Positionality of Female Visual Artists in the Ghana

Posicionalidade das Artistas Visuais em Gana

Posicionalidad de las Artistas Visuales en Gana

Adwoa Owusuaa Bobie* iD

ABSTRACT

Positionality is crucial in determining career participation, representation, and access, especially in the creative industry. However, the creative industry is wrought with inequality and discrimination, which is heightened by the industry's informality and precariousness. This paper contributes to discussions on gender discrimination in the creative sector by highlighting the unique context of Ghana. It discusses the intersectional positionality (that marginalizes) of female visual artists amidst the booming visual art industry. Drawing on the three tenets of positionality by Kezar and Lester, this paper analyzes the influence of the intersection of gender underrepresentation with a geo-political stereotype and unfavourable socio-cultural expectations in positioning female visual artists at a disadvantage in the industry. The study comprises qualitative research with female visual artists in Ghana, showing that the minority representation of females cast shadows on their professional identity and recognition. This underrepresentation also enables unbalanced power relations favoring male artists in industry entry, practice, and career growth. Contextually, female visual artists face double subordinate positioning, as females and as non-Western artists based in the Global South, when collaborating with Western artists. This racial subordination is further heightened by artists' struggles to find a balance between the demands of their careers and socio-cultural expectations associated with their gender.

Keywords: gender, positionality, female visual artists, creative industry, Africa.

* Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana.
PhD in Sociology, she is a research fellow at the Centre for Cultural and African Studies (CeCASt) at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).
ao.bobie@knust.edu.gh

RESUMO

A posicionalidade é crucial para indicar a participação, representação e acesso à carreira, especialmente na indústria criativa. Essa indústria, contudo, é marcada por desigualdade e discriminação, que são intensificadas pela informalidade e precariedade prevalentes na indústria. Este artigo contribui para a discussão sobre discriminação de gênero no setor criativo, destacando o contexto único de Gana. Ele discute a posicionalidade interseccional de (que marginaliza) mulheres artistas visuais no âmbito da crescente indústria de arte visual. Com base nos três princípios da posicionalidade de Kezar e Lester, este artigo analisa a influência da intersecção entre sub-representação de gênero e estereótipo geopolítico associado a expectativas socioculturais desfavoráveis no posicionamento desvantajoso de mulheres artistas visuais na indústria. O estudo compreende pesquisa qualitativa com mulheres artistas visuais em Gana, mostrando que a representação minoritária de mulheres obscurece sua identidade profissional e reconhecimento. Essa sub-representação também permite relações de poder desiguais favorecendo artistas masculinos na entrada na indústria, prática e crescimento na carreira. Contextualmente, as mulheres artistas visuais enfrentam posicionamento duplamente subordinado, como mulheres e como artistas não ocidentais baseadas no Sul Global, ao colaborar com artistas ocidentais. Essa subordinação racial intensifica-se ainda mais pelas lutas das artistas por encontrar um equilíbrio entre as demandas de suas carreiras e as expectativas socioculturais associadas ao seu gênero.

Palavras-chave: gênero, posicionalidade, artistas visuais femininas, indústria criativa, África.

RESUMEN

La posicionalidad es crucial para definir la participación, representación y acceso a la carrera profesional, especialmente en la industria creativa. Sin embargo, la industria creativa está marcada por la desigualdad y la discriminación, agravadas por la informalidad y la precariedad de la industria. Este artículo contribuye al debate sobre la discriminación de género en el sector creativo al destacar el contexto singular de Ghana. Analiza la posicionalidad interseccional de (que margina a) las artistas visuales en el ámbito de la creciente industria visual. Basándose en los tres principios de posicionalidad de Kezar y Lester, este artículo analiza la influencia de la intersección de la subrepresentación de género con un estereotipo geopolítico y expectativas socioculturales desfavorables en el posicionamiento desventajado de las artistas dentro de la industria. El estudio comprende una investigación cualitativa con mujeres artistas visuales en Ghana, que muestra que la representación minoritaria de mujeres ensombrece su identidad y reconocimiento profesional. Esta subrepresentación también propicia relaciones de poder desequilibradas que favorecen a los artistas masculinos en el acceso a la industria, la práctica y el crecimiento profesional. En contexto, las artistas visuales se enfrentan a una doble posición subordinada, como mujeres y como artistas no occidentales radicadas en el Sur Global, al colaborar con artistas occidentales. Esta subordinación racial se ve agravada por las dificultades de las artistas para encontrar un equilibrio entre las exigencias de sus carreras y las expectativas socioculturales asociadas a su género.

Palabras clave: género, posicionalidad, artistas visuales, industria creativa, África.

Introduction

Gender, race, class, and geographical location are markers of relational positions that influence identities and determine access to services, information, and knowledge (Carstensen-Egwoum, 2014). Positionality means how the differences in social, economic, cultural, and political experiences shape societal identities and access (Rowe, 2014; Holmes, 2020). The intersection of these factors plays out differently in different contexts. In career choices and mobility, these factors can determine people's progression patterns. The creative industry is wrought with inequality and discrimination, heightened by informality and precariousness (Gill, 2002; O'Brien *et al.*, 2016). Studies on creative industries globally show that women, lower class, and minority groups struggle to sustain their careers (Been, Wijngaarden & Loots, 2023). Although we are witnessing robust creative industries in Africa, where talented artists have emerged with innovative and creative works that have taken the world by storm (Alacovska *et al.* 2021, Bobie *et al.* 2023, Langevang, Resario *et al.* 2022, Langevang, Steedman *et al.* 2022, Resario *et al.*, 2023, Steedman *et al.* 2022), female visual artists[1] continue to lag in terms of recognition and practice compared to their male counterparts. There persist issues of gender imbalance and discrimination, industry stereotypes, geo-political racial dynamics, and sociocultural norms that overshadow the ingenuity, creativity, and innovation of female artists (Conor, Gill & Taylor, 2015; Richards, 2022). This paper discusses the marginalized positionality of rising female visual artists, using Kezar and Lester's (2010) three tenets of the positionality framework to show how gender intersects with other factors, such as race and sociocultural expectations, to shape the identity, representation, recognition, and practice of female creatives.

The creative industry functions on a gender-stereotypical system of male dominance, which has positioned women at a disadvantage over the years (Dent, 2016). The gendered expectations of the industry influence access to entry into the profession, access to audience, recognition, and, subsequently, monetary gains. Stalp (2017, p. 43) states succinctly that "the social organization of art and artistic reputation are imperative to one's success as

---

[1] Visual arts are arts created primarily based on things seen or based on visuals. In Ghana, this comprises Basketry, Jewellery, Ceramics, Graphic Design, Leatherwork, Picture Making, Sculpture, and Textiles (Siaw & Nortey, 2011).

an artist." Therefore, in the creative industry, where "women are subject to various forms of occupational segregation," women experience "inequalities of both recognition and reward, while hegemonic masculinities continue to be reproduced" (Finkel *et al.*, 2017, p. 282). This limits the power of women to access major assets such as markets and monetary rewards. These inequalities manifest even in cases where they occupy similar positions as their male counterparts (Finkel *et al.*, 2017; Stalp, 2017).

