

**When Art informs: A case study to negotiate social stereotypes  
and stigmas through Art at Taung Junior Secondary School**

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## **DECLARATION**

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## **Abstract**

While every Botswana national can claim to be a citizen legally within the framework of the modern nation-state, some (minority groups in the main) are perceived by others (among the majority Tswana groups especially), as less authentic nationals or citizens. There is a hierarchy of citizenship fostered by political, economic, social and cultural inequalities, such that it makes some individuals and groups much more able to claim and articulate their rights than others. Ethnic identities seem stronger than 'national identities' as they work at the very macro level and on an immediate and daily basis. Thus the multicultural and linguistic diversity of Taung compels us to view every group as heterogeneously unique and important in its own ways, since students become marginalised as a result of individual circumstances, by being members of historically oppressed social groups.

The main aim of this study was to explore visual art as a learning platform to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self. A qualitative approach towards the study was considered the most suitable way for conducting the research. An interpretive analysis was used to gain insight into how students made sense of their experiences and the significance of art as a platform to negotiate stigmas and stereotypes in class and school. Using the case study drawn from Taung Junior Secondary School comprising of twelve students from different ethnic groups, two major themes of difference and discrimination were identified. The sub-theme discussed under difference includes sub themes race, ethnicity and nationality, and language; while stereotyping and stigma, feelings of discomfort and feeling outcast, and Othering and marginalisation were discussed under the theme discrimination.

My study revealed that art can be an especially effective catalyst for developing a critical awareness of issues of race, immigration, difference, and privilege. Art practices can become a platform for the negotiation and construction of meaning and lobby for removing the historic inequalities and injustices created by a stratified society. For this reason, it is important to understand culture and cultural diversity because culture provides beliefs, values, and the patterns that give meaning and structure to life. It enables individuals within the multiple social groups of which they are a part to function effectively in their social and cultural environments, which are constantly changing. Groups try to maintain social hierarchies and individuals maintain their position within such hierarchies by excluding others, to deny difference and try and enforce homogeneity and reproduce current social relations. As such if forces such as, differences in race, culture, gender, language, and religion are well understood, the students will engage in the process of identifying ways to manage them to shape their own educational practices.

## OPSOMMING

Terwyl elke Botswana burger wetlik aanspraak kan maak op burgerskap binne die raamwerk van die moderne volkstaat, word sommige (hoofsaaklik minderheidsgroepe) deur ander (veral Tswana groepe) as minder egte burgers beskou. Daar bestaan 'n hierargie van burgerskap wat deur politieke, ekonomiese, sosiale en kulturele ongelykhede bevorder word; tot die mate dat sommige individue en groepe meer geredelik hulle regte kan verwoord as ander. Etniese identiteite blyk sterker te wees as 'nasionale identiteite' omdat dat dit op makrovlak funksioneer sowel as op 'n onmiddellike en daaglikse basis. Gevolglik dring die multikulturele en linguistiese diversiteit van Taung ons om elke groep as heterogeen uniek en belangrik op sy eie manier te beskou, aangesien studente gemarginaliseerd raak weens individuele omstandighede, deurdat hulle lede van geskiedkundig-onderdrukte sosiale groepe is.

Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie was om ondersoek in te stel na die visuele kunste as 'n leerplatform om oor sosiale en kulturele betekenis te onderhandel en selfbeskouings toe te lig. Daar is besluit dat 'n kwalitatiewe benadering tot die studie die mees geskikte manier is om die navorsing uit te voer. 'n Verklarende analise is gevolg om insig te verkry ten opsigte van hoe studente sin maak uit hulle ervarings en die betekenisvolheid van kuns as 'n platform om oor stigmas en stereotipes in die klas en skool te onderhandel. Deur van Taung Junior Sekondêre Skool, met twaalf studente van verskillende etniese groepe, as gevallestudie gebruik te maak, is twee hooftemas, nl verskil en diskriminasie, geïdentifiseer. Die subtemas wat onder verskil bespreek word, sluit ras, etnisiteit en burgerskap en taal in; terwyl stereotipering en stigma, gevoelens van ongemak en verwerping en 'Othering' en marginalisering onder die tema diskriminasie bespreek word.

My studie het getoon dat kuns 'n besonder effektiewe katalisator is vir die ontwikkeling van 'n kritiese bewustheid ten opsigte van kwessies soos ras, immigrasie, verskil en voorreg. Kunspraktike kan 'n platform word vir die onderhandeling en konstruksie van betekenis en selfs druk uitoefen ten opsigte van die opheffing van historiese ongelykhede en ongeregtighede wat deur 'n gestratifiseerde samelewing geskep is. Dit is vir hierdie rede belangrik om kultuur en kulturele diversiteit te verstaan omdat kultuur die oortuigings, waardes en die patrone voorsien wat betekenis en struktuur aan die lewe gee. Dit gee vir individue binne die verskeie sosiale groepe waarvan hulle deel vorm, die vermoë om effektief in hul sosiale en kulturele omgewings, wat deurlopend verander, te funksioneer. Groepe poog om sosiale hierargië te handhaaf en individue handhaaf op hulle beurt hul posisie binne hierdie hierargië deur ander uit te sluit, verskille te ontken en homogeniteit af te dwing en huidige sosiale verhoudings te herproduseer. Indien daar 'n goeie begrip is van magte, soos verskille in ras, kultuur, geslag, taal en godsdiens, sal studente betrokke raak by die proses om maniere te identifiseer om dit te bestuur en sodoende hulle eie opvoedkundige praktike te vorm.

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## **Chapter 1: Orientation to the Study**

### **1.1 Introduction**

We live in a world of difference, and all indications are that differences will increase. In this complex, interrelated, and changing world, we are challenged to explore ways of coming to know difference. Retreating into homogeneity is not an option. Botswana is a multilingual and a multi-ethnic nation that has had a thriving multiparty democracy, peace, and stability since independence in 1966. Despite the superficial impression that a casual observer may have of a so-called mono-ethnic and mono-cultural society, identity politics are increasingly important alongside more exclusionary ideas of nationality and citizenship, as minority claims for greater cultural recognition and plurality are countered by majoritarian efforts to maintain the status quo of an inherited colonial hierarchy of ethnic groupings. Since educational institutions do not exist in a vacuum; they work within a context that has cultural, economic and political orientations. School spaces are imbued with meaning and foster sensibilities of justice, belonging, and identity from an early beginning. As such, aside from the educational mandate of schools, they are places where the exercise of neighborhood integration and the fostering of civil society, and where social and cultural differences are explored, negotiated, and compromised in multiple ways. As educators we must recognise the importance of learning conditions that give students the liberty and safety to risk-take and self-explore without fear of ridicule or criticism.

Through thoughtfully designed authentic learning experiences, students can develop the understanding, skills and beliefs needed for success in school and beyond. In this sense education changes people, art education can be spoken of in this way; whether changes occur gradually or through modification to learning dispositions, pleasure in making something worthwhile or, “through illuminating experiences or traumatic converse experience” (Addison 2010:7), it is valuable. In this instance the products of art activities can not only transform people’s material and visual environment but also the way they think about themselves. Art practices can become a platform for the negotiation and construction of meaning and lobby for removing the historic inequalities and injustices created by a stratified society. It can strive to create opportunities through education for the marginalized and the minorities. Visual thinking in art education can facilitate the exploration of emotional associations and can influence the way individuals feel and think about an issue. As a student in a foreign country art became not only a way to momentarily forget reality, but a way to voice out and deal with the different cultural and political space I found myself in. My projects at Stellenbosch were a way for me to seek and understand the social space and culture; a way to establish a position and collective identity within a given society. This is the reason that led me to research on how art could be used as a powerful tool to negotiate one’s ideology and way of life. It plays an important part in changing

people's structure of thinking, either assist in facing and changing reality or acknowledges practices ingrained in a society dealing with social, cultural and political issues.

## 1.2. My Background

Teaching is a complex social process in which different people are interactively engaged. Teachers and students interact based on their interpretations of the situation they find themselves in, their own actions as well as those of others. Autobiography in this context becomes very useful and important to “provide insight into the construction of teacher selfhood in relation to social, cultural, political, economic, and historical domains” (Kincheloe 2005:2). Maturana and Varela argue that “human identities do not come with us into the world in some neatly packaged unitary self” (cited in Kincheloe 2005:18). Identities “rise and subside in a series of shifting relationships and patterns” (Kincheloe 2005:18). In the case of a critical pedagogy, these patterns or relationships involve connections to cultural systems, language, religious beliefs and the power dynamics that constitute them.

