

SYNERGISING GALLERY NARRATIVES AND ART AND DESIGN TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULA FOR ENHANCED VISUAL ART PRACTICE

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Abstract

This study explores the nature of visual art gallery narratives by contemporary Zimbabwean artists and their relationship with the Art and Design pre-service teacher education curricula in Zimbabwe. Data were collected from visual artists and college art lecturers using a hermeneutic ethnographic design through interviews, analysis of artworks, studio observations, and analysis of art syllabuses. Data analyses were according to emerging themes and visual texts. It emerged that there is a need for deliberate collaboration and partnership between art galleries and teacher education institutions since student utilisation of these galleries has been at an informal peripheral level and sometimes ad hoc. Pedagogical implications are proffered.

Keywords: Art Education, Contemporary Art, Gallery Narrative, Teacher Education

Introduction

Zimbabwe is one of the many African countries with a long history of visual art practice stretching from Stone Age art to contemporary times. The post-independence period (since 1980) is characterised by rapid socio-economic and political developments, which have transformed the nation in many ways. The new social order has impacted the country's visual arts realm and the artistic choices that artists are engaged in. Artwork by some of the visual artists in Zimbabwe reflects the complexity of this social landscape. The work also reveals artists' creative ways of reflecting on the past the present, and the future trajectory, at the same time exploring the social and cultural identities of the 21st century. The notion of contemporary Zimbabwean visual art could also be attributed to the introduction of new media at national and international art platforms (Kabov, 2018). Chikukwa (2013) posits that participation in contemporary art exhibition spaces such as Documenta (2012) and FNB Johannesburg (1995) has exposed Zimbabwean artists to the global art scene and encouraged artists to explore their creative impulses. The impact of these interactions is phenomenal in setting the pace in terms of the quality of visual expression and in creating an undulate effect across the breadth of the visual art community (Chikukwa, 2013).

The paucity of research in visual narratives is not surprising when one considers how few scholarly investigations there have been in the art to create meaning in Zimbabwe. Elsewhere, however, mainly in the USA and Europe, research in

contemporary visual narratives occupies this underestimated area of inquiry (Sanyal, 2013; Katchka, 2013). There has been growing interest in visual narratives, mostly, verbal and linguistic metaphors as propounded by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999) cited in Smith (2010). Despite the broad interest in visual literacy and visual thinking in art education, there are very few studies that have been conducted on the relationship between contemporary visual narratives and teacher education curricula. This paper focuses on this grey area of how gallery narratives interface with the Zimbabwean socio-cultural order. This is an important variable in teacher education transformation as a conduit towards the ideological persuasion of the nation.

Effective 21st century, pedagogy in art and design is multi-dimensional and is no longer restricted to the sequential and hierarchical presentation of the four disciplines of art history, art criticism, art production, and aesthetics (Smith, 2010). The phenomenon of visual culture has thus, been broadened to include issues of social justice. Teacher education curricula have over the years, acknowledged the need to intensify opportunities for learner engagement such as through studio visits and virtual interactions. The whole spectrum of the environment is considered a learning resource and art galleries are part of this wider environment providing such experiential learning. Despite such trends and values of visual culture, teacher education curricula in Zimbabwe have remained focused on teaching Western art, Stone Age art, Egyptian art, Great Zimbabwe art, mid-20th century stone sculpture, and other forms of pre-colonial art. It has not embraced contemporary visual art narratives. Furthermore, Mason (1995: 5) argues that ‘the canon of Western art remains the dominant force in the majority of the world’s famous art education systems, as evidenced by the predominance of Western instructional approaches to drawing and emphasis on creativity in syllabuses and examinations.’

The Zimbabwean teacher education curriculum is compartmentalised into four sections arising from recommendations of the Lewis Tyler Report of 1974, the T3 Working Party of 1977, the Teacher Education Review Committee (TERC) of 1986, and the Oasis Workshop of 1988. The distinct sections are; Section 1, Teaching Practice; Section 2, Theory of Education; Section 3, Main Study/Academic Study, and Section 4, Professional Studies (Mavhunga, Mavundutse and Mamvuto, 2008). The main study is for both the primary and secondary school teacher education curriculum where a subject is chosen by student teachers for in-depth study to produce resource teachers in those subjects (Chivore, Mavundutse, Kuyayama-Tumbare, Gwaunza and Kangai, 2015). It is in this section where art and design is one of the main study subjects. It is important, therefore, to find out how teacher education curricula in Zimbabwe are prepared to deal with new ideas, materials, and media from contemporary visual art practices.

