designed or group programmes would be useful. This is where selected artists
share their practice with students and demonstrate particular practical skills. Chenjerai Mutasa
proposed a formalised approach; “We are also trying to have one week workshops whereby
certain chosen schools will come and camp here, do certain workshops here, the stone, the
wood, ceramics and give them the exposure where the artists reside and get motivated.” A
similar but now defunct concept, the Mkoba artists’ week, where artists were invited needs to
be resuscitated. Students get to learn what inspire artists and acquire studio skills.
The concept of artists in residence is a useful concept that, however, heavily depends on availability of resources. In a college where students specialise in art, it would be useful to invite artists as resident artists for the sharing of ideas with students. This, should, however, not create fears and anxieties among lecturers that they would be left redundant, but it is one of the interactive methodologies that strengthen collaboration between artists and art departments.

The Need to Review School and College Curricula

Through document analysis and interviews with teachers and lecturers, I noticed deliberate omission of substantial content on contemporary art in the curriculum. What prevailed in colleges in particular was a superfluous coverage of contemporary art with more emphasis on stone sculpture by the first generation of sculptors as well as art education chronology. Critical content on contemporary art was missing. This calls for serious curricula review at all levels of education- primary, secondary and tertiary to accommodate missing content on contemporary art as Nyathi suggested:

So the whole curriculum needs to be revamped starting from primary education to make art and design compulsory at Grade 7...If art is revamped from primary education and secondary education it becomes easy for us to develop a skill that has been started even at Grade Zero. At tertiary level it becomes much easier. So if we change the curriculum at this stage without changing it at primary level the problem remains the same.

Careful co-ordination of the content and activities is, however, required so that there is no undue repetition and that there be proper spiralling of content according to the developmental
levels. The curricula should create a distinguishable art education indicative of practice in Zimbabwe. In colleges that do not have specialisation, there might be a need to consider this aspect. Sigauke elaborated that “students do everything in their first year and in their third year they look at one area of specialisation and this has to be stipulated in our syllabus. I think only then, can we have students tackling these areas.” This has implications on time tabling. The current one to one and a half hours per week in some colleges renders the curriculum and lecturers’ efforts ineffective. Curricula reviews should also seriously consider the role of the artist in the programme and their level of participation.

Besides structural shortcomings noted in some syllabi, there was also deficiency in actual content. Schools and colleges could consider the sociology of art, biographical studies of contemporary artists and the historiography of art practice and education in Zimbabwe as the nuclei for such reviews. That would act as the bases for the study of contemporary art.

The notion of acculturation cannot be underplayed. Artists and art institutions cannot insulate themselves from the influence of practices in other countries. Therefore, reviews should consider creating a balance between indigenous contemporary art and the study of western art, Oriental and other origins of art. The idea is to have curricula peculiar to Zimbabwe and reflective of contemporary practices without shutting ourselves out from positive and developmental trends and other practices.

Curricula reviews also entail proper implementation of assessment modes. A theory paper was introduced at ‘O’ level in 2005. A research project was subsequently introduced at ‘A’ level. Examinations at college level are a product of individual colleges subject to approval by the University of Zimbabwe through the Department of Teacher Education’s quality assurance. At primary school level, there is no examination in art. A re-examination of modes,
models and content of examinations at the various levels can be instituted so that contemporary art is correctly infused as Sigauke echoed, “I think if art is taught at primary school and examined at Grade 7, and then when students come up, they know people like Mukomberanwa. They will have no problems when introduced to those areas at college level.” For example, content on contemporary art at Grade 7 level can be infused in the General Paper. At college level, a paper could be devoted to the study of contemporary art and issues in Zimbabwe. A reassessment of the depth and breath of contemporary art at secondary school level could be instituted. All this is in line with the significance attached to the arts as recommended by studies such as the Nziramasaenga (1999), Prode (1987), Williams (1994) and the Kadoma and Masvingo art workshops, among others.