I was born and raised in Zimbabwe and naturalized to become a Motswana<sup>1</sup> in 2007 (Botswana citizen) after I married a Motswana in 1997. However I am still considered as a second grade citizen or *mokwerekwere*<sup>2</sup> by both my colleagues and students. I ensure my safety by finding ways both of being an “insider” of my new world (Botswana) and of knowing that it is “in” to be on the “outside” (Zimbabwean). Moreover, by continuing my habit of remaining on both sides of the boundary, I can claim a uniquely privileged position (Atkinson 2001:313). I am a hybrid and as a result, borrowing Gary Younge's (2010:23) words,

You can learn to bury your own feelings and honour theirs in hope  
that they will meet you half way. It becomes your job and yours  
alone, to explain, to ignore, and to forgive-over and over again.

The constant shift between Zimbabwean and Botswana finds me silenced and operating from the edges of the boundaries. Creating a space for my voice influences my working identity as I am aware that my voice is always “interpreted and understood as situated in and thus influenced by political, ideological, institutional and structural contexts” (Kelchtermans 2010:613). I acknowledge that I come to school or class not as blank sheet; but rather bring with me 23 years of personal experience as a Zimbabwean, 17 years' experience as a Motswana, and four years as a student at Stellenbosch

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<sup>1</sup> Motswana is a citizen of Botswana in singular form, while Botswana is the country and the people of Botswana in plural are called Batswana. Setswana is the main language spoken by Batswana.

<sup>2</sup> The phantom of *mokwerekwere* has been constructed and deployed in and through public discourse to render Africans from outside the borders orderable as the nation's bogeyman. In D M Matsinhe, 2011 Africa's Fear of Itself: the ideology of *Makwerekwere* in South Africa, *Third World Quarterly*, 32:2, 295-313.

University in South Africa, thus inevitably have built a very personal set of ideas and beliefs about what it means to be a teacher, to be teaching and to be a student. As mentioned my projects at Stellenbosch were a way for me to seek and understand the social space and culture. Although there are projects put up to ensure social engagement by the University of Stellenbosch and the Visual Art Faculty, some of the utterances and modules, I could not help but feel that my presence was more of convenience than it was about my ability. Sometimes I had instances I felt that I was addressed not as an individual but as a “kind” or “type” or a representative of “black” people. This personal interpretative framework is therefore embedded in my identity as a teacher and researcher. Therefore I refrained from asserting my set of rules and I tried to be as detached as possible as I conducted this research. I refer to being ‘detached’ not in an objective sense since I acknowledge that it is impossible to escape one’s own position in history and society. I carry out this research from a stand in which I identify with the students I will be sampling from. This can help me understand critical key incidents in my life around which pivotal decisions revolve that lead me into selecting particular kinds of actions when my students and colleagues utter derogative statements about my identity or taking account of “wider historic, cultural and political values or beliefs in framing and refraining practical problems to which solutions are being sought” (Hatton 1995:34).

Reflection on the concept of identity becomes very crucial as it facilitates clinical intervention which enables me to “recognise the influence of ethical and moral beliefs behind professional practice” (Yip 2007:285), as well as gain understanding on how my identity and work affects and is affected by societal tendencies. An understanding and change in the way I view myself enables me to focus on understanding myself with the purpose to gain humble new insights that can facilitate one’s ability to become a responsible and transformative member of larger communities where socially just activities are coordinated. As I negotiate my way between the constructed and discovered dimensions of knowledge work, I come to appreciate the blurred line between knowledge production and being. In this context autobiography informs me of my own location in the social web of reality and how this location helps shape how I make meaning of the world: “seeking not precise steps to reshape our subjectivity but a framework of principles with which we can negotiate” (Kincheloe 2005:9).

### **1.3 Problem Statement, Research Question and Aim**

#### **1.3.1 Describing the problem**

In Taung Junior Secondary School, the student population comprises of Batswana citizens who come from various ethnic groups, one of which are descendants of Zimbabweans who still have ties with their relatives in Zimbabwe. Although this group of people, maShona, popularly known as maZezuru, have naturalised and are officially Batswana citizens, they are still considered as ‘second grade’

citizens or ‘maZimbabwe’. The tribe has a separate ward with few Balet<sup>3</sup>, if any, amongst them. Our students who live in MaZezuru ward always find themselves labelled or identified as *Makwerekwere* despite being Batswana. Due to the fact that schools are situated within the larger social context and hence are not immune to the political pressure of the broader social body, the marginalisation routinely enacted within the public realm in the main village finds its way into the school premises. Ethnic identities seem stronger than ‘national identities’ as they work at the very macro level and on an immediate and daily basis. The attitudes between the Tswana and non-Tswana groups in the communities and schools have always been of superiority and inferiority respectively.

In order to free the students from being discriminated against due to their background, there is a need to explore if art processes can facilitate an open, safe space where, through dialogue, stereotypes and stigmas can be negotiated. Can art processes provide a platform to create lessons that help all students reflect on stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination directed toward minority groups – those with less political, social, and economic power relative to the dominant group? Moore (2006:36) states that “individuals acquire stereotypes from society’s major institutions such as the family, peer groups, schools, churches, and the media.” Stereotypes, which are universal throughout multi-ethnic societies, become entrenched in the collective consciousness of the society as justification for all forms of socioeconomic and political inequality among groups. Thus, individuals form emotional attachments to stereotypical beliefs that are very difficult to abolish even in the face of contrary evidence. Dialogue, in this instance, can “make[s] it possible to take the perspective of others into account, which is necessary for ‘the assessment of truth claims’” (Hajhosseiny 2012:1359). Learning opportunities can be afforded through participation in dialogue and meaning negotiation, to bring out common themes from the diverse groups. In this way education can be viewed “as a political act... transforming schools towards pursuing social justice... (and) using education to engender social change” (Johnson 2010:80). This kind of education can help students to build their capacity to become active and effective citizens. The school authority and the village at large fail to acknowledge (as it will become clear in this research) that there are issues that involve students that are victimised because they have a cultural heritage that is linked to Zimbabwe. Despite the cases that are reported to the school authorities by affected students, the top management still fail to accept the existence of diverse identities and modes of association in an effort to combat marginalisation. We thus fail to equip students with the skills necessary to ask critical questions about the role of power and privilege in established systems and structures. Thus visual art as a learning platform was explored in this study to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self. In the art classroom –

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<sup>3</sup> One of the eight main ethnic groups in Botswana who speak Setswana as their mother tongue; the others include the Batawana Tribe, Bakwena Tribe, Bangwaketse Tribe, Bangwatho Tribe, Bakgatla Tribe, Batlokwa Tribe and Barolong Tribe. Each one of these is officially considered a majority group. (Nyathi-Ramahobo, L. 2002. Ethnic identity and Nationhood in Botswana, in I. Mazonde, (ed), *Minorities in the Millennium: Perspectives from Botswana*. Gaborone: Light books.

where art, identity and culture are intricately linked – racially and culturally responsive teaching plays a critical role in how students come to understand cultural diversity, social inclusion and antiracist behaviours. The study sought to explore ways to encourage students to connect meaningfully to unfamiliar topics and visual thinking strategies for expressing understandings of complex issues such as stereotypes, culture and citizenship through art making.

### **1.3.2 Research questions, study aim and objectives**

#### **(a) Study Aim**

The main aim of this study was to explore visual art as a learning platform to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self.

#### **(b) Research questions**

The main questions this research will address are:

1. What are the reactions of students to a project that, through the process of art making, aimed to create a safe space to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes, labelling and stigmas experienced in Taung?
2. How do the students negotiate and experience diversity within their spaces of learning at Taung Junior Secondary School?

#### **(c) Research objectives**

The objectives are:

1. To identify the reactions of students to a project that aimed to create a safe space to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes, labelling and stigmas in Taung.
2. To establish what the reactions revealed about their psychological state of mind and own understanding of their selves.

## **1.4 Overview of the Methodology**

The research uses an interpretive approach as way to explore ways to negotiate stereotypes and stigmas at Taung Junior Secondary School. This approach provides first-hand insight into the complexity of the experiences of those who have lived it (Schwandt 1994:118). It assumes that knowledge of reality is accumulated through social constructs that consist of language, consciousness, meanings that are shared, tools, documents and other artefacts (Klein & Myers 1999:69). Considering the cultural and social context of the research problem, a qualitative research method was utilised

within the study. Qualitative research focuses primarily on the value of processes and entities that cannot be identified by merely examining or measuring them (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:14). This study will use a multi-method research which entails the application of two or more sources of data and aspects of various research methods to investigate the research question. In this study, an arts-based approach and case study will be used.

## **1.5 Structure of the Thesis**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH:** Chapter 1: Introduction to the research is provided as well as the background to the study. My background and motivation to the study is given to declare my position and place within the research. The main question, aim and objectives of the study are provided in this section.

**CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY:** Chapter 2: In relation to understanding how art can be used to negotiate discrimination in a multicultural nation and society like Botswana, Chapter 2 provides a contextual backdrop to the study in which the research is situated, the historical background of the history of minorities in Botswana, tribes as well as on a global level. The society is still evolving and each stage brings new opportunities and challenges which require appropriate modifications in the rules and regulations of governance.

**THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES:** Chapter 3 highlights the theoretical framework of this research. The overarching theoretical framework used in the study contains aspects of Art and Multicultural education. The questions and ideas people articulate about multicultural education and multiculturalism in the broader society are bound up in their assumptions about the nature of difference, race, social class, and who is legitimately “Motswana”. This framework aims to possibly highlight the role of art within a critically-based approach to multicultural education.

Other key theories that are tackled and will be further elaborated on include:

- (a)** Education for social justice
- (b)** Colonialism, Postcolonial theory and Anti-colonialism
- (c)** Critical Citizenship

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:** Chapter 4 outlines the Inductive qualitative analysis used to guide the analysis. Written reflections were used as the main source of data while semi-structured interviews were conducted with students and teachers.

Other major research methods that were used that will be elaborated further include:

- (a) A case study
- (b) Semi-structured interviews

**DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION:** Chapter 5 presents the data that was collected in this research. Data is presented within the themes which emerged from the study. A discussion of the findings of each theme follows the presentation of the data.

**CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:** Chapter 6 provides a summary of the results and a discussion of implications. Considering the results of the study and taking note of its implications may facilitate a contribution to diversity and multicultural education. New possibilities of addressing the power structures in the school in order to foster social and political empowerment for all students with regard to stigma and stereotypes within such spaces are suggested.

## Chapter 2: Contextualising the Study

### 2.1 Global Context

Today multicultural democratic nation-states grapple with a number of significant issues, paradigms and ideologies as their population becomes more culturally, racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse. The gap between minority and majority groups and language rights of immigrants and minority groups are among the unresolved and contentious issues with which nations in a global world must grapple. In urban areas, school populations are characterised by increased cultural diversity. Citizens now find themselves belonging to what Held calls “overlapping communities of fate; local, regional, national, international and increasingly virtual” (in Osler 2003:246).

Today, the issue of demographic size and numbers often translates into a struggle for power, particularly between majority and minority groups. Cultural and group identities are important in multicultural democratic societies. Africa’s ethnic diversity has been blamed for the escalation of violent conflict and the implosion of the state. The so-called African traditional identities are often recent constructions, either by colonial powers or by their post-colonial successors, resulting in mythologies of Africanist cultures (Banégas 2006; Bayart 2005). The colonial manipulation of ethnicity left Africa’s post-colonial societies with the polarities of settler (migrant) and native (indigenous) categories. These have become the axis about which ethnic violence in Rwanda, or more recently in Kenya, rotates (Mamdani 1996:201), as well as xenophobic attacks experienced in South Africa in May 2008. The colonial state drove a wedge between ethnic groups by giving preferential treatment to some identity groups through appointments of local authorities or administrative staff in the colonial offices. This use of tribal authorities as agents of political violence became widespread in countries as diverse as Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Burundi and South Africa. Botswana is no exception.

In Botswana, xenophobia<sup>4</sup> is about deep-seated dislike and it is usually expressed through verbal and physical abuse (Shindondola 2001:3). Xenophobia in Botswana has also been expressed largely through the deep dislike of black foreigners. Here, foreigners take the blame for all societal ills and frustrations. Post-liberation xenophobia is not limited to Botswana and South Africa. It is prevalent to varying degrees in southern Africa. According to McDonald and Jacobs (2005), xenophobia is “distinctive and widespread” in the region. McDonald and Jacobs (ibid) conclude, “The harshest anti-immigrant sentiments are expressed by the citizens of South Africa, Namibia and Botswana, the anti-

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<sup>4</sup> Xenophobia has been described as “a deep fear and dislike for the unknown” (Morapedi 2007:231) and also as “the deep dislike of non-nationals based on fear of the unknown or anything perceived as different” (Morapedi 2007:231).



foreign ‘troika’”. Nyamnjoh (2002: 767–8) contends that the migrant positions of *makwerekwere*<sup>5</sup> are “most vulnerable to question and revision by the locals, as compared to those of Asians or whites, in that order. And among *makwerekwere*, Zimbabweans are those whose presence is most contested and most devalued by locals”. Zimbabweans are the ones who bear the brunt of national targeting and they are more likely to suffer from public prejudice, police harassment, stereotyping and debasement (McDonald and Jacobs 2005: 318).

As countries become increasingly multicultural, it can be argued that the authentic teaching and learning of multicultural education in educational settings is essential to avoid the creation of a negative image of the ‘other’, and an ever-strengthened fear of the ‘other.’ While there are many identity markers such as race, nationhood, kinship, class, religion, language, gender, age, geographic location, cultural preferences, and occupation, by and large ethnicity is identified as the dominant axis about which conflicts have revolved.

## 2.2 National Context

While diversity is celebrated and seen as valuable and integral part of Botswana identity, “those members of groups seen as ‘diverse’ are often framed as ‘the problem’, as lacking what is necessary to succeed in society, and as threats to the potential for social cohesion” (Eidoo 2011:66). The discrimination experienced by minority groups occurs, in part, because many individuals hold strong, negative, and false beliefs about all members of those groups. In Botswana, where ethnicity and belonging had almost become masked issues as the state sought nationhood and consensus through dominant Tswana values and liberal democratic institutions, “there has been, since the mid-1980s, a resurgence of identity politics and overt tensions on the question of belonging, as minority ethnic groups seek equity, better representation and more access to national resources and opportunities” (Nyamnjoh 2002:755). While every Botswana national can claim to be a citizen legally within the framework of the modern nation-state, some (minority groups in the main) are perceived by others (among the majority Tswana groups especially), as less authentic nationals or citizens.

There are about fifty-five distinct indigenous groups speaking about twenty-six languages in Botswana (Nyati-Ramahobo 1998; Botswana Language Use Project 1996). The Khoisan are classified into nine main ethnic groups, and they speak about 23 languages and dialects. The rest of the languages and ethnic groups are Bantu. Eight of the Bantu groups speak Setswana as their mother

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<sup>5</sup> The term *Makwerekwere* is generally employed in a derogatory manner to refer to African immigrants from countries suffering economic downturns. The phantom of *makwerekwere* has been constructed and deployed in and through public discourse to render Africans from outside the borders orderable as the nation’s bogeyman. In Matsinhe, D. M. 2011 Africa’s Fear of Itself: the ideology of *Makwerekwere* in South Africa, *Third World Quarterly*, 32:2, 295-313.

tongue. Each one of these is considered a majority group or ‘tribe’<sup>6</sup>. The Chieftainship Act (Republic of Botswana, 1966, Cap. 41:01) states that ‘tribe’ means ‘the Bamangwato Tribe, the Batawana Tribe, Bakgatla Tribe, Bakwena Tribe, Bangwaketse Tribe, the Bamalete Tribe, Barolong Tribe, and Batlokwa<sup>7</sup> Tribe’ (41:3). These are the eight Setswana speaking tribes<sup>8</sup>. According to this act, non-Tswana speaking tribes are not recognised since they have to be absorbed into other tribes. This denies the non-Tswana group their right to define themselves culturally, and be able to live according to their cultural traditions and customs. The Tswana have rights to land, they have the right to use their language in all social domains and they have the privilege to live their culture. The exact status of non-Tswana groups vary but it has been suggested that “the main categories are commoners (such as Kalanga), foreigners (such as OvaHerero) and serfs (such as Basarwa and many Bakgalagari)” (Bennett 2002:5). Thus the use of the term minority and majority languages and ethnic groups in Botswana bears no numerical significance. It simply distinguishes between those speaking Setswana as their mother’s tongue and those who would speak it as a second language and embrace it as their national heritage. It is therefore inaccurate from a linguistic and ethnic point of view, according to Nyathi-Ramahobo, “to speak of majority and minority languages and ethnic groups in Botswana, but rather about marginalised versus non-marginalised linguistic and ethnic groups” (Nyathi-Ramahobo 2002:17). In part, ‘minoritisation’ is carried forward by the politics of recognition.

There is a hierarchy of citizenship fostered by political, economic, social and cultural inequalities, such that it makes some individuals and groups much more able to claim and articulate their rights than others. Being a rights-bearing Motswana is a matter of degree and power relations, and some are “less Batswana than others, even though they are armed with the same *Omang* (Identity Card) and inspired or protected by the same constitution” (Nyamnjoh, 2002:758). And on matters of ethnicity and identity politics, while every Botswana national can claim to be a citizen or a ‘local’ legally,

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<sup>6</sup> The term is used to denote an ethnic group or *morafe* in the sense of a state or chiefdom; it can also be used in the sense of a territorial and political unit (Bennett 2002:11).

<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the country was divided into eight regions called districts: Kgalagadi, Ghanzi, Kweneng, Central, Ngwaketse, Kgatleng, and Ngamiland (Northwest) and South East District. In those districts in which Tswana speaking groups reside, the name of the district would be the same as the name of the tribe and that of the body that distributes land in the district.

