
**PRODUCTION OF PAINTINGS INSPIRED BY DISABLED VISUAL ARTISTS
FOR SELF IDENTITY AMONG YOUNG DISABLED ARTISTS
A CASE STUDY OF RUBAGA DIVISION, KAMPALA**

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ABSTRACT

In Uganda, Visual Art is done by Normal Artists without disability worldwide, in Uganda the development of Visual Art by persons with disability has not been a smooth stream. Disabled Artists have played a very big role in the development of Traditional, Modern and Contemporary Art. As development takes place, disabled artists have been excluded in the mainstream of documentation of visual art practice in Uganda and their work is not accepted like those of the predecessors who are normal yet it is at the same stake. Findings show that a big percentage of the Disabled Artists (up-coming) practicing Visual Arts are not adequately documented. The researcher therefore had to explore and produce paintings inspired by the upcoming unprivileged Disabled Artists so that they can be inspired with self-identity that Disability is not Inability and aspire to inspire in the mainstream practice of Visual Art in Uganda and the world at large. Three research questions were posed,

I investigated the questions through a vivid ethnographic account using both primary and secondary sources. Through questionnaire, field notes, one on one interviews and observations with people that mattered as far as this research was concerned. Secondary data was collected through literary sources, such as books, journals, research papers, newspapers and the internet.

Key words: production, paintings and visual artists

Background of the study

According to James (1890/1950), the word self refers to a representation or set of representations about oneself, parallel to the representations people have of other individuals. This is the most straightforward and common usage of the term and the one on which we focus most of our attention in this chapter. It is the “me,” or self as object, about which James wrote the entire set of beliefs, evaluations, perceptions, and thoughts that people have about themselves. Nevertheless, the term “self” has also been substituted for “behavior,” as in “self - regulation.” Our review does not focus on work exemplifying the latter usage, partly because this work was covered comprehensively according to Baumeister (1998).

The amount of self - knowledge, beliefs, thoughts, memories, and feelings about the self that people possess is theoretically unlimited in quantity and scope. As such, it cannot all be brought to attention at once. Beginning in the late 1960s, researchers began to acknowledge this fact by differentiating between active and stored self - knowledge. Active self - knowledge includes information about oneself that is held in consciousness. It has been referred to as the phenomenal self (Jones & Gerard, 1967).

The term identity can be conceptualized as a way of making sense of some aspect or part of self-concept (Abrams, 1994; 1999; Hogg, 2003; Serpe, 1987; Styker & Burke, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). For example, one can have a religious identity which contains relevant content and goals what to do, what to value, and how to behave.

For better understanding of this research, the researcher will frame the objectives to guide in the documentation and not to dwell more on the definition of self-identity. The framed objectives will be meant to find out the condition of persons with disability in Rubaga division in Namungoona Kampala, to find out disabled artists who have tried to do visual arts for self-identity.

Statement of the Problem

Whereas Visual Art is done by Normal Artists without disability worldwide, in Uganda the development of Visual Art by persons with disability has not been a smooth stream. Disabled Artists have played a very big role in the development of Traditional, Modern and Contemporary Art. As development takes place, disabled artists have been excluded in the mainstream of documentation of visual art practice in Uganda and their work is not accepted like those of the predecessors who are normal yet it is at the same stake. Findings show that a big percentage of the Disabled Artists (up-coming) practicing Visual Arts are not adequately documented. The researcher therefore explores and produced paintings inspired by the upcoming unprivileged Disabled Artists so that they can be inspired with self-identity that Disability is not Inability and aspire in the mainstream practice of Visual Art in Uganda and the world at large.

Objectives to the study.

To find out the Condition of the disabled persons in Rubaga Division Kampala.

To find out the disabled artists who have tried to come up with visual art pieces for self-identity.

To produce paintings inspired by disabled visual artists for self-identity among young disabled artists in Rubaga Division Kampala.

Studio guiding questions

The studio guiding questions were: -

What is the condition of the disabled persons in Rubaga Division Kampala?

Who are the disabled artists who have tried to come up with visual art pieces for self-identity?

How can the researcher produce paintings inspired by the disabled visual artists for self-identity among young disabled artists in Rubaga Division, Kampala?

Methology

Research design

The researcher used qualitative research method to accomplish this research where the researcher used case study research in obtaining data. This was by using both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources that were used in field work notes, questionnaires, one on one interview and observations. Secondary data was collected through literary sources and these included books, research papers, newspapers, journals and internet.

Population Sample

The respondents were selected from both private and public galleries; craft shops with in Kampala, Persons with disabilities (PWDs), Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) and National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda Action Plan (NUDIPU). The researcher chose the above-mentioned organizations because they had the relevant information about wildlife conservation.

Sample size

The selected sample included three (03) respondents who were authorities and disabled artist from Rubaga Division in Namungoona Local Council. The sample size selection, the researcher considered the time factor as he had planned before. The researcher then created Seven (7) art works articulating and documenting the self-identity of young disabled persons. These were done in accordance to the two themes that the researcher selected.