There are extensive works on gender inequalities in the creative industries in the global North that show how systems and structures pose challenges to women's entry and participation in creative works (O'Brien *et al.*, 2016; Conor *et al.*, 2015; Stalp, 2017; Brydges & Hracs, 2019; Jansson & Calderón-Sandoval, 2022). While these works provide significant starting points for discussions about gender inequality in other parts of the world, Christiaan De Beukelaer (2017) has argued that fitting African creative and cultural production in Western literature produces tension between the cultural and creative industries' models and contexts. Therefore, scholars need to conceptualize and theorize models and approaches that pay attention to empirical African practices (De Beukelear, 2017). Thus, this paper contributes to debates on gender inequality in the creative industry by highlighting the case of Ghana. It discusses intersectional factors that interfere with female visual artists' practice in Africa positioning them at a disadvantage in terms of professional identity and power relations in the industry.

While gender inequality manifests in almost all societies, the case of female Africans is different from females of the West due to contextual influences. Even among females of the West, Kimberle Crenshaw's intersectionality concept and other black feminist theories have shown the difference and complexity of the Black woman's identity. Though scholars such as Langevang and Gough (2012), Schmahmann (2015), and Langevang (2017) have worked on how systems and structures of the creative industry in different African countries limit female career progression, these works do not interrogate how the industry's gender representation, which is rooted in its historical institutionalization, coupled with social factors shape the career of female artists. Therefore, the study agrees with Ogundipe's (1987) long-standing claim that in "whatever studies we make of women in Africa, we should be aware of the need to 'periodize' African history adequately. It is also necessary to recognize various social and historical categories which would

affect our analysis of women's position in Africa" (Ogundipe, 1987, p.132, quotation marks from original text). Thus, to understand the complexities of the African woman's identity, researchers must understand the social and historical contingencies that contributed to the current position. It is on this premise that the study explores how the introduction of visual art training has produced industry specific gender dynamics. This historical antecedence continues to influence gender representation in the industry.

This paper is divided into four main headings. The next section is on methodology, followed by a literature review on positionality as a feminist theory. The third section discusses the introduction of visual arts education in Ghana and the final section is on female positionality in contemporary visual arts practice. The last section further discusses Kezar and Lester's (2010) three tenets of positionality.

Methods & Data

This work consists of qualitative research that draws on both secondary and primary data. Primary data were gathered through purposive sampling and snowballing techniques, targeting female creative artists in Accra and Kumasi. In each region, a creative artists' workshop was organized for visual artists to discuss the challenges and opportunities in the visual art profession. These were workshops for both male and female visual artists, however, they were dominated by males. The gender representation in both regions sums up to nine females and 15 males. During the workshop, peculiar gender issues emerged that caught my interest, therefore, I decided to pursue them by engaging the female artists individually for in-depth interviews. Over a span of three months, I was able to interview six female artists; the remaining three were unavailable. Both the workshop discussions and the in-depth interviews were recorded and later transcribed for analysis. Although I allude to the conversations from the workshop for similar experiences shared by the artists, this paper draws heavily on the individual interviews. The analysis also highlights variables such as age and marital status to show how they intersect with artists' gender to position them differently even as females. Below is a table that introduces the participants of the in-depth interviews, using pseudonyms but accurate ages and marital statuses.

Table 1 – Participants of in-depth interviews

Name	Age	Marital Status	Craft
Senam	43	Not married	Sculpture
Kate	37	Not married	Sculpture/Curator
Adwoa	29	Married	Sculpture/Curator
Victoria	35	Married	Textile Designer
Mariam	37	Not married	Painting
Tina	28	Not married	Painting

Positionality as a feminist theory

The paper adopts "positionality" as its theoretical framework, which is discussed in detail in this section. Inevitably, my position as a female, middle-class, married woman and mother researcher in data collection cannot be overlooked. Participants' knowledge of my background contributed to the easy flow of information because most of them share similar socio-economic backgrounds, which was instrumental in forming early rapport. They believed my position could help me relate to their circumstances and understand their struggles. The high levels of education, international exposure, and high-end clientele characteristics of the participants also position them differently from low-end creative producers.

Positionality theory was developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Kezar and Lester (2010) posit that the development of the theory was to counter the Standpoint theory propounded in the 1970s. Authors such as Dorothy Smith, Sandra Harding, and Patricia Hill Collins advanced the Standpoint theory to emphasize the importance of using women's oppressive experiences as the focal point of research to build feminist epistemologies (Sica, 2005; Brooks, 2007; Cipriani, 2020). While the Standpoint theory posits an objective "stand" of individual identities shaped by experiences, positionality theory argues for a subjective position of an individual which is "informed by multiple experiences…that simultaneously construct and

reinforces individual perspectives…. Identities are complex, fluid and they are associated with power" (Kezar & Lester, 2010, p.166). They further argue that, with positionality, "identity is constantly being reproduced through a process of social construction" (p. 166). It implies:

> concurrently a process, a condition, a location, and a discourse: the incessant processes and means by which positionality is in/formed, undone, and reformed; the varying conditions in which we live and express ourselves; the location and spaces where it is shaped and envisioned… "a state of being and a process of becoming, a journey of negotiations between social identities and shifting spaces of here and there (Knight & Deng, 2016, p. 106).

According to Kezar and Lester (2010), positionality is premised on three main tenets: identities, power relations, and context. People have multiple identities formed from the "overlapping of their gender, race, class, age, and other features such as their professional status" (Longino, 1993 cited in Kezar & Lester 2010, p.167). Power relations are the ability to wield authority or possess a significant influence to make meaning or shape perspectives in each situation. This form of power relation is socially constructed (Kezar &Lester, 2010) and imperative in gaining access. It is how people are positioned in "relation to others as dominant/subordinate, marginal/centre, empowered/powerless" (Takacs, 2002, p.169). Venner (2015, p. 3) argues that power is "fundamental to almost all kinds of feminism, which is rooted in an exploration of the power relations that characterize social interpretations of gender".