<sup>8</sup> Only the eight Setswana-speaking tribes (Bangwato, Bakwena, Balete, Bangwaketse, Batlokwa, Bakgatla, Barolong, and Batawana) have designated and demarcated tribal territories and have group land rights. For instance Kgatleng District Council is in Mochudi village where the Bakgatla reside and the land governing body is Kgatleng Landboard. Thus, we have Ngwato Landboard, Tawana Landboard, Ngwaketse Landboard and Kweneng Landboard. The Balete and Batlokwa tribes reside in the South East District. By design or by default, this renders the other tribes ‘invisible’ on the national scene. Only the Setswana-speaking tribes may be represented in the House of Chiefs by chiefs with ex officio status and thus ensure some permanence (Lubinda 2010: 128-29). In general, the Ba-/Mo- (singular/plural) prefix before the tribe name signifies the number of people being discussed e.g. Bangwato refers to more than one person while Mongwaketse refers to one person.

some, such as BaKalanga<sup>9</sup>, and the Bazeduru (whose total population in Botswana is estimated to be in the range of 11,000) are perceived in certain Tswana circles as less authentic citizens or locals. Indeed, they are presented as having more in common with *makwerekwere* from Zimbabwe and further north, than with the other Batswana. Citizenship and belonging, even as nationals of the same country, are all a matter of degree. Much that was taken for granted – about ideas of cultural homogeneity for the sake of national building, about tribal entitlements, about the limited public use of local languages and the assertion of ethnic difference and tribal identity in public life<sup>10</sup> - is now being contested, or renegotiated through effective compromise (Werbner 2002:120).

Diversity in any society is naturally reflected in its schools, and with the implications of globalization and accelerated flows of migration, contemporary classrooms are increasingly becoming sites of multilingualism and identity negotiations. Battiste (2000:192) argued that for children whose languages and cultures are different from mainstream expectations, the educational system can lead to a form of “cognitive imperialism” or cultural racism, defined as “the imposition of one worldview on a people who have an alternative worldview, with the implication that the imposed worldview is superior to the alternative worldview”. Schools therefore process both knowledge and people, and seem to contribute to inequality in that they are tacitly organized to differentially distribute specific kinds of knowledge. From this perspective ways of knowing are limited and constrained by the dominant culture and the primary educational ways maintain and becomes a way through which social inequality is reproduced. According to Apple (1979:32), schools partly recreate the social and economic hierarchies of a larger society through what is seemingly a neutral process of selection and instruction. In the past, South African education reflected the fragmented society in which it was based, and it hardly created conscientious critical citizens.

At independence in 1966, Botswana implemented ambiguous language of instruction policies. English was designated as the official language, while Setswana was declared the national language. Languages other than English and Setswana were banned from use in schools. Every child in every community is expected to learn in Setswana and English (Boikhutso 2013:799, Nyathi-Ramahobo 2002:17). Despite the fact that personal rights and freedom are guaranteed by the Botswana Constitution for every citizen (irrespective of colour, tribe or religious affiliation (Article 11, 3 of the Constitution), minority languages and minority ethnic groups still face a number of hurdles with respect to common rights in and freedom in the domains of language culture and ethnic identity. The

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<sup>9</sup>Stereotypically, the more dark-skinned a local is, the more likely s/he is to pass for *Makwerekwere*, especially if s/he is inarticulate in Setswana. BaKalanga and Bazeduru, who tend to be more dark-skinned than the rest, are also more at risk of being labelled *Makwerekwere*. In general, the le-/ma- (singular/plural) prefix in Setswana usually designates someone as foreign, different or outside the community. It is not used just for ethnic groups but for any group or profession that seems to be set apart from average folks.

<sup>10</sup> I. Mazonde, *Minorities in the Millennium: Perspectives from Botswana* (Gaborone, Lightbooks for the University of Botswana and the International Centre for Contemporary Cultural Research, 2002; R. Werbner, ‘Citizenship and the Politics of Recognition’:117-135

growing intolerance and ignorance of cultural and language difference coupled with an increase in racism and xenophobia is being contested within the education systems worldwide and in Botswana today. Classrooms in Botswana are increasingly becoming sites of multilingualism and identity negotiations. Thus achieving equality in a multi-ethnic society requires a pluralistic approach where schools respond positively to the fact that society as a whole includes a range of different ethnic and cultural groups. This study aims to explore ways to negotiate structural inequalities brought about as a result of intolerance and prejudice as a result of overt and subtle forms of stereotyping and stigma that arise as a result of multiculturalism within a school.

### **2.3 Local context**

The national vision, as articulated in Vision 2016 (73), advocates for multiculturalism by encouraging the education system to “stress the value of a multicultural society.” One of the pillars of Vision 2016 states: A Tolerant, Just and Caring Nation. The policy goes on to say that, “The system of education, supported by public campaigns must stress the value of a multicultural society, and the need for tolerance and understanding of the differences between people” (Lubinda 2010: 125). Schools are thus recognized as immediate sites of multicultural memories, histories and knowledge. It is acknowledged that activities within educational spaces can provide room for opportunities to be lost, negotiated or redefined in various ways. However, despite certain positive gains and official pronouncements by government officials seemingly in favour of multiculturalism, ethnic equality, and development of minority languages, much still remains to be done, as shown by Chebanne (2002) and Nyati-Ramahobo (2000, 2002, 2003, 2008a), to redress the imbalances and level the playing field. Experiences of victimization, stigma, and stereotyping at Taung JSS demonstrate the need for putting policy into practice.

Taung Junior Secondary School (Taung JSS) has four hundred and twenty-three students and forty-three teaching and non-teaching staff. Both students and staff come from different tribes or ethnic groups. The school has students and teachers that are from the eight major tribes and a variety of the non-Tswana speaking tribes. In each class, there is a mixture of these diverse tribes. It is crucial for the school to recognise that feelings, emotions and morals are crucial aspects of education. The school authority and the village at large fail to acknowledge that there are issues that involve students that are victimised because they have a cultural heritage that is ‘linked’ to Zimbabwe. Students physically fight because of careless and derogatory remarks that are passed towards one another because there is a lack of understanding that we are citizens of multiple communities, local, national and global. We have a challenge of getting the school educators to acquire skills to teach students to appreciate multiple points of views and recognise stereotyping. This serves as the motivation of this research study. There is a lack - by both students and teachers - to appreciate the interconnectedness and interdependence of people, to respect and protect cultural diversity as evidenced by the way specific

derogative speeches are carelessly thrown around. As Zhao posits “Communities need to provide senses that are culturally sensitive,” (2010: 425) as diversity has the potential to lead to clashes, conflicts and breed hostility.

## **Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the theoretical framework of the study. Multicultural education is the overarching theoretical framework used in the study. This is explored in reference to the role of Art education in a multicultural curriculum. The theoretical framework of the study employed here also contains aspects of post-colonial theory, colonialism and anti-colonialism. Another key area that will be elaborated in this chapter includes Education for social justice theory.

### **3.2 Multicultural education theory**

#### **3.2.1 Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism in society and schools is taking on new dimensions of complexities and practicalities as demographics, social conditions and political circumstances changes. Domestic diversity and unprecedented immigration have created a vibrant mixture of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and experiential plurality. As such diversity is increasing in our classrooms implying the need for teachers to be prepared to work effectively with students from different backgrounds such as cultural, linguistic or national origin. Multiculturalism, according to Lubinda, (2010:122) is a “theory of existence and a policy instrument to cope with the new challenges of increasing cultural diversity of society in the context of racial tensions and intercommunal conflict in many parts of the postwar world.” The term ‘multi-racial’ has two usages. One is a demographic descriptor referring to a society that is made up of several visible racial groups. The other describes a government policy that avowedly promotes harmonious racial relations among various racial groups living together within one country. Sardar and Van Loon (2004:123) briefly define multiculturalism as “the common notion that describes diverse races living in pluralistic harmony... It sees diversity as plurality of identities and as a condition of human existence”. The theory of multiculturalism “requires a central recognition of unequal power relations... to avoid ‘flattering out’ differences, making them equal” (May 2002:136). The questions and ideas people articulate about multicultural education and multiculturalism in the broader society are bound up in their assumptions about the nature of difference, race, social class, the opportunity structure, and who is legitimately a “citizen” in a given nation; hence why this stands as a central focus of this research.

#### **3.2.2 Multicultural Education**

Multicultural education respects cultural differences and affirms pluralism which students, their communities and teachers bring to the learning process. Nyati-Saleshando asserts that it is “founded on the belief that a school curriculum which promotes the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity and human dignity is most likely to result in high academic achievement and quality education” (2011:567). Proponents of multicultural education (ME; Banks 1994; C. I. Bennett 1990;

Coelho 1994; Davidman & Davidman 1994; Gay 1988; Grant 1977; Nieto 1992) explicitly state that the inclusion of Multicultural Education in the curriculum of schools creates an atmosphere where racial attitudes and academic achievement are improved.