Sample techniques

The researcher was purposive sampling technique. Platon, (1990) defines sample techniques when He said “the logic and power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information- rich cases for study in depth”. This definition was confirmed true by Bryman, (2008) when he defined purposive sampling as “a method that entails selecting respondents in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed”.

Methods and tools of data collection

According to Mbokane, (2001), Data is information obtained during the course of the study. Therefore, the used different techniques and design methods of corresponding tools for each method of collecting data to inspire and meet the objectives of the study: The methods aimed at producing relevant information on production of paintings by the disabled artists for self-identity among young disabled artists in Rubaga Division, Namungoona Kampala

In-depth Interview

According to Kakooza, (2002), the term interview refers to a conversation in which a researcher tries to get information from the interviewee and records it by him or herself. During an interview a rapport is established between the interviewer and the interviewee. Not only is physical distance between the two is beaten, the social cultural obstacle is also removed; and a free common flow of Ideas to take place. This is because interviews will help the interviewer to get to a one on one conduct with the respondents during the study. Interviews helped in satisfying objective (1) of the study.

Library and archival survey.

Library and archival survey made it possible for the researcher to access relevant data recorded on internet, text books journals among others in order to satisfy objective one (1) and two (2) of the study. The researcher through this method was able to traverse the internet, use the University library in search for information and also read various literature related to the area of study. The data collected was recorded in the log book through writing and in photographic format.

Photography

Photography is an instrument of data collection that involves the use of a camera to record an incident or happening. Photography is another method of data collection that will be used to record the persons with disability. The researcher used a digital camera of a smart phone as a tool to photograph images of the persons with disability. These photographs helped the researcher to develop sketches and designs

that were referred to while creating paintings, documenting the life of the persons with disability.

Studio Exploration

During Studio Exploration, many experiments will be made to make it thinkable to access relevant data that will help in satisfying objective three (3) of the study.

Data analysis

The data to be collected from in-depth interview, focused group discussion, photography and videographer was taken to the studio to be analyzed. Preliminary sketches and drawings were developed using free hand technique.

RESULTS

Overview.

This chapter presents interprets and analyze the studio findings of the study. In this Chapter, findings were based on the study outcomes of studio exploration using painting as one way of producing paintings inspired by the disabled visual artists for self-identity among young disabled artists. Chapter four answers objective 3 of this study; to produce paintings inspired by the disabled visual artists for self-identity among young disabled artists in Rubaga Division, Kampala.

In this chapter, the researcher presents the visual images he created in studio, interprets these images and analyses them according to the tools and materials used in each painting.

Different tools and materials were used during studio practice for purposes of being creative and communicating the researcher's message clearly. Despite the fact that different materials and tools, techniques and principles and elements of design were employed, emphasis was put on the message and subject matter. The explanation and arrangement of studio findings was based on selected themes, and these are; a) a painting of a disabled visual artists for self-identity, b) Self portrait of the artist for self-identity.

Presentation of studio findings

Condition of the disabled persons in Rubaga Division Kampala



Figure: 1; a painting of a disabled visual artists for self-identity

Materials: Hybridization of paints on canvas

Source: Researcher

Design Interpretation

The composition presents the handicapped painter showing his skills in painting for self-identity. The yellow color represents the need to catered for in the field of art and design. The illustration depicts the disabled persons with the skills of painting using the painting tools and materials on canvas. The bold flat painting of the body represents that population of the people that are not aware of the importance of self-identity but do not care. This is why the disabled painter is presented looking in the opposite direction. The right and left lower corner depict the ignorant population that needs to be sensitized about the need to have self-identity especially the disabled persons. The light-blue color on the short pants and canvas depicts that disability is not inability there for the community should also recognize the strength and ability of persons with disability for self-identity.

Self portrait of the artist for self-identity



Figure: 2; Self portrait of the researcher for self-identity.

Materials: Hybridization painting on canvas

Source: Researcher

Design Interpretation

“Fear and doubt had been holding me back. Fear of the unknown, of what the society would think about me. And doubting myself; feeling as if, perhaps, I shouldn’t express myself this way somehow, after creating this work, there is this new-found peace; the realization that it is okay to express your thoughts. Because of the way society is structured and what I went through growing up, I developed a protective shell. Until this work, I had not realized that it was okay to be weak. It is okay to express all these feelings raw. Maybe that is how the world will connect with you and your cause for self-identity among young disabled artists.”

Conclusion

The study found out the Condition of the disabled persons in Rubaga Division Kampala. In the process of accomplishing this objective, the researcher looked at the status and conditions of persons with disability who are practicing art in Rubaga Division Kampala. This was done when the researcher visited the different areas in Rubaga Division like Galleries and practicing disabled visual artists and recreation centers to collect data. This probably shows how long the journey is for the country as far as self-identity is concerned.

The study further found out the disabled artists who have tried to come up with visual art pieces for self-identity. According to the attendant to the afri-art gallery seventh street industrial area, limited visual disabled artists have painted or exhibited art works for self-identity

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