The last tenet is context, which defines the circumstance/situation and conditions in which an individual exists. It can be an organization, a community, or a nation. The context also has cultures that "represent a shared system of rituals and significance that give meaning and power to an individual's role" (Kezar & Lester, 2010, p.169). Social, political, cultural, and economic factors that influence an individual's experiences are found in contexts and they interact to produce identities and influence power. Thus, identities are shaped, and power relations are manifested within contexts. Therefore, according to Linda Alcoff (1988, p. 433), positionality is a person's "position within any given context, a position always defined by gender, race, class, and other socially significant dimensions". Takacs, citing Mahr and Tetreault in their defining work titled "The Feminist

Classroom", notes that positionality is the idea that "people are defined not in terms of fixed identities, but by their location within shifting networks of relationships, which can be analyzed and changed." (Takacs, 2002, p.169). Therefore, to understand women's positionality, it is imperative to analyze how the intersectionality of social factors produces different identities of women based on their access to power to shape perspectives in a context. Thus, feminist positionality theory adopts an intersectionality approach to understanding women's identity and influence within a context.

When Kimberle Crenshaw introduced the idea of intersectionality, it was to "highlight the classical categorical triad of race, gender, and class" (Carstensen-Egwuom, 2014, p. 265). Intersectionality is the connectivity and simultaneity of the different axes of oppression in defining women's experiences and identities. Intersectionality challenges researchers to examine the connections between multiple axes of oppression and exclusion, their complexities, and how they intersect with systems to create lived realities (Gill, 2014; Mohammed, 2022). Crenshaw, a female black legal educator, propounded intersectionality to demonstrate the complexity of the identities and experiences of Black females in America. While all females experience marginalization and oppression, she argues that factors such as race and class further differentiate the experiences of Black women. It is important to perceive the simultaneous influence of these factors on women's lived experiences rather than their isolated effects. The separate analyses of these oppressive factors give partial understanding because the "analytic distinction between, for instance, 'racial' oppression and 'gender' oppression distorts their simultaneous operation in the lives of people who experience both" (Carastathis, 2014, p. 305).

The application of intersectionality illustrates the wholeness of women's experiences (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality therefore became a pivotal reference for black feminism. Carastathis (2014) notes that "[u]ntil the emergence of black feminism in the United States, not a single social theorist took seriously the concept of the simultaneity of [race, gender and class] intersection in people's lives" (Carastathis, 2014, p. 304). While the term's early application was situated within the triad category of gender, race, and class, over the years, there has been "extensive debate about the need for open-endedness within the concept of intersectionality, especially as the concept travels to different places across the world" (Davis, 2008

cited by Carstensen-Egwuom, 2014, p. 265). Carstensen-Egwuom (2014) has argued that the term's extensive application has both its advantages and disadvantages. It presents an endless possibility of analyzing the different structural, systemic, and social influences in different contexts while, at the same time, making it loose with no defined structure of application. Thus, it is likely to be misapplied in some contexts.

The intersectionality approach to understanding female positionality is clearly seen in the concept's admission of multiple identities of women in different contexts based on the intersectionality of different social dimensional factors that influence experiences. Different contexts present different influential factors that intersect at varying levels to produce identities and influence power relations in a particular context. Ogundipe (1987), who was one of Africa's foremost feminists, in her application of intersectionality to understand the experiences of African women states that "the African woman has six mountains on her back: one is oppression from outside (colonialism and neo-colonialism), second is from traditional structures, feudal, slave-based, communal, etc., third is her backwardness (neo-colonialism); the fourth is man; the fifth is her colour, her race; and the sixth is herself" (Ogundipe, 1987, p.129). In effect, the experiences of African women are shaped by their context's socio-political history, traditional and cultural norms, economic marginalization, patriarchal social organization, race, and individuality. Depending on the context, some factors play a dominant role in positioning the woman either positively or negatively in relation to defining identities and accessing power.

In many contexts, African scholars have used the intersectionality approach to interrogate the marginalized and oppressed situations of women in Africa across broad themes (Alidou, 2013; Ekine & Abbas, 2013; Tamale, 2020; Mohammed, 2022, 2023). Alidou (2013) examines the representation of Muslim women in leadership positions in Kenya. Sylvia Tamale (2020) interrogates masculine biases in the production of decolonial epistemologies. Wunpini Mohammed (2023) analyses the importance of feminist discourses and activities to take an intersectional approach to addressing gender marginalization in Ghana. However, the intersectionality approach has not been utilized to analyze female positionality more so in the context of professions in Africa. This paper bridges the gap by showing that factors such as gender, race, and socio-cultural context can influence

visual art practice in Ghana. The historical analysis of the introduction of visual arts education in Ghana reveals a structural and systemic gender inequality, which has lingered for decades and continues to influence female participation in the visual art industry. The next section of the paper discusses the historical background of the visual arts in Ghana to help appreciate the paper's argument on industry-specific gender dynamics.

The introduction of formal visual art training

The introduction of visual art in Ghana[2] from the onset targeted males. It was introduced by the colonial missionaries primarily as "manual training for boys or so-called craft for boys" (Seid'ou, 2020b, p. 137). Diabour, Navei and Marifah (2021, p. 42) assert that "the introduction of the Visual Arts programme in Ghanaian schools was to diversify the then liberal curriculum to include practical or hands-on activities". The Rev. Johann G. Auer's Educational Reforms of 1863 introduced the Hand and Eye training in visual arts to displace the bookish educational curriculum with vocational and technical subjects (Seid'ou, 2020b). The Hand and Eye method means "drawing what you see, education through practical activity, a generic term for freehand drawing, brushwork, and manual training" (2020b, p. 140). It was similar to the basics of European drawing, painting, modelling, and handicraft that uses technics such as light and shade, accurate observation, and mixing of colours. Besides its gender target, the introduction of visual art education was also class-targeted, as it was to serve as an elementary education for children of working-class (Seid'ou, 2020a). According to Graham (1971) by 1888, hand drawing skills were introduced in girls' schools such as Wesley Girls High School and Basel Mission Girls High School.

Seid'ou (2020b) criticizes the pedagogy of the Hand and Eye training, as basic training that was far below the standard of visual arts training in Europe. The training was more of "a drawing and craft instruction for the generalist teacher of children, not a course for a specialist artist (2020b, p.141). The basic nature of the training could not equip individuals to

---

[2] Ghana is an African country located in the western part of the continent. A formal British colony, Ghana was arguably the first country to gain independence from the British in Africa in 1957. The Ghanaian educational system was established by British Missionaries and this in many ways continues to influence the functionality of education in the country.

independently practice visual arts after completing training. The early pedagogy also ignored indigenous forms of arts in the training because the Europeans reasoned that "the inhabitants of the Gold Coast were…non-rational primitives lacking the qualities to produce art" (p.142).

In the 1930s, the Arts and Crafts Specialist Course (ACSC) for teacher trainees was introduced in the School of Art of the Achimota College as an elective course (Seid'ou, 2020a; Graham, 1971)). In 1952, when the Kumasi College of Technology (KCT) was established, the ACSC's teacher training section was transferred to KCT as the foundation of the School of Art (Kassah & Kemevor, 2016). Teachers' training comprised a three-year course. The first batch of students at the KCT School of Art was made up of eight students: two females and six males. In 1961, the KCT gained full university status and was named the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) after Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah. Though the School of Art is now the Faculty of Arts, the Teacher Training section was moved to the University of Education, Winneba, in the 1960s to become the present-day Art Education Department. From the 1973/1974 academic year, the teacher training programme of Visual Arts was decentralized and taught in all Teacher Training Colleges in the country (Kassah & Kemevor, 2016).