Multicultural Education goals are centered on raising personal awareness about different categories of individual differences, and how these differences enhance or hinder the ways students and teachers generally interact with each other (Lubinda 2010:122). It includes addressing the fundamental issues of inequality in societies, institutions and education with goals including to reduce prejudice, the elimination of bias and stereotypes, and the empowerment of oppressed individuals and groups. Integration viewed from within this broader context is multidimensional, and schools as immediate sites of multi-cultures, memories, histories, and knowledge provide the spaces where such opportunities are lost, negotiated, or redefined in various ways. Multicultural education theory examines the socio-political, historical and cultural contexts, but focusing more on ethnicity, race and culture as well as on class, gender, and sexuality in relation to issues such as discrimination, social justice and power relations. The unifying goals for multicultural education theory are to create a socially just education system for diverse students through social transformation (Phillion in Kridel 2010:290-1).

### **3.2.3 Multicultural Education and Art**

Art has tremendous potential to develop “students’ intercultural competence and experience, and can reveal the assumptions, values, and beliefs of a culture in a way that makes them poignant and comprehensible” (Graham 2009:155). It is an influential medium to press the claims and consolidate a lexicon of national symbols instructing people to alter their habits in order to persuade or change their ideology. It has played a role in indoctrinating people in political situations, and because it is visual it may touch a multitude of people and form an imagined community where everyone is connected via visual, performing and literary art. Art can provide a way to establish a position and collective identity within a given society. It can provide a way “to promote socialization, the enculturation of beliefs, value system and convention of behaviour” (Bonoell 1992:2). A work of art can also help students view the world from new perspectives and to critically consider taken-for granted assumptions; “the arts offer opportunities for perceiving alternative ways of transcending and being in the world . . . and to subvert our thoughtlessness and complacencies, our certainties” (Greene 1995: 118). The creation of a work of art can allow students to develop their own vision and personal voice in a visual language that allow for enormous divergence and imaginative responses. Nolan contends that one of the functions of art is to “destabilize fixed ideas and existing identities” and “help us move into a different space where different rules apply” (Jones, 1999:3). Maxine Greene (1995, 2001) reminds us that art challenges and encourages people to look and see differently, and that imagination is what helps us see things as if they could be otherwise. As such the study of art can enhance multicultural education by helping to build students’ understanding of their own place in history and emphasising the capacity

and ability of all human beings including those who have been culturally degraded, politically oppressed and economically exploited.

### **3.3 Colonialism, Post-Colonialism and Anti-Colonialism**

By fragmenting the traditional ethnic groupings within Africa in their quest to divide up the continent among themselves, the European powers created the potential for ethnic conflict. When they imposed formal territorial boundaries throughout the continent in 1885, the seeds for ethnic conflict in post-colonial Africa were sown. This study uses the postcolonial lens to highlight that mainstream postcolonial societies still ignore, marginalize and suppress other knowledge systems and ways of knowing. The marginalization of ethnic groups, it is argued, was established in the colonial times that relegated all things indigenous or from the colonized communities as unworthy, uncivilized, barbaric and superstitious. The postcolonial history is possibly one of the reasons why the hierarchy in skin colour is taken as a norm for judging people which involves the oppression and dominance of certain groups of people in a country. Systematic efforts to inscribe Western ways of cultural, economic, political and social systems were applied during the colonial times and maintained in the post-independence era. The educational system did not escape the colonial construction of the colonized subjects and their relegation to otherness. Years after the struggle for independence the content of what is taught, methods of teaching and research remain Western in non-Western contexts.

#### **3.3.1 Colonialism**

Colonialism has been from the very beginning a contest over the mind and the intellect. Under the colonial influence the biological and intellectual heritage of the non-Western societies was devalued. Under colonialism ethnic identities were constructed and classified, often with disregard of local histories, and imposed not only for purposes of indirect rule, but also to justify a civilising mission to ‘primitive natives’. According to the authors Dei (2006), Kemp (2006), Allan (2006), and Wane (2006), colonization did not only seize land, but the minds of the colonized as well. Given that the colonial project was not a charity undertaking, the use of foreign languages, especially English, in most neo-colonial societies has become the main determinants of a child’s ability to master formal language. This further acknowledges that the “role of education system is producing and reproducing racial, ethnic, linguistic and sexual inequalities and the absence of indigenous voices and practices” (Wane 2006:100). As Fanon’s work asserts, “[t]he uni-focal history of dominant/colonial education serves to amputate marginalized people from their past and consequently from their present” (cited in Kempf 2006: 132). As a result of failure to teach and value, accurate and inclusive history must be understood as rather part of the ongoing colonial project in which power of representation is paramount. Language, for example, can be a tool for empowerment or disempowerment. In India, for example, English language was an important colonial tool. Gandhi, writing about English colonialism argues;



To give millions knowledge of English is to enslave them ... Is it not a sad thing that if I want to go to a Court of Justice ... I may not speak my mother tongue and that someone else should have to translate for me from my language?

cited in Kempf 2006:135

English erodes modern students' abilities to center/value their own culture for many people in a globalized era. English is no longer simply a courtesy for outsiders or gracious gesture, but has become the default language of choice. It comes to define and thus potentially limit expression, representation and historical telling. Education is a marginalising force which divides the learner from herself and her history.

### **3.3.2 Post-Colonialism**

In post-colonial African states, tensions among ethnic groups about purity, belonging and entitlements have been ongoing, as demonstrated in the case of the resurgence of indigeneity in Botswana since the mid-1980s. As Wane notes (2006:90), “[I]t is quite clear that colonization did not end with the British leaving ..., but continued through various organizations and institutions that they conceived as instrumental to carry-out the colonizing project even after they were thousands of miles away”.

The post-colonial ideas largely focus on the interconnections between imperial/colonial cultures and the colonized cultural practices and the constructions of hybridity and alterity. It demonstrates the shift of anti-colonial thought from the focus on agency and nationalist/liberatory practice towards a discursive analysis and approach that directs our attention to the intersection between “Western Knowledge production and the ‘other’ and western colonial power” (Dei 2006:13). It problematizes the subversive notion of history as a monologue and “propose a post-colonial geopolitics of representation that positions subalterns as valid producers of knowledge” (Smith 2010:255).

### **3.3.3 Anti-Colonialism**

Anti-colonialism is about the colonial struggle to resist the neo-colonial governing procedures that reside within everyday lived experience. It calls for a critical awareness of the social relations and power issues embedded in the ways of organizing the production, interrogation, validation and dissemination of knowledge in order to challenge social oppression and consequently subvert domination. As a theory articulating the connections between colonialism, oppression and change, anti-colonialism posts a literacy of resistance’ to bring about social change. Rabaka (2003:7) argued that “one of the true most important tasks of a critical anti-colonial theory ... is to capture and critique the continuities and discontinuities of the colonial and neo-colonial in order to make sense of our currently ... colonial life and worlds” (cited in Dei 2006:2). It is a framework that works to detangle

oppressive spaces and understanding the lived experiences of the self through praxis<sup>11</sup>. The authors posit the anti-colonial discourse as a politics of action, as a way of knowing and understanding lived experiences of the self through praxis as entailed in their different accounts of their journey to finding themselves/ their positions as privileged bodies. For Allen, the use of indigenous knowledge within the anti-colonial framework is seen not only as a site of resistance to colonial oppression but also as a way to “help resuscitate oneself and one’s community from mental bondage” (2006:264). He sees this framework as a way to detangle oppressive spaces as they appear through day to day social interactions.

The line between an anti-colonial and postcolonial frame of reference as defined above perhaps become slightly blurred in that while working towards liberation one is involved in discursive negotiation between the authoritative and the other voices present in current society. The school, particularly the classroom, can provide the space for each learner to understand both her privileges and oppression.

### **3.4 Education for social justice theory**

The research focuses on foundations of social justice as a way to find effective ways to challenge oppressive systems and promote social justice through education. The study examines the ever-changing aspects in which “common sense knowledge and assumptions make it difficult to see oppression clearly” (Bell 2007:1). This critical pedagogy describes the body of literature that aims to provide a means by which the oppressed may begin to reflect more upon their social circumstances and take action to improve the status quo. The roots of critical pedagogy lie in the critical theories of the Frankfurt School and most directly associated with the teachings of Paulo Freire. Freire’s pedagogy is directed to breaking the cycle of psychological oppression by engaging students in confronting their own lives, to engage in a dialogue with their own fears as the representation within themselves of the power of the oppressor. Social issues hinder the active participation of the students as citizens in politics and civic life. Because the concept of a community is a flexible concept which allows for a range of meanings, the discussion with the students provided me with the ability to recognize and view issues of social formation or concern from multiple perspectives since community is a learned understanding. The challenge for a critical educator is to introduce new literacies in a manner that empowers individuals (students, teachers) and that simultaneously creates platforms for the critique of existing power and knowledge structures. Advocacy for such initiatives comes internationally from critical theorists such as Henry Giroux (1992), who has urged educators to take up roles, as “critically engaged public intellectuals” (cited in Narayanan 2006:373).