The Need for More Literature by Local Writers on Contemporary Art

One of the key observations worth noting about lecturing staff in colleges was their academic and professional qualifications. The colleges are manned by suitably qualified lecturers with various relevant degrees and diplomas. Those qualifications, it is hoped, could be translated to writing of materials for use by students, teachers and lecturers themselves. Nyathi argued that “after a certain period lecturers produce, be it pamphlets or booklets pertaining to their subjects. Having some researches and findings pertaining to their subjects or departments... That will make literature available.” The notion of having a teacher/lecturer as a researcher should be seriously considered for the writing of materials relevant to Zimbabwe. Lecturers can research on contemporary art and publish workshop and conference papers. It is incumbent upon relevant institutions and ministries to make funds available for such endeavours.
It has been observed elsewhere that most publications on contemporary art have been confined to catalogues and artists’ monographs. This could require extension, both in depth and breath to include books and other resource materials such as modules. It is recommended that workshops and seminars on literature writing be mounted for art teachers, lecturers, artists, critics and art journalists, among other interested parties. Evidence from colleges and schools has shown that the critical handicap in the teaching of contemporary art is the shortage, inadequacy and unavailability of relevant literature. However, if the literature is made available, that could complement the proposed syllabi reviews and increase artists’ participation in schools and colleges.

**Reflecting Contemporary Practice in Studio Art in Schools and Colleges**

Despite claims by teachers and lecturers that they taught contemporary art, there was little evidence on how students actually benefited from such interaction with artists. Studio practice by students should, therefore, reflect how organised tours to art galleries, artists’ studios and various art centres benefited them. That individual interpretation of contemporary art by students should show in their art. Art practice by students can reflect how contemporary views and practices can be taken into the art classroom. This could give art education an outlook reflective of indigenous practices. It was noted that contemporary art had remained largely a gallery narrative. Artists seemed to have denigrated the use of indigenous materials in favour of more Western media. It is important that students embrace local media and materials in their exploration of visual expression. Artists have also experimented with new art-forms such as performances and installations. Students should be exposed to such art-forms and approaches in order to broaden their conceptual view of visual expression rather than restricting them to
traditional art-forms. That exposure to diverse art genres, explored in the context of African art, and Zimbabwean in particular, could be a feature of the proposed curricula.

The Need for Critical Apprehension of the Notion of Contemporary Art

From the findings that were made in this study, it was clear that contemporary art was variedly conceptualised. Some identified impressionist art (of the 1870s) as contemporary because it had influence on contemporary practice. The majority limited their conception to stone sculpture of the 1950s and art in early art education institutions. Such diverse conceptual views were evident in the content that was taught and how students seemed to have been tested. It would be prudent that efforts be made to have contemporary art properly defined and understood. That would lead to proper curricula review and practice. It was observed that traditional arts and crafts were omitted from contemporary art at secondary and college levels but limited to fine art. However, at primary school level, it was included under cultural history. There is need to reconceptualise the notion and subsequently include the study of factors that influence contemporary visual practice. It is hoped that a clear understanding of contemporary art will have some bearing on curricula reviews, interactions with artists, publications and practice by students.

General Summary and Conclusion of the Study

The study investigated visual expression among contemporary artists with the objective of proposing curricula reforms reflective of such practices in art education. The issue of contemporary art practice relates well with the current educational reforms as envisaged by Prentice (1995). Contemporary art is current, more relevant and students would find it more
interactive and practical in their daily experiences practice. Curricula objectives should therefore reflect this notion of contemporary art. This was a two-pronged study that involved collection of data from contemporary artists, schools and colleges. The findings from the three broad sources were then collated and general conclusions drawn. The major findings revealed that a lot was happening in terms of contemporary practice by artists. This was, however, inadequately pursued and complemented in primary and secondary schools as well as in teachers’ colleges mainly because of teachers’ and lecturers’ inadequate knowledge about contemporary practice. Contemporary art was narrowly defined and conceptualised. Comments like “It would be naïve to expect us to explain what they [artists] are doing because we also don’t know” are a sad reflection of the state of contemporary art in schools and colleges. Whilst the artists have adopted fundamental Western ideas, they have fused such aspects with local ideas and practices. School and college curricula and contemporary art could adopt complementary roles.