The Faculty of Art of KNUST has been a great forte for producing art and artists in Ghana over the years. It is arguably the strongest visual art tertiary institution in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most of Ghana's renowned artists, such as Ablade Glover, El Anatsui, Atta Kwame, and in more contemporary times, Ibrahim Mahama, Bernard Akoi-Jackson, and Akoto Bamfo, whose works are globally recognized, are alumni of the KNUST School of Art. Though the School continues to be dominated by males, it has produced renowned female artists such as Dorothy Amenuke. The participants of this study are coincidentally all alumni of the KNUST School of Art.

The discourse on arts and artists in Africa has mostly centered on males. Women's contributions to art are barely recognized. especially in visual arts. Adom *et al.* (2020, p. 451) reason that the lack of "recognition of women artists historically may have been because of the stereotype that… the more pronounced fine arts such as sculpture, painting, and architecture purported to be for men". However, Asante (2009, p. 278), in his studies on Ghanaian women in indigenous visual arts, realised that, for a long time, "women might have played unique roles as performing artists, verbal artists, body

artists, and visual artists through the use of natural resources such as clay, straw, wood, stones, ivory, and fibres from plants and others to produce artifacts for their daily use".

Though this study will show that there has been significant improvement in female art education and practice over the years, many female artists face challenges in practicing their craft. The gender dynamics of the art industry significantly affect the recognition of talent and works of female artists, positioning them as subordinates to their male counterparts.

Female positionality in the visual arts in Ghana

The Ghanaian art industry is argued to be experiencing a "quiet revolution" (Boafo & Simbao, 2021). The "quiet revolution" is a radical shift in perspective and curriculum in art education and production championed by the BlaxTARLINES.[3] The BlaxTARLINES, a "mutable and transgenerational community of artists, curators and writers that is based in, but extends beyond, the Department of Painting and Sculpture at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) has revolutionized contemporary artworks in Ghana" (2021, p.1). This revolution is attributed to the vision and drive of Kąrî'kąchä Seid'ou, "an elusive and reclusive artist-provocateur, as a principal architect, guide, and vanishing mediator of this "quiet revolution" (Bodjawah *et al.*, 2021). While the above assertion will not be disputed due to the significant impact of artists affiliated with the BlaxTARLINES, this revolution has older contributors such as Ablade Glover and El Anatsui (Acquah, 2018). Notwithstanding, it is evidence that contemporary Ghanaian art has penetrated global art practice and discourse. Ibrahim Mahama is noted for his huge monumental installations around the world and the establishment of three art sites in Ghana: Savannah Centre for Contemporary Arts (SCCA), the Red Clay, and Nkrumah Violini. Similarly, Kwame Akoto Boafo is a well-known multidisciplinary artist known for his sculpture and massive body of works dedicated to the memory, healing, and restorative justice of people of African descent. According to Bodjawah *et al.* (2021, p. 22), within the "[quiet revolution] more women and cultural

---

[3] BlaxTARLINES was established in 2015 at the Department of Painting and Sculpture, KNUST. It is an experimental incubator of contemporary arts and a sharing community.

and ethnic minorities are beginning to take their place in the unfolding ethos". This is an important feat considering how female artists and their work have been neglected in Ghanaian art practices and discourse over the years (Asante, 2009). In the subsequent sections, with the three tenets of positionality by Kezar and Lester (2010) as the framework, this paper discusses female visual artists' professional identity, their power relations in the industry, and how context defines their practice.

Professional identity

Female visual artists are heavily underrepresented in the Ghanaian industry, a phenomenon that flows from the gender-based introduction of the training. This has negatively affected the professional identities of females, who are less recognized for their skill and talent. In the wake of the "quiet revolution", there has indeed been an increase in female participation in the visual arts industry. This assertion is deduced from participants' accounts of the number of female enrollments in their tertiary classes. The oldest participant completed her undergraduate studies almost 19 years ago, while the youngest completed it five years ago. Senam, the eldest of the participants asserts that, during her education at the university, she was one of the three females among the 120 visual arts students in the school. Kate, a 37-year-old artist, counted 13 females in her class among approximately 100 males, while Victoria, a 35-year-old, reported 16 females and about 100 males in her class. Adwoa, a 29-year-old artist noted over 20 females and 80 males in her class at the university. Thus, the younger the participant, the higher the proportion of females in their class. There has been a consistent increase in female enrollment in visual art education in recent years. Kate believes that contemporary female visual artists are better positioned compared to their predecessors of the 1990s and beyond. She states that "many female artists in the 90s had lived experiences of how they struggled trying to be seen, but now it's not like that. It doesn't matter if you are female or male, as long as you are an artist, the challenges are what artists face and not what any gender faces". This assertion is corroborated by Bodjawah *et al.* (2021), who argue that the increase in number has resulted in better visibility and economic participation of female visual artists in Ghana. Although Kate admits that

to their predecessors, they continued to be heavily underrepresented. Their identity continues to be subordinated to their male counterparts because representation is essential in power relations which shapes control and access in practice.

Power relations

The continued minority representation of females underpins skewed power relations that favour male artists in Ghana. After completing training, the female artists participants had limited options to aid their transition from school to the visual art industry. Entry access to practice favours male artists, who are more likely to gain direct jobs in art practice, while female artists wander in search of alternative "secure" jobs. This preference stems from the social perception of visual arts, especially sculpture and painting, being the occupation of males instead of females. The participants struggled to find studios to work with because most studios prefer male artists. This phenomenon is underpinned by the industry's historical gender stereotype, which deems visual art as a male occupational field. It is equally difficult for a female artist to start practicing on their own because of lack of funding. While the latter reason may not be peculiar to female artists, their situation is direr because opportunities for internships and partnerships with existing studios are unavailable. Therefore, they resort to other jobs to fill in the period of searching for a studio or gallery to intern or practice.

One interesting trend among the participants is engaging in teaching in primary and secondary schools during their waiting period to practice. In the teaching field, some had the opportunity to teach visual arts, while others had to incorporate their visual background into the teaching. Senam was unemployed for a year after her national service[4] at a government district office in Accra. She went back to school for her Masters in Fine Arts (MFA) but still could not secure a job in the arts industry after completion. Her niece recommended her to fill the vacancy of a Kindergarten teacher who was on leave in a private school. She narrates, "It was KG [Kindergarten], I am telling you! But you see, in [an] international school, what was good

_____

[4] National Service is a one-year compulsory service after tertiary education required of all Ghanaian citizens who are 18 years and above and have completed tertiary education.

was that they teach in a very practical way, you know, like art. A lot of art was going on, such as photocopying for the students…I connected with the art there". Thus, she found a way to incorporate art into the teaching of kindergarten students.