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<sup>11</sup> The concept of praxis is defined as an action based on critical reflection, which aims to provide a means by which the oppressed may begin to reflect upon their socio-economic circumstances and take action to improve the status quo. The philosophy of praxis lies in the critical theories of the Frankfurt School (most notably Adorno, Habermas, and Horkheimer) and is directly associated with the teachings of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator. Freire brought a Marxist approach to his work with illiterate adult workers in Brazil.

## Chapter 4: Research Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study was to explore visual art as a learning platform to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self. The study sought to explore ways to use art as agent of social change and to establish a classroom environment that models good citizenship skills, such as respectful listening and tolerance of difference. Art was explored as a way of coming to know and valuing the diversity in our complex, interrelated, and changing world. The research questions were formulated as: a) What are the reactions of students to a project that, through the process of art making, aimed to create a safe space to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes, labelling and stigmas experienced in Taung Junior Secondary School; and b) How do the students negotiate and experience diversity within their spaces of learning at Taung Junior Secondary School? The research approach and design, sampling, data collection methods, and procedures for data analysis are further elaborated in this chapter.

### 4.2 Design of the Study

The following sections present a discussion of the research approach, research paradigm and research design

#### 4.2.1 Research Approach and Paradigm

A qualitative approach towards the study was considered the most suitable way for conducting the research. It was appropriate in the sense that qualitative research “is based on *interpretation of experience* and the *meaning* that is attached to experience” (Wilson 2011:188). It allows for valuing the interpretation of the human response to the research question. I chose a qualitative research method for this study to gain detailed information about the complex phenomena of how students negotiate social stereotypes and to identify themes and theoretical structures which describe this process. An interpretive analysis was used to gain insight into how students made sense of their experiences and the significance of art as a platform to negotiate stigmas and stereotypes in class and school.

#### 4.2.2 Research Design

A study as described above involves an intimate relationship between the researcher and that which is being studied. A case study research design was thus used for the empirical part of the study. Hancock and Algozzine (2006:11) describe case studies as “intensive analyses and descriptions of a single unit or system bounded by space and time”. It is an in-depth analysis of people, events, and relationships, bounded by some unifying factor. The advantage of case studies is that they provide an in-depth, detailed description of a small number of cases being investigated (Mouton, 2001:148).

### 4.3 Sample Selection

A purposeful sample of twelve Taung Junior Secondary School Art students in Botswana was used in this study. Smith argues that a small sample size is acceptable because an Interpretative Analysis “is an idiographic approach, concerned with understanding particular phenomenon in particular contexts” (2009:49). According to Silverman, the purpose of a sample is usually to “study a representative subsection of precisely defined population in order to make inferences about the whole population” (2005:126), in this instance that of my school. Sampling has two functions. First it allows one to feel confident about the representativeness; “if the population characteristics are known, the degree of representativeness of a sample can be checked” (Silverman 2005:126). Second a sample allows one to make broader inferences.

The students were selected by consulting identified ethnic groups represented in Taung Junior Secondary School. The sample consisted of representatives from the Batlokwa tribe, one from the Bangwatho tribe, three from the Balete tribe, three foreign students from Zimbabwe<sup>12</sup>, four Bazezuru<sup>13</sup> and one from the Bakalaka<sup>14</sup> tribe. The participants were from a varied social and economic background. The coding process for the identification of students is described as follows: M indicates ‘Balete’ and the number following indicates the number of students interviewed in this category; G indicates ‘Bangwato’ and the number following indicates the number of students interviewed in this category; S indicates ‘Mashona from the Bazezuru’ and the number following indicates the number of students interviewed in this category; N indicates ‘Nyasa from the Bazezuru’ and the number following indicates the number of students interviewed in this category; T indicates Matebele from the northern part of Botswana; K indicates ‘Batlokwa’ and the number following indicates the number of students interviewed; and F indicates Foreign students from Zimbabwe and the number following indicates the number of students interviewed in this category.

#### 4.3.1 Data Collection & Capturing

Data was collected through an art project, semi-structured interview and written reflections. An Art project: students were asked to use any media of their choice to represent one of the issues they wrote in their reflections. The project was a way to use art as a medium of communication. The media chosen by the students included, linoleum block printing, mosaic and collage making. Upon completing the project students discussed the project. The main purpose is to explore the participant’s experiences and subjective views on a topic.

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<sup>12</sup> There are a number of foreign students at Taung among them four from Zimbabwe- three Ndebele and one Shona only three took part in this study.

<sup>13</sup> Bazezuru are a tribe found in Botswana and among them are Mashona and Manyasa. in this study three Shona and a Nyasa took part.

<sup>14</sup> There are different dialects within the Bakalaka and participant in this research is a Motebele.

The interviews took place behind closed doors where discussions could not be overheard and where participants could speak freely without fear of being judged or victimised. This provided them with an equal opportunity to voice their opinions. During the interview, the participant responded to open-ended questions related to his or her experience at Taung Junior Secondary School and follow-up questions were asked based on the responses of the participants. I started each interview with the following phenomenological question: “Can you tell me about your experience at Taung Junior Secondary School?”. Interviews lasted between 10 to 20 minutes, and was recorded using a digital recorder.

#### **4.4 Ethical Clearance**

Ethical Clearance for this research project was obtained from the Departmental Ethics Screening Committee (DESC) – Visual Arts, of Stellenbosch University. Institutional permission was also granted by Taung Junior Secondary School administrators. Prior to the art project, all semi-structured interviews and written reflections participants and their parents were provided with consent forms which they read before filling in the necessary information with regard to the study. No participant was forced to participate and no one received any financial compensation.

Participants could ask to review the information gathered during interviews and observations as well as their reflections which were the main source of data that was used in this study. All information concerning the results of the study will also be made available to all the participants in the study. As indicated by Stellenbosch University’s Research Ethics Committee: Human Research, the information will be erased five years after the degree has been conferred.

#### **4.5 Data Analysis**

Qualitative research values the fact that the researcher attempts to understand people in terms of their own understanding of their world. This form of research makes it possible to deal with the many complexities - such as the social, cultural and political imbalances within spaces of learning that exist within a study. The reflections written by the participants, their opinions and the interpretation of their responses to the questions asked are considered to be valuable. I used the interpretative analysis<sup>15</sup> of data which is inductive in nature.

From the reflections written by the participants and the transcribed recordings made during interviews, I searched for emerging themes across all the participants’ responses. By processing and organising data into themes identified from the interviews, the categorisation of the data was reduced

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<sup>15</sup> It is a qualitative research means that the researcher draws meaning from the findings of data analysis. The analysis does not include a single step of data analysis but must include: a) movement from what is unique to a participant to what is shared among the participants, (b) description of the experience which moves to an interpretation of experience, (c) commitment to understanding the participant’s point of view, and (d) psychological focus on personal meaning-making within a particular context. Cooper 2012:5

to fewer categories/themes through the process of coding. Coding is the process of “organising the material into chunks or segments of text in order to develop a general meaning of each segment” (Creswell 2009:227). In this study data was coded using open coding - process of “breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data” (Punch 2006: 108). The aim of open coding is the development of categories. These may then become a topic for further analysis. The combination of data collected through interviews, observations in the classroom, artworks and especially their reflections was useful. This does not only reflect the participants’ original words and thoughts, but also my interpretations of data.

#### **4.6 Validity and Trustworthiness**

All reflections were scrutinised for themes and recordings of interviews were transcribed by myself to ensure that the data was ‘true’ representations of what written and was said respectively. It is important to note, however, that as a human being it is difficult to remain objective with regard to the transcribing process, through non-deliberately selecting and editing the transcripts. The interviews were played and listened to repetitively to ensure that what was being said was heard correctly and understood completely. The reflections were read repeatedly to ensure that there were no misinterpretations of data. The validity of the research was also ensured through the utilisation of students from varying backgrounds. Efforts were made to view what was being said from the participants’ point of view and this was very important and taken into consideration during the process of data analysis.

## Chapter 5: Data Presentation and Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

The following sections present a discussion of the identified themes. Data of the first identified main theme of difference (5.2) with sub-themes which include 5.2.1) Race, ethnicity and nationality, and 5.2.2) Language will first be presented. After the presentation of data, a discussion (5.2.3) will follow. Discrimination (5.3) is identified as the second main theme with sub-themes of 5.3.1) Stereotyping and stigma, 5.3.2) Feelings of discomfort and feelings of being an outcast, and 5.3.3) Othering and marginalisation. After data relating to these themes is presented, a discussion (5.3.4) of the second main theme with the sub themes will follow.

### 5.2. Difference

Looking at the case study taken from Taung Junior Secondary School, this section shows not only that all societies are different but also that they differ considerably in the ways their differences play out. This study's intent was to find means to create an open space in which students conceptualise and negotiate their dynamic diversities through art. Difference was identified as the first theme and the sub-themes 5.2.1) Race, ethnicity and nationality, 5.2.2) Language and 5.3.3) Othering/Marginalisation will be discussed below.