The understanding of visual imagery lies in the interpretation of cultural contexts in which metaphors are conceptualised (Oyedemi and Enemona, 2015). A very influential version of visual narratives and metaphors is the theory of metaphors by Lakoff and

Johnson (2003); a vehicle for elaborating meaning from experience. Available research indicates that each artwork is part of a complex visual vocabulary used by artists to express cultural and societal issues. The visual narratives used by artists often denote ethical, religious, and political issues and they are an integral part of meaning-making among artists. The artist is initiated into the practice of uncovering these narratives and metaphors so that they can interpret them in their artworks. For instance, masks in the African culture are endowed with rich and deep meanings hence, the features of a mask are endowed with meaning that is shaped and intensified by action. There is no doubt that the role of the artist has been underestimated and yet many artists work with rich imaginative projections of narratives, symbolism, and metaphors. There are very few studies that have been conducted on visual narratives. Amongst the body of research in this area are studies by Serig (2008), Limont (2014), and Pente (2002). These have written about meaning-making in different contexts like philosophy, visual culture, and museum art education. These studies have created a knowledge gap in the interpretation of African visual metaphors that manifest contemporary art practices by African and Zimbabwean artists in particular.

Art education enables the understanding of culture since its content mirrors a society's knowledge systems. According to Gude (2008: 101), 'meaning-making is the ability to engage and entertain ideas and images, it is the ability to make use of images and ideas to re-imagine one's own life experiences.' Therefore, the core objective of quality art education is to increase students' capacity to make meaning. Contemporary art education could then be a hybrid that incorporates styles and metaphors to interest students so that they acquire the abilities to engage, analyse and apprehend artworks. According to Mamvuto (2019), Nigeria underwent policy changes in 1981, 1998, and 2008, aimed at indigenising the visual arts curricula thereby realigning its art education. Similarly, attempts at the indigenisation of art curricula have been noticed in Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda. There appears to be some disconnect in the interpretation of visual narratives in art education in Zimbabwe. This has created a curriculum that is more foreign with little focus on indigenous homegrown art. Observations show that the making of artworks is premised on the understanding of art that is skewed towards Western art canons. In a survey by Lancaster (1982), on art education in Zimbabwe, it emerged that Zimbabwean heritage could be employed as a point of departure in the teaching of art. This helps art students to realise with pride that the art of their own culture is comparable to that of any other culture in the world, thus, they will develop empathy towards indigenous art forms, which are meaningful to them.

This study sought to explore artists' and art lecturers' views on the extent to which the pre-service teacher education art and design curricula in Zimbabwe can engage visual art narrative discourse by contemporary artists. The following questions are addressed in this paper; What forms of visual art narratives are exhibited by contemporary artists in their practice? How do contemporary artists create visual

narratives in their artistic practices? To what extent can pre-service teacher education curricula engage contemporary visual narratives as teaching and learning sources for disciplinary and pedagogical content knowledge? What are artists' and lecturers' views concerning the relationship between artists' practice and teacher education art curricula?

Gallery Visual Narratives

The term 'visual narrative' has been used to describe several genres of visual storytelling, from news and information, to entertainment (art, movies, television, comic books, and graphic novel). In short, any kind of story told visually, is a visual narrative. The visual narrative has also intrigued inquiry in the academic community as scholars, thinkers, and educators seek to understand the impact and power of visual narratology on individuals and societies (Caputa, 2003). The visual narrative concept implies decoding and communicating meanings through the medium of art. In art, visual narratives are seen as a phenomenon in which meaning is transferred from one entity to another in a non-authorial manner (Preziosi, 1998). Serig (2008) proposes two schools of thought about narratives in visual art. The first notion is that all art is narrative. At the other end of the continuum are rules and attributes that constitute a visual narrative. Overall, the rules are on how to organise pictorial spaces, visual elements, and principles as determinants for the understanding of the import of an artwork. Thus, all art is a visual narrative as it creates 'seeing-as experience.' Serig (2008) also states that visual narratives can be classified as either extrinsic or intrinsic. This means that the narratives can be read from different levels - formal to symbolic analysis. In a painting, for example, an artist creates the most particular image of the intended meaning and by so doing, a work of art becomes an interplay between perception and thought. Inversely, a 'hedonistic aesthetic approach' is preferred as it suggests that signifiers are put into play to create meaning from a work of art through active engagement. Thus, a work of art is viewed as rich in meaning and this meaning is open and decentered (Serig, 2008).