Victoria, on the other hand, had the opportunity to work in a visual art-based department in a manufacturing company after her bachelor's education, "because I did my service [National Service] there, I got retained until I left to go and teach. Because they were also pressuring me to come and help my alma mater…I was teaching picture making and general magazine art". Victoria worked as a National Service personnel at a manufacturing company that has a design department and was fortunate to be employed afterward. However, the employment was on a short-term contract. Therefore, when her alma mater requested her services for teaching, she left the manufacturing company. Though the manufacturing company job was ideal for her, its temporary nature which does not provide job security, caused her to accept teaching in her senior high school. The creative art industries are known for their job insecurities and precariousness, which mostly discourage artists from pursuing full-time careers without an alternative stream of income (Conor *et al.*, 2015). Victoria's desire for permanency and job security is not misplaced in a highly volatile economy such as Ghana.

The diversion from practice to teaching, irrespective of the field of teaching, has the implication of stagnating the career of visual artists. The crux of an art career is in the practice. If an artist wishes to make a career out of visual education, it is imperative to not just teach it but also engage in the practice. The quiet revolution discussed above became visible through the practical works of trained artists from the BlaxTARLINES. Male artists continue to dominate the visual art industry and possess high influence in shaping the discourse and practice, principally due to the practice opportunities.

Participants of the study realised this phenomenon at a point and decided to revert to the practice of the art. Picking up from Victoria's story, after three years of teaching "I couldn't stay. The lab was still here [manufacturing company] so I quickly ran back. Because they don't get to practice. It's more theory". The Ghanaian educational pedagogy lacks practical equipment and materials that support teaching (Babb, 2019) thus, art teachers are constrained to teach the practical aspect of the training. Victoria returned to being a contract staff, this time she gained a permanent position after a few

months in the manufacturing company. Senam was fortunate to move from the KG classroom to a university as a lecturer in visual arts. One advantage of tertiary teaching is the opportunity to practice along with the teaching. Thus, she took advantage of this to start her practice as well.

Kate presents an interesting career trajectory. Though she also taught in a primary school for some years after her education in arts, she left teaching to enroll in the MFA programme. During the MFA, she became a part of a community of artists who work together to produce art and engage in exhibitions. While working with her colleagues she "realized that I am being misunderstood. I also felt like there was favoritism going on towards men more than women at my workplace. It was subtle but it was there. People who are supposedly doing well are appreciated and get approval, but the ones who seem not to do well… I felt alienated". Creative communities are vital support systems that cushion artists as they negotiate the terrains of the art space, especially for new entrants. According to Elliot Benjamin (2018), it is a therapeutic environment that promotes creativity and the mental health of artists. However, Kate realised that beneath the friendliness and support there was subtle gender discrimination that stifled her creativity, making her feel like she was trapped "in a box and needed to break out." She felt controlled with little to no freedom to function independently. Thus, power relations manifest even in supposed art-supportive environments, which play in favour of male artists. On average, the participants started full practice five years after completing their first degree.

Females' limited power to access the industry and its functions continues in practice. The opportunity for early entry and practice enables the rapid growth of the careers of male artists compared to females. Building a career in visual art has proven difficult for most female artists as they have to deal with different forms of discrimination and marginalization. When Senam decided to produce her first solo exhibition in 2015 at the university in which she lectures, she was ridiculed by her colleagues, students, and the entire university community. In the Visual Art Department, she is one of two female lecturers, as against over 20 males, and she was the first lecturer to hold a solo exhibition. She narrates that when her colleagues came to her "first exhibition, they were laughing at me, my colleagues, they were laughing at me. They treated me badly, seriously. One guy even mentioned in his class that I said I'm doing [an] exhibition, they came, and they didn't

see anything. I've only projected something on the wall... Doesn't he know photography is a form of art?" Senam, who is despaired at her colleagues' condescending behaviour noted, "You know what? Some of my colleagues feel things like sculpture are for men, and I am doing it", therefore, some even made sexist comments on how she should stick to the teaching and leave the practice to the males. However, she has gone on to exhibit her artworks on national and international platforms, which have earned her international recognition and awards.

Despite their struggles to penetrate the market, female visual artists are resilient. They can turn subordinate positions around for their gains. One channel female artists use to access and wield partial influence in the industry is curating. Besides Victoria and Senam, who returned to established institutions to start their practice, the rest of the participants started their practices by curating the works of other artists. These curatorial jobs mostly start with females working on the exhibition projects of their male colleagues. With the limited opportunities for practices and solo exhibitions, female artists ride on the advantages of curating to access the art market. Their male colleagues are likely to get solo exhibitions in renowned galleries both at home and abroad. Therefore, they collaborate with the females as curators. Kate acknowledges the hierarchical relationship between the artist and the curator but argues that, though the artistic spotlight is shown more on the artists and their works during an exhibition, the role of the curator is equally significant. She believes that the fact that more females are being recognized for that aspect speaks of their knowledge of artwork. Curators co-create exhibitions with artists, they are "the artist's voice in terms of concepts" Kate explains. She further attributes the rise in female curating to the nurturing nature of females, their ability "to nurture things to grow". By application, female artists are better at interpreting and developing the concepts and themes of art. Through curating and exhibitions, female artists have been exposed to the international art market where they have received international recommendations, which has earned them other jobs and income.

Thus, in terms of power relations, influence, and access, the experiences of participants portray a nuanced situation. Although participants are experiencing subordination in entry and practice, they are taking advantage of a perceived subordinate position to develop mainstream careers and gain access to greater economic value in the international market. The perceived subordinate position of the curator is a platform for accessibility and recognition of female artists.

Context

Generally, artists in the Global South endure racial subjugation in the global art industry (Nzegwu, 2019). The geographical contexts of artists influence their positionality in participation in the global art economy. Participants reported on racial discrimination in art collaboration between Ghanaian and foreign artists. Foreign artists who collaborate with Ghanaians sometimes denigrate the skills and knowledge of local artists, treating them as inferior. Kate, who works in a gallery and has organized several collaborations between foreigners and locals, has witnessed this discrimination play out several times. Ironically, it is "the so-called black people who say when they are abroad, UK or America, they get discriminated against, when they come, they discriminate against the locals," Kate states. Here, "race" is not conceived as a biological determinant but as a geographical determinant (Zeleza, 2006). This discrimination is due to the Eurocentric, racialized perspective of the body of arts created outside the West. As Nzegwu rightly highlights, Western assertions about Africa and its arts are racially produced, committing to a Eurocentric fallacy that upholds white supremacists (Nzegwu, 2019). She asserts that "two major ideas these raced theories promote about African art that continues to the present are (1) Africans are at the lowest rung of the human evolutionary ladder, and (2) Africans do not conceptually distinguish between the category of art and the category of artifact, nor make lexical and conceptual distinctions between art and nonart" (Nzegwu, 2019, p. 367). This narrative of stereotypical Eurocentric representation of African art (Visonà, 2015) is perpetuated by not just whites but, in this context, black diasporans as well. This affects both the professional recognition of local artists and the monetary benefits they gain from these collaborations. Thus, "someone who is from the diaspora will get more pay and get better treatment than someone who is a local here, who might even have more experience…They don't respect you" (Kate).