The discourse of difference is about power, racial and social oppression as well as the silences. Difference is uncertainty, the unknown, something to be suspicious of. As such, it is easier to ignore or exclude these people than it is to come to know them, to dispel the uncertainty, especially when deep-seated, historical prejudices exist. Racism is expressed through stereotypes (racist beliefs), prejudice (racist emotions) and/or discrimination.

#### 5.2.1 Race, ethnicity and nationality

The main framework for theorizing race nationality and ethnicity in this study is multicultural with its focus on "individual, psychological and cultural phenomenon" (Young 1997: 10). The discussion follows later in this section

Student T1 said,

*It was after the holidays and we were supposed to tell others about how our holidays were like and what we were doing during the holidays.*

*Other students just stood up and told us about their holidays and it was my turn to tell others about the holidays that I had, suddenly I told them that my holidays were fun and I had a lot of fun at Siviya. They asked me if Siviya is around the border of Zimbabwe and I said yes and they asked me if I am a Zimbabwean and I said no and they started laughing. Then I got irritated about the laugh and I told them to shut up then I told them that if Siviya is on the*

*border of Zimbabwe is not my problem and if they have a problem with it they should say it after I sit down.*

As student M1 explained about her views on difference she said

*The Kalanga students are exposed to discrimination mostly because of their skin colour.*

Student N1 commented that

*Students always judge me about my skin colour and like I am always an outcast when it comes to other students skin colour because most of them are 'white'<sup>16</sup>. People call me different names about my colour and tribe.*

Student S1 describes his experience about those who fail to accept him as a Motswana.

*I am 'black' but I am not 'moZimbabwe'*

Student S1 expressed that

*In school, students always shout me that I am Moshona I must go back to Zimbabwe; I do not belong in Botswana. I always ignore them and focus in my education. When I grow up I want to be a Doctor. If the teacher ask students what they want to be when they grow up, when it is my turn to talk they will start to shout me that I am short and I am not a Motswana no one can employ me when I grow up.*

For student K1,

*Since I came to school in Ramotswa, I was treated like I was not a Motswana person. Teachers were not treating me like any other student and I don't know why, was it because I was new in this school or what and when I got home I told my mother that I don't want to go back to that school but. I pushed myself to come to this school but all I had is tears on my face because I was treated like a person who did not belong to this country.*

Student F3 added and said

*They start saying you Zimbabweans, 'makwerekwere,' you come here to our country to stay and have better future and talk our language not your language this is not Zimbabwe that you can do whatever you want.*

Although student N1 is a Motswana, by birth, she commented on that most of the time she is not considered as such.

Student N1 said,

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<sup>16</sup> meaning light in complexion



*Ever since I got to Taung Junior Secondary School it has been tough for me to interact with other students. This is because they always ask if I am a Motswana and if I know how to speak Setswana. Wherever a new teacher comes they always ask the same question. Sometimes in some lessons like Setswana, the students always give examples about foreigners stealing or being caught for robbery or not having permits.*

Student K1 adds on,

*I was not given that sense of Motswana person but anywhere God was there for me. I wished I could be helped because I had suffered from this since I was transferred to this school.*

Student T1 sums up with

*I feel like I am a ghost because so many people always ask me lots of questions like who is a Zimbabwean between your mom and dad, I would tell them that I don't know maybe both of them because I got nothing to do with them. I hated it when people made me feel like I am useless and I am sort of different from them but I am not. Everyone has the right to nationality not discrimination.*

### **5.2.2 Language**

Language is a set of social practices-constructed, contingent and contested (Stroud 2001:348; Stroud 2004:197). It is used as a marker of socio-cultural belonging in minority language communities as such embracing another person's language is the highest form of colonisation (Colonial in this context is not defined simply as 'foreign' or 'alien' but more broadly as anything which is 'imposed' and 'dominating' (Dei 2006:3). This is so because one is denied what is essential to one's cultural growth. Most of the students in this study commented on language as a source of frustration while within the school premises.

As M1 observed,

*I am a form three student here in Taung JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL. I come from the Balete tribe and ever since I settled in this school I have never experienced any sort of discrimination, probably because I am Molete. Taung is a settlement for the Balete tribe so if you were Molete, you would know you had nothing to worry about... Take for example the Shona students, these students never get to speak their language, most students would laugh at them and tell them to stop speaking their language.*

Student S1 stated that

*I speak Shona at home and everywhere I am with other Shonas. In school, students always shout me that I am Moshona I must go back to Zimbabwe; I do not belong in Botswana. I always ignore them and focus in my education. I always feel to fight with them but I always*

*pull myself, and I have been suspended for two weeks because of fighting with other student because they were shouting me.*

As student M2 argued

*Kana they speak like maZim, so tota they are not Batswana, they should speak Setswana and stop gossiping about us here. If they want that language of theirs they should start their own school.*

As such the students from other tribes especially Bakalaka and Mashona are forced to speak Setswana despite being amongst those from their tribe. Student F2 explained that,

*Taung Junior Secondary School is a good school. I got in the school when I was doing my form 1. I met lots of different people some I even made friends with. As a foreigner from Zimbabwe I spoke a little bit of Setswana. I was not fluent though. To communicate with other students and teachers I spoke English. Lots of form threes liked me from the beginning for being different speaking English every day and every time all the time this was amazing to them... In the past two years English became my language. I could not speak Ndebele or Shona because most of my friends are Batswana and they did not understand my languages. I remember when I was doing form 2 we were eating lunch; two of my friends could speak and understand Shona. So we started speaking. Some of our friends became angry saying we were gossiping it is not fair we should stop speaking Shona and Ndebele when we are around them. They do not like it. They also said they come from different tribes but they never speak their language so we should not speak ours also.*

Student F3 added

*At Taung I was enjoying myself but not that much because of the way that they are doing. They don't allow us Zimbabweans to talk in our languages as Zimbabweans. When you talk in Zimbabwean language they complain that we are gossiping on them or insult them whilst we don't talk about them. They want that everyone should talk in Setswana either you like it or not. As Zimbabweans we are not hundred percent in Setswana but you would be forced to talk Setswana. I never knew that all of a sudden they will change like that because us Zimbabweans we talk isiNdebele and Batswana they talk Setswana. We should be equal in languages. They should be fifty -fifty in languages.*

Student S3 had this to say

*Also these Tswanas make it uncomfortable for the Shonas to speak our language.*

G1, a student from one of the eight Tswana speaking tribe had this to say about Bangwato tribe,

*This is an ethnic group that people do not like because they say this ethnic group does not speak the natural language of Batswana that is Setswana properly. They say that our ethnic group and how they speak Setswana it is like we are being insulting.*

*What I think about my ethnic group is that its language is not hard to speak and is not like the Bakalanga or Herero language that takes years to practice*

Student F3 went on to say

*In Botswana they have different culture but still they have to treat us the same. Of course we different cultures and languages but we are still the same. In Zimbabwe we treat everybody the same, we don't judge by languages that you speak Shona, Ndebele, Sitonga, etc. we look the same*

These languages for most of the students signified different cultures and beliefs. During the conversations, students' assigned social values to those different cultures e.g. Bazezuru especially those who spoke Shona were perceived as hard workers, yet inferior, unintelligent and uncivilized for being different. As M2 said

*Kana maZimbabwe are ugly and black, but they are such hard workers. If you need anything done well 'makwerekwere' will do it well.*

### **5.2.3 Discussion**

The relationship between majorities and minorities in pluralistic societies rests on the everyday struggles and realities of maintaining social and cultural identity. Difference was identified as the first theme and the sub-themes include race, ethnicity and nationality and language. Dealing with these sub-themes individually enables a holistic understanding of how students negotiate stereotypes and labelling at Taung as well as experience their 'othered' identity within the spaces of learning. The discussions, as the students worked on their project informed me about the process of Othering "which is a construction of imaginary differences as real" (Dei 2006:9). Others are those groups in society who are generally marginalised or excluded on the basis of some characteristic(s) (e.g. race, language, gender, sexuality or lifestyle) and cultural difference. However, the categories used to denote different groups are portrayed as essentialist and imperialist (there are differences between people and these differences are 'natural' and given) rather than being socially constructed (people are the same but are categorised and treated differently in order to make sense of the world and maintain power relations).

The study revealed that for most non-Tswana at Taung, experienced exclusion. It revealed that our school needs to recognise the power of other tribes and foreigners as not just passive recipients but as active agents of school community- building itself and language played an important role in their spaces of learning. The growing intolerance and ignorance of cultural differences, coupled with increases in racism and xenophobia has created climates of desolation and antagonism amongst our students. In such context increasing prejudice constructs a fear and anxiety that diversity undermines cohesion and the building of our school community. In effect, dominating and oppressive relations that emerge from structures of power and privilege inform us about the process of Othering.