Serig (2008) suggests two perspectives to interpreting and understanding a work of art; naturalistic and symbolic tendencies. An artist may have a preference for one predisposition more than the other. To read a work of art, the reader must recognise more or less the constitutive natural-geometric forms and shapes. These are the surface, the naturalistic, and the imitative visual cues. But a real work of art has some other levels situated within its inner plans. The more profound the artist is, the more the number of levels the reader can find in a work of art. These levels express, symbolically, the artist's conception of the worldview but with no unitary and linear meaning to viewers (Efland, 2002).

Visual narratives are essential in art education as they enable students to think through visual images (Smith, 2010). Smith further argues that if these narratives play such a fundamental role in the making of meaning by artists in their practice, then art students should be grounded in the conceptual structure of these visual narratives.

Through the use of visual narratives, artworks become vehicles and embodiments of meaning. This calls for the development of visual thinking in art education. Efland, (2002) thus, situates the need to understand cognitive processes by arguing that if images play such a pivotal role in the making of art, therefore, understanding the conceptual structure of visual narratives impacts how students are taught to be artists and art educators.

Methodology

The nature of the research problem, study sites and participants who are practicing contemporary visual artists, and art lecturers teaching in teacher education institutions led to the adoption of the hermeneutic phenomenology research design. The design focuses on artists' lived experiences of visual narratives (Creswell, 2012). The study adopted an interpretive discourse (Mason, 2002) positioning the researchers to reflect upon the perspectives of both art lecturers and artists toward contemporary visual culture. To investigate contemporary gallery narratives, an interpretive paradigm provided the context that allowed the researchers to examine what artists had to say about their experiences concerning contemporary visual art practices in Zimbabwe and what lecturers experienced in their teaching engagements. Contemporary artists are typically participants who have experience and knowledge about Zimbabwean visual culture. The artists proffered informed perspectives about visual art leading to an all-inclusive appreciative understanding of the phenomenon. The lecturers were selected because they are domicile to visual practices and they offer visual art as a subject in teacher training.

Six contemporary artists were purposively selected from the National Gallery of Zimbabwe and Gallery Delta (a private institution) as epi-centers of contemporary artistic expression in Zimbabwe. The selected artists are those who are actively involved in the generation of aesthetic ideas in their works of art. These were information-rich participants who have participated at national and international art exhibitions such as the Venice Biennale, Documenta (2012); and the FNB Johannesburg (1995), which have exposed them to the global art space. The participating artists are Doris Tafadzwa Kamupira, Peter Musami, Gareth Nyandoro, Hugh Hatitye Mubaiwa, Cosmas Shiridzinomwa, and Lovemore Kambudzi - hereafter identified using numerical numbers. The artists have formal art training and some of them are practicing art facilitators at different educational levels. Lecturers from six teachers' colleges were purposively selected as participants. In addition, the study involved the analysis of art and design syllabuses and artists' work.

Data were generated through observations and in-depth interviews with practicing artists and art lecturers from the selected colleges. The interviews focused on the nature of visual narratives as reflected by the artists, how the artists generate these narratives, and how art and design teacher education can engage galleries as teaching

resources and repositories of pedagogical content knowledge. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), in-depth interviews enable the researcher to solicit more information through probing and observation of paralanguage. Data collection also involved photographing works of art at the selected gallery sites and their subsequent analyses. Data were analysed using a hermeneutic data analysis strategy- organising dominant themes emerging from the data. Interviews were transcribed and analysed using an indexing system in which units of meaning that contained similar ideas on contemporary visual narratives and art and design teacher education are identified. These units were grouped into thematic labels, which represented participants' perceptions of contemporary visual art narratives in Zimbabwe. Substantiating excerpts from the interviewees also appear as a significant way of exemplifying the interview data.

Findings and Discussion

The following themes emerged from the generated data; contemporary visual art and its narratives; forms of contemporary visual art in galleries; and engaging visual art narratives and teacher education curricula.