In the context of this study, female visual artists are further subjugated based on gender. In addition to the Eurocentric stereotypical representation of African arts and artists, there is gender discrimination in art recognition. Male artists are likely to be acknowledged for their skill and talent compared to female artists (Stalp, 2017). Thus, female artists are always pushed to extra hard work to prove their worth, and the situation is no different for

Ghanaian female artists who collaborate with foreign artists. However, as a gallerist and curator, Kate has observed that Ghanaian females are likely to produce better artwork on time than male local colleagues and sometimes foreign artists during collaborations. Despite their hard work, Ghanaian female artists experience subordination (in fact, double subordination) due to their gender and race.

Ghanaian female artists' contextual plight is compounded by the socio-cultural expectations of females in Ghana. Female artists struggle to balance their social life, marriage, and child rearing, with the demands of their work. Ghanaian society places a premium on marriage, especially among females who are raised to believe marriage and child rearing are two essential obligations that must be fulfilled to ensure the sustainability of society (Acheampong *et al.*, 2018). Two out of the six visual artists interviewed in this study are married. One of the married participants has three children, the other has no child. Victoria, who is the mother of three children notes that being a wife and a mother has contributed to the delay of her career. At the time of the interview, she was preparing for her first exhibition after over seven years of break (the period she gave birth to her three children). She had 10 months to prepare 10 art pieces, and the exhibition was to take place the following month; however, she was sure she could present only six. Her youngest child is a year old, therefore, per the Ghana Labour Act (651), her working time closes three hours prior to the conventional closing time (5 pm) until the child turns two years old. However, because she does not have a nanny to cater for the child at home, she has put her in a Day Care that closes at 4 pm. Thus, after closing at 2 pm, she spends an hour and a half working on her project before picking up her children at 4 pm from school; the one hour and 30 minutes is the only time she gets to work on her exhibition materials because, when she returns home, her domestic responsibilities begin. This has caused a delay in the delivery of her exhibition works. Adwoa, the other married participant, realising the impact of child rearing on career progression, has agreed with the husband to avoid pregnancy while she takes the next two years to build her career.

The decision to stay unmarried by the four other participants is deliberate. The demand of their jobs takes most of their time, leaving little room for socializing and building significant relationships. Thus, Kate notes that the challenge of contemporary Ghanaian female artists is not discrimination

but rather that "the problem is how to balance marriage with children and then your parents. That's now the challenge. I can't imagine working and also being a family woman with children, because that's going to take a toll on my career". Senam also shares a similar sentiment, since her "sister has children. When I see how they take up her time and her routine for taking care of the home, I don't think I can get married now, my job is too demanding". However, participants' compelling reasons for staying unmarried have been met with confrontation, derision, and innuendos from family, friends, and colleagues. Senam, who is 43 years old and unmarried shares one of her sexist experiences:

> There are a lot of my colleagues, some of the senior men, they would be like "hey, by now, we must have another little like you walking around…" I remember one time… he met me in an aisle, and he was like, hey, are you pregnant?

The parents of 37-year-old Miriam have been subtly making comments about her marriage and "waiting to see the man I am dating". According to the participants, parents lament over how the demand for commitment and time, coupled with the irregular income that characterizes art practice, unfavourably position their daughters in the marriage market. For the parents, their daughters' singlehood negates their career achievements, therefore, participants are faced with a dilemma of how to balance their career goals with social expectations. While they have been firm on their decision so far, participants also know that it is just a matter of time before they settle down in marriage.

Contextually, female artists in Ghana are subordinately positioned in practice and society. They suffer double subjugation as females and as artists from the Global South when collaborating with colleagues from the Global North. Their professionalism and practice are denigrated as inferior to that of their foreign counterparts due to their gender and geographical location (female artists from Ghana). This has profound implications for career growth as it limits access to both the local and the global art industry. While female artists struggle with the negative positionality that comes from geo-political stereotypes, they face societal pressure for their inability to balance social responsibilities with their careers. Participants who are married face the challenge of effectively managing their domestic and reproductive

responsibilities with the demands of their jobs. Unmarried participants on the other hand are facing societal derision for ignoring their socio-cultural responsibilities in pursuit of a career.

Conclusion

The visual arts industry in Ghana is experiencing a "quiet revolution". The works of Ghanaian artists have made their way to renowned art galleries in Europe and America while artists are being recognized for their talent and creativity. A significant aspect of this "quiet revolution" is the participation of female artists. Although there has been an increase in female participation, authors have not explored their positionality in the industry. Drawing on Kezar and Lester's (2010) three tenets of positionality – identification, power relations, and context – this work has shown how gender intersects with geo-political stereotypes and socio-cultural expectations to position female artists subordinately in the visual arts industry.

The significant increase in the number of female artists over the years has resulted in better visibility that has enhanced their professional identification. However, Ghanaian female visual artists and their works continue to be positioned as subordinates in the art industry. Male visual artists continue to heavily outnumber the female ones and this phenomenon has its remote cause notably in the gendered introduction of visual arts training in Ghana. For over a century and a half since its introduction as a manual training for boys in Ghana, visual arts education remains a male-dominated field. However, female artists struggle to fit in the industry – participants of this study have shown resilience and determination in training and practicing visual arts.

The underrepresentation of females has implications for power relations, which influences access in the industry. Participants struggled in the early years of their careers to fully participate in the industry due to limited opportunities for females. Established institutions prefer employing male artists over female artists, thus marginalizing females to the fringes of art practices such as teaching in institutions lower than those of their training. They are positioned as the second option to their male counterparts in employment, a position that reduces their professional credibility and limits their access to economic participation in the local industry. To cope with

the unfavorable power relations that limit opportunities for art production, some females have found curating as an alternative route to accessing the art industry. Although curating is perceived as secondary to being the exhibitor, it is also a significant aspect of art marketing, and some Ghanaian female artists are taking advantage of it to access local and global markets.