It was clear that contemporary visual practice could positively influence curricula reforms so that art education has an outlook peculiar to art practice in Zimbabwe. I am not, however, suggesting drastic reforms based on Zimbabwe contemporary art only, but reforms that take into cognisance global trends in art education, which Zimbabwe art education should keep abreast with. It is hoped that the study will make some meaningful transformational suggestions to art education curricula reforms.
References


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Interview with Julia Krestiva, Flash Art: Two Decades of History No 126 pp 139-140.


Primitivism and Modern Art. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd.


Visions of Africa. California: University of California.


An Overview of the Re-conceptualisation of Curriculum in Home Economics and Art and Design. A Paper Presented at the Art and


APPENDIX I

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION CONSENT SLIP

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Informed consent for participation in research
Topic: Visual expression among contemporary artists: Implications for art education

Dear Artist
I am a post graduate student from the University of Zimbabwe researching on visual expression among contemporary artists in Zimbabwe. I would like to invite you to participate in this research. I am particularly interested in how you practice in your studio as an artist. Your participation will involve the following:

• Being interviewed for about 40 minutes
• Being observed whilst working in your studio during which you will be requested to discuss informally with the researcher
• Providing artworks for analysis. Some will be photographed.

The information you provide will be confidential and will be used for study purposes only. For confidentiality, your identity will not be disclosed, pseudonyms will be used instead. You will have access to the research findings after completion of the thesis. The study will be shared with my supervisors and appropriate members of the University. Copies of the thesis will be put in University libraries for the benefit of the art community.

I greatly appreciate your sparing valuable time to participate in this study. For any clarifications, please feel free to contact me on 091350792 or (04) 333550

Thank you

A. Mamvuto

Please sign and date this consent slip if you are willing to participate in this study as outlined above.

SIGNATURE: ..................................................
NAME (PRINT): ...........................................
DATE: ....................................................
APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTISTS

ARTIST (CODE): ………………………………………..
DATE: …………………………………………………
TIME: …………………………………………………..
DURATION OF INTERVIEW: ……………………..

1. What themes do you normally deal with in your art? Please explain
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

2. What media do you normally use? Give reasons
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. What techniques and approaches do you normally use? Give reasons
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. What type of art do you usually focus on?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. What is your general source of inspiration?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. How would you describe your art?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

7. What role does acculturation play in your art?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
8. Where did you do your art training?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

9. Describe your educational background
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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

10. Describe your artistic background
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

11. Do you have any artistic theories which you feel influence your work? Please explain.
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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

12. To what extent is visual expression about communication of ideas and feelings?
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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

13. To what extent is art a means of self-gratification and self-expression?
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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

14. To what extent are media and materials a limitation in your work?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

15. Does your culture play any role in your art? If so, how?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

16. How did you become an artist?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
17. Why did you decide to become an artist?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
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18. What is the purpose of art in your opinion?
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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

19. To what extent are you influenced by commodification of art in your work?
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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

20. How does your educational background/ artistic background influence your work?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
APPENDIX III

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE
(For analysing artworks)

ARTIST (CODE)……………………………………………..

1. TITLE OF WORK ANALYSED……………………………

2. TYPE OF ART ANALYSED:  
   Installation [ ]  
   Happening [ ]  
   Kinetic art [ ]  
   Abstract art [ ]  
   Conceptual art [ ]  
   Other (specify)………………………….

3. FORM OF ART ANALYSED:  
   Painting [ ]  
   Sculpture [ ]  
   Textile [ ]  
   Print [ ]  
   Drawing [ ]  
   Other (specify)…………………………

4. Specify the themes portrayed in the artwork.
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. Specify the subject matter.
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. Assess the media used.
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Analyse the techniques used.
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………………………
8. Describe the approaches used.