Contemporary Visual Art and its Narratives

The artists regarded contemporary art as a concept guided by timeliness, new media forms and conceptual thinking. It was defined as visual artistic practices of the present-day era, the art of now. The following excerpts from four artists provide their understanding of what contemporary visual art is:

- Artist 1: If we say contemporary visual art, we mean recent works of art, talking of recent forms of art, for example, sculpture, architecture, photography, installation, performance art, and others.
- Artist 2: In contemporary art, we will be looking at art that focuses on current issues and events trying to run away from the principle of tradition.
- Artist 3: I see contemporary visual art as current visual art trends that we find in our day-to-day lives.
- Artist 4: When we talk of contemporary art, we are looking at the art of today, the art of now. You will realise that several theories have tried to conceptualise this whole thing of contemporary art.
- Artist 1 said, '[in Zimbabwe], we have the first generation, second generation, and then the contemporary starting from independence [since 1980]...' Artist 3, argued that the definition of contemporary visual art is drawn from the terminology, which meant art that is happening now. It was observed that the concept was also context-based, between African and Western art worlds.

Artist 4 summed it up in the following way:

You understand that people like Peter Osborne, Nancy, and maybe the Australian Terry Smith, have written a lot about contemporary art. Each one came up with their viewpoint but over and above they converge on some issues. They say contemporaneity is about now, today, that is, art by its living artists. However, somebody was here yesterday, it was that contemporary, somebody was here 69 years ago it was that contemporary. Think about Sydney Kacieve 1969, contemporary African Art, it was contemporary by 1969. So this idea is now different from these issues in Western art where there are periodised and so on. Contemporary, I think from the literature it is agreed that it is art from the 1970s, art of the 1980s coming to this side and usually produced by living artists.

From the above excerpts, the participating artists understood contemporary art as a notion that is grounded in the art of the here and now - the art of the present-day cultural experiences of a people. It was defined as art, which is influenced by political, economic, and social gradations. The artists indicated that contemporary art is characterised by the development of new media, modern technology, canvas, acrylics, and computers. However, opposing views were noted among those who argued that it is a matter of terminology as these forms had existed before. An example of installation art is reflected in Kane Kwei's (a Ghanaian) funerary art of the 1950s, which depicted that contemporaneity rests with the authorship and curatorship of African art. Thus, the term contemporary art is the art that is generally produced during the time of the artist and interpreter. In other words, the artist and the viewer experience the same epochal period. Contemporary is thus, a transitory phase and not a description of a period that is permanent and time-bound. Art lecturers had similar conceptions. The excerpts in Fig 1 illustrate their views.

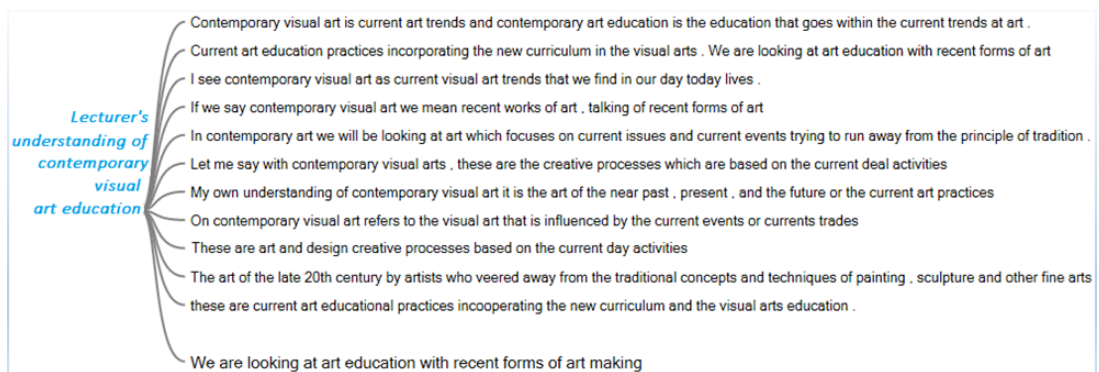


Figure 1: Lecturers' Conceptions of Contemporary Art

Both lecturers and visual artists shared similar views concerning the meaning of contemporary art. However, artists were more articulate as compared to the college lecturers. The perception of contemporary visuals was viewed as guided by timeliness, new media, art forms, and conceptual thinking.