The subordinated professional identification, which invariably produces limited power for access and participation, is further intersected with the racialized system of global art practices that denigrates arts from non-Western countries and positions Ghanaian female artists negatively. Ghanaian female artists are faced with double subordination as locals and as females during collaboration with foreign artists. Their professional identity and practice are positioned as inferior to foreign artists during collaborations.

The racialized stereotype is further compounded by socio-cultural expectations of marriage and child rearing. Female visual artists struggle to find a fine balance between their career progression and domestic and reproductive responsibilities. Married artists attest to the toll their domestic and reproductive responsibilities have on the progress of their careers. On the other hand, the decision by others to stay unmarried to build their careers has been met with disapproval from relatives and colleagues who berate and cast innuendos and aspersions upon them. Thus, it is noted that continued male dominance of the industry produces hierarchical power relations where female artists are subordinated. This is further intersected by socio-cultural expectations of marriage and child-rearing, compounding the racialized stereotype and socio-cultural expectations of female reproductive responsibilities. This has produced a negative positionality of Ghanaian female visual artists.

However, these female artists are resilient and forceful, they are determined to turn unfortunate situations into advantages. Therefore, there is a need for systemic and structural support from the educational sector and market structures to help female visual artists overcome the challenges that position them subordinately.

References

Acheampong, Enoch, Anomah, Esenam J., Edusei, Anthony K., Nakoja, Charity, & Afful, Barbara F. (2018). Expectations of and challenges in marriage among the people with disability in the Yendi municipality of Ghana. *Developing Country Studies, 8*(9), 19-22.

Acquah, Ebenezer K. (2018). Ghanaian artists' response to preserving Ghanaian cultural values: Ablade Glover and El Anatsui in perspective, *International Journal of Innovation and Research, 7*(7),163-173. https://doi.org/10.24940/ijird/2018/v7/i7/JAN18013

Adom, Dickson., Daitey, Samuel T., Yarney, Lily, & Fening, Peggy A. (2020). Breaking the culture-specific silence of women glass bead makers in Ghana: towards empowerment. *Safety and Health at Work. 11* (4), 450-457. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shaw.2020.08.002

Alacovska, Anna, Langevang, Thilde, & Steedman, Robin. (2021). The work of hope: spiritualizing, hustling and waiting in the creative industries in Ghana. *Economy and Space, 53*(4), 619-637. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X20962810

Alcoff, Linda. (1988). Cultural feminism versus post-structuralism: the identity crisis in feminist theory. *Signs, 13*(3), 405-36. https://doi.org/10.1086/494426

Alidou, Ousseina D. (2013). *Muslim women in postcolonial Kenya: Leadership, representation, and social change*. The University of Wisconsin Press.

Asante, Eric A. (2009). *A Study of selected indigenous Ghanaian women in some indigenous visual arts*. PhD Thesis presented to the Department of General Art Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. https://ir.knust.edu.gh/handle/123456789/708

Babb, Jake. (2019). *Impact of practical education network on students and teachers in the Ghanaian junior high school classroom*. Open Access Master's Report, Michigan Technological University https://digitalcommons.mtu.edu/etdr/775

Been, Wike, Wijngaarden, Yosha, & Loots, Ellen. (2023). Welcome to the inner circle? earnings and inequality in the creative industries. *Cultural Trends, 33*(3), 255-272. https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2023.2181057

Benjamin, Elliot (2018). The Creative artists' support group: A therapeutic environment to promote creativity and mental health through person-centered facilitation. *Person-centered and Experiential Psychotherapies, 17*(2), 111—131. https://doi.org/10.1080/14779757.2018.1440624

Boafo, Kwame, & Simbao, Ruth. (2021). A Quiet revolution in the arts education: The rise of the BlaxTARLINES Kumasi. *African Arts, 54*(2), 1-5. https://doi.org/10.1162/afar_a_00575

Bobie, Adwoa. O., Darkwah, Akosua K., & Gough, Katherine V. (2023). Career geographies in the Ghanaian fashion industry: From brain drain to brain gain and brain circulation. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, (1), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2023.2236563

Bodjawah, Edwin, Kissiedu, Kwaku B., Ampratwum, George, Ohene-Ayeh, Kwasi, Amenuke, Dorothy, Mahama, Ibrahim, Kisser, Adjo, McTernan, Billie, Akoi-Jackson, Bernard, Owusu-Ankomah, Kezia, Kujie, SerlormRiskin, Robin, & Thompson, Tracy N. K. (2021). Transforming art from commodity to gift: Kạrî'kạchä Seid'ou's silent revolution in the Kumasi College Of Art. *African Arts, 54*(2), 22-35. https://doi.org/10.1162/afar_a_00581

Brooks, Abigail. (2007). Feminist standpoint epistemology: Building knowledge and empowerment through women's lived experience. In Sharlene Hesse-Biber & Patricia L. Leavy. *Feminist research practice: A primer*, (pp. 53-82). Sage https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412984270.n3

Brydges, Taylor, & Hracs, Brian J. (2019). What motivates millennials? How intersectionality shapes the working lives of female entrepreneurs in Canada's fashion industry. *Gender, Place & Culture, 26*(4), 510-532. https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2018.1552558

Carastathis, Anna. (2014). The Concept of intersectionality in feminist theory. *Philosophy Compass 9*(5), 304–314. https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12129

Carstensen-Egwuom, Inken. (2014). Connecting intersectionality and reflexivity: Methodological approaches to social positionalities. *Erdkunde, 68*(4), 265-276.

Cipriani, Nastassja. (2020). *Feminist epistemology: standpoint theory. What can feminist standpoint theory say about the physical sciences?* Masters Thesis submitted to the Universidad de Valladolid, Spain. http://uvadoc.uva.es/handle/10324/45684

Conor, Bridget, Gill, Rosalind, & Taylor, Stephanie. (2015). Gender and creative labour. *The Sociological Review, 63*(1),1–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12237

Crenshaw, Kimberle. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics and violence against women of colour. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6),1241-1299. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1229039

De Beukelaer, Christiaan. (2017). Toward an "African" take on the cultural and creative industries? *Media, Culture and Society, 39*(4), 582-591. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443716664856

Dent, Tamysn. (2016). *Feeling devalued: The creative industries, motherhood, gender and class inequality*. PhD Thesis submitted to Bournemouth University. https://eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk/29424/1/DENT%2C%20 Tamsyn_Ph.D._2017.pdf

Diabour, Kwame K., Navei, Nyamawero, & Marifah, Hillia F. (2021). Visual arts education and national development: An inquiry into the popularity of visual arts programme in senior high schools in Upper West Region of Ghana, *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE), 8*(12), 42-55. https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0812005

Ekine, Sokari, & Abbas, Hakima. (2013). *Queer African reader*. Pambazuka Press.