9. Aesthetic influence:
   - Mimetic [ ]
   - Expression [ ]
   - Attitudinal [ ]
   - Institutional [ ]
   - Other (specify) ………………………………..

10. Supporting evidence

11. Influencing theories:
   - Cultural [ ]
   - Historical [ ]
   - Social [ ]
   - Economic [ ]
   - Philosophical [ ]
   - Myths and legends [ ]
   - Modern [ ]
   - Post modern [ ]
   - Other (specify) ………………………………..


13. Assess the relationship between themes, techniques and approaches.

APPENDIX IV

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

ARTIST (CODE): ..................................................
LOCATION: ......................................................
DATE OF OBSERVATION: ...............................
TIME: .............................................................
TITLE OF ARTWORK OBSERVED: .....................

1. STYLE OF ARTWORK OBSERVED: Installation [ ]
Happening [ ]
Kinetic art [ ]
Conceptual [ ]
Abstract art [ ]
Realist [ ]
Other (specify).................................

2. FORM OF ART OBSERVED: Painting [ ]
Drawing [ ]
Textile [ ]
Print [ ]
Photography [ ]
Sculpture [ ]
Other (specify)......................

MEDIUM(S): ..........................................................

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN</th>
<th>SUBSTANTIATING EVIDENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Description of studio facilities and equipment (eg studio space, sinks, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List of equipment and materials available in the studio (frames, paints, chisels, drawing boards, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artwork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Subject matter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Artistic influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Source of inspiration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Aesthetic content</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Subject interpretation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cultural influence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills domain</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Techniques</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Approaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Working procedures/processes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use of tools and equipment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use of media</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual discourse</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Semiotic processes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Symbolism</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Iconography</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Visual perception</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX V

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH ART TEACHERS/LECTURERS

INTERVIEW DATE:……………………………………
TIME: …………………………………………………
SCHOOL/COLLEGE: ………………………………..
NAMES OF TEACHERS/LECTURERS (CODES):
…………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………
The following are some of the areas of discussion with selected art teachers and lecturers: The discussions focus on infusion of contemporary art.

- The status of art in the school/college
- The curriculum
- Relevance of the curriculum to society
- Suggested changes to the curriculum
- Teaching methodologies
- Resources and material provisions
- Facilities
- Support from administration
APPENDIX VI

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE
THE STATUS OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ART EDUCATION LEVEL (tick)</th>
<th>DOCUMENTS</th>
<th>OBSERVATIONS</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school [ ]</td>
<td>• National syllabus</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• School/ college syllabus</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary school [ ]</td>
<td>• Schemes of work</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
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<tr>
<td>College [ ]</td>
<td>• Course outlines</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teaching programmes</td>
<td>………………</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Examinations</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assignments-theory and practical</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students’ work-theory and practical</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• External and internal assessors’ reports</td>
<td>………………</td>
<td>………………</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX VII

ARTISTS’ VISUAL PRODUCTIONS

Doris Kampira. *Self portrait* (2007). Monoprint on paper. 45 x 29 cm
Doris Kampira. *Gossipers* (2007). Acrylic on canvas. 90 x 68 cm
Charles Kamangwana  Loner (2009). Acrylic on paper. 40 x 60cm
Doris Kampira. *Plight for the rains* (2007). Oil on paper. 21 x 23 cm
Doris Kampira. *Preparing Supper* (2007). Oil on paper. 20 x 21 cm
Doris Kampira. *Combing hair* (2007). Metal sculpture, weld art. 91 x 60 x 40 cm
Doris Kampira. *Drumming* (2007). Metal sculpture, weld art. 83 x 51 x 28 cm
Chiko Chazunguza *The three Kings* (2007). Acrylic on canvas
David Chinyama. *Township* (2008). Mixed media. 60 x 90 cm
David Chinyama. Scorched (2008). Mixed media. 80 x 100 cm
David Chinyama. *Morning drizzle* (2008). Mixed media. 50 x 40 cm
David Chinyama. *Journey* (2008). Mixed media. 50 x 130 cm