Forms of Contemporary Visual art in Galleries

Several contemporary art forms were identified by both lecturers and practicing artists. Through the interviews and observations, the major art forms that were identified include drawings, paintings, digital art, photography, installation and assemblage, wire construction, mixed media art, and performance art. Analysis of works of art at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe and Gallery Delta also confirmed the existence of these artistic practices. The Gallery Delta was running an exhibition under the theme *Past and Present* opened on 21 May 2021. The advent of new technologies, especially computers, was identified as having led to computer painting, graphic design, digital art, and video art. Through occupying a small segment, photography was cited as one of the current visual art forms in Zimbabwe. However, it now involves photo editing and painting as opposed to ordinary photo shooting of images. Sculpture, assemblage, and installation are now contemporary art forms as they involve a combination of mixed media like wood, plastic, and metal, a concept called *assemblage art*. Artists voiced the emergence of *soft sculpture* constructed using plastic, fibre, and similar materials.

There was an emphasis on painting as a contemporary visual art form, especially abstract painting. This was seen from works by Peter Musami, Gareth Nyandoro, Cosmas Shiridzinomwa, and Lovemore Kambudzi. New approaches to painting were also evident particularly, with the works by Peter Musami such as *Mhukahuru 1* and *Biri naGanyire*. One artist has invented a style, which he labeled “*Kucheka-cheka*” which means cutting. He had this to say: ‘I am a pure artist, I do not have a genre. I think genres will limit me; *ndoita kunonzi kuchekacheka* (I use a style called *kucheka-cheka*) cutting and cutting probably a painting format.’ However, concerning the institutionalisation of these art forms, galleries had made great strides as compared to teacher education where imitative drawing and painting, were noticeable. The artists agreed that visual art in Zimbabwe had adjusted well into the worldwide arena in terms of quality and forms of media.

This confirms that visual art in Zimbabwe is contemporary by Western standards (Mamvuto, 2013). However, others averred that Zimbabwean art forms, though contemporary, are of an inferior status when compared to Western art. The art content was skewed towards Western art with some galleries promoting imported approaches, especially in painting. This was also evident in the syllabuses that were analysed. Emphasis was put on the appropriation of Western art styles by Zimbabwean artists. In a bid to enter the global art world, artists argued that they had to appropriate Western aesthetics.

Engaging Visual Art Narratives and Teacher Education Curricula

Artist 2, who is both a practicing artist and an art instructor at the National Gallery School of Visual Art, was quick to express discomfort over the status of art in teacher education, which he viewed as lacking contemporaneity and rigour. The artist said; ‘I have been with Chinhoyi University of Technology and it was not an easy thing to get a practicing artist to engage with students in workshops. Maybe the artists wanted to keep their work out of threat...’ The artists highlighted the need for reforms in art education, particularly at the teacher education level. ‘Teachers’ colleges should have gallery spaces and, allow the student to experience that,’ said Artist 3. Artist 4 stated: ‘Of major concern is the use of rigid drawing tools, which hinder creativity in students. I have invented the *kucheka-cheka* painting format so that I am not limited in my creativity.’

Artist 2 suggested that:

Galleries are nerve centres of art. They are well-equipped and experienced with recent and modest artistic practices. I was talking of people like Chiko. You will remember his photography exhibitions and the mega-themed exhibitions of 2021, 2019, 2017, and 2015. There are artists like David Chinyama, Charles Bhebhe, Doris Kamupira, and a number of these artists are representing Zimbabwe at the Venice Biennale Pavilion. So, you can see that with all this experience if teachers’ colleges are to take their learners to these galleries, they will understand what contemporary art is and how we create it, and how we interpret these themes.

The other suggested alternative ways is for contemporary artists to visit teacher education colleges and demonstrate skills as resource persons or as resident artists. This deliberate interaction would benefit art educators and their students. Art platforms where artists meet the public to discuss works and exhibitions were noted to be of great importance since it was the arena where contemporary art is discussed and resides. There were some interesting opinions from artists on the role of exhibitions in the development of contemporary visual art in Zimbabwe. Artists argued that engaging in art exhibitions was of great value as these were platforms where students and artists would interact with curators and art critics. They indicated that having participated in different exhibitions, their art had changed the status of Zimbabwean contemporary visual art. However, one artist had a different opinion arguing that art galleries and exhibitions were marketplaces for art and this on its own had detrimental effects on amateur art produced by student teachers. Some artists maintained that participating in mega exhibitions enabled them to get in touch with the global art world and current developments in art. Another group hinted that exhibitions provided space for experimentation by artists. This implies that students in teachers’ colleges can equally get to understand global art spaces and practices through such engagements.