Finkel, Rebecca, Jones, Deborah, Sang, Katherine, & Russell, Deimtrinka S. (2017). Diversifying the creative: Creative work, creative industries, creative identities. *Organization, 24*(3), 281–288. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508417690167

Gill, Rosalind. (2002). Cool, creative and egalitarian? Exploring gender in project-based new media work in Europe. *Information, Communication and Society, 5*(1):70-89. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180110117668

Gill, Rosalind. (2014). Unspeakable inequalities: Post feminism, entrepreneurial subjectivity and the repudiation of sexism among cultural workers. *Social Politics, 21*(4), 509-528. https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxu016

Graham, Charles K. (1971). *The History of education in Ghana. From the earliest times to the Declaration of Independence*. Routledge.

Holmes, Andrew G. D. (2020). Researcher positionality: a consideration of its influence and place in qualitative research. A new researcher guide. *Shanlax International Journal of Education, 8*(4),1-10. https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v8i4.3232

Jansson, Maria, & Calderon-Sandoval, Orianna (2022). Opposition to gender quotas in Sweden and Spain: Debates about gender equality in the film industry. *Women's Studies International Forum, 93* (102559). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2022.102599

Kassah, Johnson K., & Kemevor, Agbeyewornu K. (2016). The Challenges of visual arts education in Ghana's colleges of education. *International Journal of Scientific Engineering and Applied Science (IJSEAS), 2*(3), 87-98.

Kezar, Adrianna, & Lester, Jaime (2010). Breaking the barriers of essentialism in leadership research: Positionality as a promising approach. *Feminist Formations, 22*(1),163-185. https://doi.org/10.1353/nwsa.0.0121

Knight, Wanda B., & Yang, Deng (2016). N/either here n/or there: Culture, location, positionality, and art education. *Visual Arts Research, 42*(2),105-111. https://doi.org/10.5406/visuartsrese.42.2.0105

Langevang, Thilde. (2017). Fashioning the future: Entrepreneuring in Africa's emerging fashion industry. *The European Journal of Development Research, 29*, 893–910. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41287-016-0066-z

Langevang, Thilde, & Gough, Katherine V. (2012). Diverging pathways: Young female employment and entrepreneurship in Sub-Saharan Africa. *The Geographical Journal, 178* (3), 242-252. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4959.2011.00457.x

Langevang, Thilde, Resario, Rashida, Alacovska, Anna, Steedman, Robin, Amenuke, Dorothy A., Adjei, Sela K., & Kilu, Rufai H. (2022). Care in creative work: Exploring the ethics and aesthetics of care through arts-based methods. *Cultural Trends, 31*(5): 448-469. https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2021.2016351

Langevang, Thilde, Steedman, Robin, Alacovska, Anna, Resario, Rashida, Kilu, Rufai H. and Sanda, Mohammed. (2022). 'The Show must go on!': Hustling through the compounded precarity of Covid-19 in the creative industries. *Geoforum, 136*, 142-152. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2022.09.015

Mohammed, Wunpini F. (2023). Intersectionality in African digital organizing: a Ghanaian perspective. *Communication, Culture and Critique. 16*(2), 107-109. https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcad007

Mohammed, Wunpini F. (2022). Why we need intersectionality in Ghanaian feminist politics and discourses. *Feminist Media Studies, 23*(6), 3031-3047. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2022.2098798

Nzegwu, Nkiru (2019). African art in deep time: De-race-ing aesthetics and de-racializing visual art. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 77*(4), 367-378. https://doi.org/10.1111/jaac.12674

O'Brien, Dave, Laurison, Daniel, Miles, Andrew, & Friedman, Sam. (2016) Are the creative industries meritocratic? An analysis of the 2014 British Labour Force Survey. *Cultural Trends, 25*(2), 116-131. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2016.1170943

Ogundipe, Leslie O. (1987). African women, culture and another development. *Présence Africaine*, (141), 123-139. https://doi.org/10.3917/presa.141.0123

Richards, Christopher. (2022). *Cosmopolitanism and women fashion in Ghana*. Routledge.

Resario, Rashida, Steedman, Robin, & Langevang, Thilde. (2023). Exploring everyday resilience in the creative industries through devised theatre: A case of performing arts students and recent graduates in Ghana. *International Journal of Cultural Studies, 26*(3), 237-256. https://doi.org/10.1177/13678779231163606

Rowe, Wendy E. (2014). Positionality. In David Coghlan & Mary Brydon-Miller (eds.) *The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research* (Vol. 2, p. 628). Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446294406.n277

Siaw, Abena O., & Nortey, Samuel. (2011). Teaching and learning of visual arts in senior high schools in Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice, 2*(4), 111-120.

Schmahmann, Brenda (2015). Shades of discrimination: The emergence of feminist art in apartheid South Africa. *Woman's Art Journal, 36*(1), 27-36. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26430740

Seid'ou, Kạrî'Kạchä. (2020a). Changing lessons: The Kumasi School of "Art and Crafts" in a Scottish regime (1952-1962). *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences, 11*(1), 42-71. https://doi.org/10.9734/arjass/2020/v11i130161

Seid'ou, Kạrî'Kạchä. (2020b). "Hand and Eye Work" in Gold Coast colonial modernism: A genealogical history of Ghana's fossilized art curriculum. In Vlasta Hus (ed.). *New Horizons in Education and Social Studies* (Vol. 2, pp. 136-161). Book Publisher International. https://doi.org/10.9734/bpi/nhess/v2

Sica, Alan (ed). (2005). *Social thought: From enlightenment to the present.* Pearson.

Stalp, Marybeth. (2017). Still a man's art world: The gendered experiences of women artists. *Journal of Research on Women and Gender, 6*(2), 40-55. https://hdl.handle.net/10877/12876

Steedman, Robin, Alacovska, Ana, Langevang, Thilde, and Resario, Rashida. (2022). Imaginaries of platform entrepreneurship in the creative industries: Techno-optimism and subversion in Ghanaian filmmaking, *Information, Communication and Society, 26*(10), 1979-1995. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2022.2062252

Takacs, David (2002). Positionality, epistemology, and social justice in the classroom, *Social Justice, 29*(4),168-181. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768156

Tamale, Sylvia. (2020). *Decolonization and Afro-feminism.* Daraja Press.

Venner, Catherine. (2015). Positionality at the center: Constructing an epistemological and methodological approach for a western feminist doctoral candidate conducting research in the postcolonial, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 14*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406915618094

Visonà, Monica B. (2015). Chika Okeke-Agulu, postcolonial modernism: Decolonisation in twentieth-century Nigeria. *The Art Bulletin, 98*(2), 272-274. https://doi.org/10.1080/00043079.2016.1155906

Zeleza, Paul T. (2006). The inventions of African identities and languages: The discursive and developmental implications. In O. F. Arasanyin & M.A. Pemberton. *Selected Proceedings of the 36th Annual Conference on African Linguistics* (pp. 14-26). Cascadikka Proceedings Project.