Four of the practicing artists viewed exhibitions as playing a pivotal role in the development of contemporary art in Zimbabwe. They indicated that several Zimbabwean artists had participated in both local and international exhibitions, especially in painting. The most prestigious of these exhibitions was the Venice Biennale mounted in Venice, Italy (Enzwezor and Okeke-Agulu, 2009). Local exhibitions like *Tiri tose/Sisonke*, and the Zimbabwe Annual Exhibition by the NGZ were also cited as important adventures meant to strengthen contemporary art in Zimbabwe although the participants are primary and secondary school students, hence, the need for student teachers to participate at such fora.

Artist 4, when asked about the possible areas where galleries and teachers' colleges can collaborate, had this to say,

There are many areas where these can cooperate; the first one being mounting art seminars and workshops together, maybe quarterly or twice a term, and looking at grey areas that require attention. Galleries can visit teacher education colleges as resource institutions to make presentations, and to teach main study students. These two institutions could then collaborate in terms of research.

Recent scholarship by Nzewi (2013) also affirms that exhibitions such as the Dak'Art Biennale in Senegal are important avenues for contemporary African art where installation art, photography, and conceptual art (ideational art) are exhibited. This is also supported by Okeke-Agulu (2013), who posits that participation at art fairs, biennales, and 'documentas' are important because these are active cultural sites where artworks are displayed and debated. Thus, Artist 3 reiterated that 'participation by artists at local and international exhibitions helps in improving our art through ideas from critics and curators. Most Zimbabwean visual artists are participating in art fairs, biennales, and symposia and this strengthens our art.' Teacher education could utilise these art fairs as resources for disciplinary and pedagogical content knowledge in art and design education. Overall, the artists viewed galleries as sites for rich artistic heritage and resources for vibrant art education. They indicated that galleries had promoted art forms such as painting, installations, and photography as one artist said: 'We mount exhibitions such as the Annual Exhibitions, *Tiri tose/Sisonke* Exhibition, *Amali Malola* Sculpture exhibition.' Artist 3 stated: 'if medical students practice with patients, why not art students in galleries?' This indicates that galleries were viewed as laboratories for all forms of artistic innovation that could be used to promote experimental art by student teachers. There should be a deliberate relationship between colleges and galleries of modern art. This, it is assumed, would enable art educators and students to get acquainted with different art forms and recent developments in art.

Concerning embracing gallery narratives in teacher education, college lecturers suggested the following:

- Lecturer 1: I think there could be a relationship between galleries and teacher education, especially using the Critical Studies approach, which advocates interacting as much as possible with galleries and artists. Critical Studies encourages visiting galleries and museums.... The more students visit galleries, the more they will work better on their works of art.
- Lecture 2: Art galleries should work with colleges in the production of works of art. Teachers' colleges should visit galleries and engage in a lot of research.
- Lecturer 3: I think galleries play a very essential role because they exhibit current narratives that are displayed in the gallery. So, students will use those approaches within their own art-making.
- Lecturer 4: Attending galleries will inform students of the recent practices even the understanding of diversity in terms of media. Students get first-hand information from galleries. This is where they meet the modest art creators. Students get to know these artists by name, by face and by their works of art. By so doing, they are motivated by knowing the actual people who are into art hence, influencing the art they are doing at college.
- Lecturer 5: Art gallery act as a rich resource for students in terms of their research in search of their art style. They have a chance to also compare their approach to that which is done by other artists.
- Lecturer 6: Engagement in galleries helps in boosting of student creativity and craftsmanship. There is a possibility of students learning diverse artistic expressions from the gallery narratives and also gain an appreciation of the beauty of art – since work in the gallery is created by various artists from different places.

From the above excerpts, it is evident that art lecturers offered various options that could be taken on board to incorporate contemporary art forms in the art and design curricula. It was noted that collaboration between artists and lecturers would form the basis for this strategy and synergy. This would be achieved through attending art conversations, exhibitions, and symposiums in art galleries where students would meet curators, art critics, and art collectors. Galleries and other art platforms are, therefore, critical exhibition sites that can benefit teacher education.

The data generated from the interviews with artists and college lecturers, and from the documents that were analysed showed diverse views that illuminate the interconnectedness of gallery narratives and the art and design teacher education curricula. It emerged that art galleries are indispensable to the successful drawing up and implementation of an effective art and design teacher education curriculum. Xanthoudaki et al., (2003) further propose that the relevance of art galleries in art education rests on the premise that experiences in these institutions balance art-making through engaging in discussion and criticism of other people's works of art and also studying art traditions.

Art education can also get value from repositories in art galleries because of the centrality of the art object (aesthetic object) in the lecture room and studio art discourse. Models of art education such as DBAE, CSAE, and Visual Culture place emphasis on the study of visual and material culture as pathways to developing the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of the learners. This is further illuminated by Broudy (1985) who posits that any ideal art education curriculum should develop the skills to discern the aesthetic qualities of a work of art. In addition to understanding the aesthetic properties of a work of art, learners should be equipped with creative skills. Knowing about the context of art should also be part of the experiences learners acquire and the skill to make critical judgments on given works of art. These various faculties are based on the study of real objects. Institutions such as art galleries and art museums become critical to this type of curriculum as they are repositories of canonical works of art from different cultures and historical epochs.

The study revealed the appropriation of Western art styles by Zimbabwean artists. In a bid to enter the art world, non-Western artists felt they needed to appropriate Western aesthetics. The participating artists suggested diverse strategies that could be implemented by teacher educators to incorporate contemporary art forms in their curricula. Collaboration between artists and art lecturers would form the nexus of this strategy. It entails lecturers tapping on knowledge and skills from practicing artists, engaging in conversations, exhibitions, and symposiums where artists, curators, art critics, and art collectors, would further strengthen the strategy.

Implications

Based on the findings, there is a need for professional and material investment that will empower teachers' colleges to further develop partnerships with art galleries and practicing artists. This should be enhanced through the establishment of synergy among gallery educators, artists, and teacher educators to support the professional growth and practices of students. This will also create a networking system for gallery events and programmes that are of benefit to teacher education. The envisaged collaboration will provide access to works of art to students and enable practicing artists to work closely with colleges of education in mentorship programmes. This concurs with pronouncements by one artist who argued that students have to go out and search for the information themselves.

An analysis of teacher education curricula in selected colleges revealed that Western art is significantly taught as compared to Zimbabwean art as similarly, observed by Mamvuto (2013). The art and design syllabuses showed that under art theory, Western art movements, African art history, Zimbabwean art, and cultural analysis were significantly, taught. Inversely, Zimbabwean art is taught as 'Shona stone sculpture', the Zimbabwe bird sculptures, missionary art schools, and the Zimbabwe stone monuments, missing out on contemporary art. Observations are

that installations, photography, emerging painting styles, artists' biographies, cultural aesthetics, and the use of found objects and materials in sculpture by contemporary artists are missing. In light of such observations, it is hoped that teacher education includes, as part of its curriculum, guided tours to art galleries and studios. This will enable students and lecturers to acquire knowledge about recent developments in the visual art discourse by linking and collaborating with the actual creators of art. This will help colleges to incubate current artistic practices in their studios. Since contemporary visual art involves a multiplicity of art styles and media, engaging with galleries will help students explore such recent developments in the visual arts from the ancient period to the contemporary.

This study revealed that visual art has broadened its horizon to include mixed media art, photography, installation art, performance art, wire construction, sculpture and assemblage, and computer art as was observed from the different works by the artists. However, teacher education curricula are still limited in terms of these visual art forms. There is a need for art education to embrace ready-made and other art forms. It is hoped that such developments will lead to the use of new media - leather, DVDs, CDs, scrap metal, and discarded plastic material, which will help students create innovative artwork with contextual meaning. This will also widen students' modes of visual expression using media that connect with modern technology and contemporary issues.

Conclusion

This study explored the potential of the use of art galleries as a learning resource in art and design curricula in teacher education in Zimbabwe. It revealed the contribution of galleries as integral resource centres in art and design curricula in teacher education. Collaboration between teacher education institutions and galleries was observed to be limited yet such collaboration would be key to achieving successful experiential teaching and learning where student teachers acquire knowledge and skills on self-expression, art criticism discourse, and aesthetic judgment (Smith, 2010). This would add value to the discourse of contemporary visual art about meaning-making through visual art narratives. It is envisaged that the study will benefit the pre-service teacher education art curricula in Zimbabwe, and indeed elsewhere concerning theory, knowledge, and practice.

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