Educating learners to become more democratic involves creating spaces whereby they can learn to share “commonalities and to respect differences of others” (Waghid 2009:22). The point is that students need to be educated to accept that they cannot be excluded from performing certain tasks on the basis of their cultural differences. They have the right to participate, to be heard and to offer an account of their reasons “within a civic public space of multicultural understanding and confrontation” (Benhabib 2002 cited in Waghid 2009:22). Although we established in our discussion that one’s mother tongue is very important “in the process of learning and for psychological; spiritual, mental cognitive development of the self” (Dei 2008:16), Student M2 insisted that everyone must speak Setswana including foreigners. Education in this instance becomes a key site for conferring legitimacy on specific practices of language, and for distributing control over linguistic and non-linguistic resources. This echoed Freire’s theory that in such instances, education is used by the dominant groups to validate their own privileges while certifying the inferiority of students marginalised by social factors.

In this I realised that language and culture was an issue for most of the students as we discussed their views on citizenship and globalisation. Such structural inequalities have serious consequences and have been linked to students’ low self-esteem. As Wane (2008:100) states “language is a powerful tool for colonising peoples’ minds”. A foreign language indicates a foreign culture and the use of a foreign language as a medium of education makes a child foreign within her own culture, environment, etc. In this context language loss has a great deal to do with issues of power and prejudice and for this reason; language loss implies loss of ethno cultural identity as well.

The inherent identification of a people with their ethnic language is significant in this remark, as recognition of the language is linked with a sense of cultural identity, nationality and racism. The conversations that were held during the art making process projected their inner understanding of the outside world via their use of language, onto the social world. The projects showed an ability to encourage participants to reach beyond the safe boundaries of the familiar to hear and see the experiences of others as most of the conversations were sparked by the projects students were working on. As they moved around to see their classmates work, they discussed the

meaning of their work and why they made such works. Students engaged openly in critical discussions about discrimination issues on a collective platform. They talked openly about experiences with less fear or vulnerability about sharing their thoughts as they worked on their project. The projects created opportunities for students to examine topics of culture, diversity, and social justice in a traditional classroom and within the local context of their community.



**Figure 1. Student M1. Mosaic**

The results reveal that Taung Junior Secondary School is ethnically more diverse than common wisdom suggests and it is important for the school to take this reality into account. It revealed that our school needs to recognise the power of other tribes and foreigners as not just passive recipients but as active agents of school community building itself. The art work above **Figure 1** represented the cultures and languages within our school which are not considered as important. The silencing of these languages only aids the denial of minority tribes within the spaces of learning. Thus teachers should attempt to even the playing field so that the languages and cultures of individual students are perceived as equally valued and powerful. Teachers should acknowledge that different cultures exist in modern diverse classrooms and provide the necessary accommodations for those differences. For instance, when addressing our students, we should strive to use appropriate language; choose our vocabulary well, even if we individually feel confused about which terminology to use. We have an obligation to request clarification or admit our ignorance as to what terminology will be most welcomed by an individual or group of children. Furthermore, we should inquire from the students about the names they like to be called and use languages that affirm diversity. Through art, this study tried to open up a safe space in which common patterns of talk and argumentative strategies used by majority group members to construct various minority groups negatively were identified and discussed. In my opinion it was an effective strategy as students managed to discuss openly their thoughts and arguments. Although the discussion happened, I cannot for sure say the attitudes of the

students change or not because attitudes are hard to change overnight. However there was a change in the way the students in the minority looked at themselves slightly.

I stand in a privileged position as I am able to converse in Shona, Ndebele, Setswana and English. I share a philosophy that a school system, particularly the classroom, must provide the space for each learner to understand both his/her privileges and oppression and develop effective resistance to domination. In this context I am aware that the anti-colonial education continually meets with the open resistance such as the denial of difference that provides the context for power and domination in our society. This research was an invitation for the students to share their model of the world in a safe space through art as a medium and language of communication. It can be argued that the arts are culturally appropriate because they are universal, inherent to every culture in the world. As noted by the students they felt left out as a result of their racial status. The belief that differences between skin colours are ethnically driven implies that such inconsistency is essentially fixed. These essentialist beliefs lead to the categorisation of people [students in this case] into groups based on assumptions that surface characteristics reflect deeper essential features. Existing definitions of racism focus on a mix of prejudice, power, ideology, stereotypes, domination, disparities and/or unequal treatment. ‘Race’ according to Loury, is a social phenomenon that results from the combination of two processes; categorisation and signification (Loury 2003:334). Categorisation involves the sorting of people into cognitively, manageable number of subgroups. Race, he, contends is why people take note of and assign significance to the skin colour, hair texture and bone structure of the human beings. Berman (2008:216) defines racism as the “the definitive attribution of inferiority to a particular racial ethnic group and the use of this principle is to propagate and to justify the unequal treatment of the group”. Berman contends that through racist ideology, social reality is distorted, obscured and clouded by dominant social groups who have an interest in hiding the exploitative nature of their relations with other groups. In Taung racism is not about black versus white, but a social system involving ethno racial categories and some form of hierarchy that produce disparities in life changes between different tribes as a result of their skin complexion.

### **5.3 Discrimination**

Using the case study drawn from Taung Junior Secondary School, this section illustrates not only that all societies are diverse but also that they vary significantly in the ways their diversities play out. This study’s intention was to find ways to create an open space in which students conceptualise and negotiate their dynamic diversities through art. Discrimination was identified as the second theme and the sub-themes 5.3.1) Stereotyping and Stigma, 5.3.2) Feelings of discomfort and feelings of outcast, and 5.3.3) Othering / Marginalisation will be discussed below.

### 5.3.1 Stereotyping and Stigma

Stereotypes and stigma is central to the formation of prejudice. Riley (2012:306) describes stigma as an “attitude that is deeply discrediting”. It is created by the initial recognition of differences based upon individuals’ distinct attributed characteristics and by the subsequent devaluation of that individual. Once stigmatised the individual is often treated as ‘less human’ and may be subjected to various levels of discrimination. Stigma is a social construct determined by the broader cultural context involving stereotypes. As noted by student S3,

*Other children who are Kalangas and Zimbabwean are really not comfortable because they do not come from Taung. They are really exposed to discrimination most of the times because of their skin colour. They feel uncomfortable when students accuse foreigners of being the ones stealing from them.*

Student S2 added that

*People think we practice early and forced marriages but truly this was done in the past, nowadays is not like that. People see us as very ugly people than other ethnic groups but this is not true because there are some people who are uglier than Bashona<sup>17</sup>. Some think that Bashona are dirty people but this can be because of personal hygiene of an individual, not all Bashona are dirty. But some Bashona think that Batswana are the most witchcraft than any other people but I know this is not true because some Batswana are not witchcrafts their attitude about this witchcraft is that even if they stole a small thing or insult a Motswana and is disappointed, he/she may bewitch you.*

Student M2 could not hide his sentiments about Zimbabweans and how they are perceived in Botswana alongside the Bazezuru people,

*Mme I’m sorry to say this, I’m just saying what is said; they say maZimbabwe smell. If they pass next to you, you can smell them they have their own smell most of them...not you madam you are not one of them. It doesn’t suite you.*

### 5.3.2 Feelings of discomfort and feelings of being an outcast

Mainstream education has distinct ways of arranging, utilising and transmitting knowledge to students, generally based within the framework of a dominant culture. In mainstream education settings, students are expected to “...abandon their style of speech and learning and conform to the ‘correct’ language and culture” (Vang 2006: 24). What this implies is that if students are to have any chance of succeeding in their education, they must take on another identity one that is academically

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<sup>17</sup> Bashona are popularly referred to as Bazezuru in Botswana. They are one of the minority tribes. They speak Shona or isiNdebele, which are similar to that which is spoken in Zimbabwe.

attuned, and aligned with the values and practices of mainstream society, sometimes different from their own.

Student M1 explained that

*The Zimbabwean students sometimes fell uncomfortable about some topics in certain subjects. For example in Social studies there is a topic about population growth and in one of the subtopics it talks about how foreigners can be blamed for certain activities such as crime. These issues make these children uncomfortable as the students in their class may defend these Zimbabweans while the others would say that these foreigners would commit these criminal activities. This makes the child uncomfortable and he/she may request to be excused from the lesson*

Student F3 wanted to stress how uncomfortable she was by saying.

*Today it is the day that I want to explain about the difference between Zimbabwean in Botswana. I came here last year in June in Botswana. This year 2014 I came to Taung Junior Secondary School. I was very scared because there was no one that I know in Taung Junior Secondary School. When you are Zimbabwean in another country you will be very uncomfortable because you don't know the way that they live, their lifestyle. As me my side I feel so lost and out of place because of the way they treat us it is not fair. I will have that feeling that as Zimbabweans we are not free*

As for student F2 she added that

*There were times when I spoke Setswana I would not pronounce some of the words correctly. Some students would tease me this made me feel I did not belong and sometimes made me cry or feel unwanted. I decided to speak English most of the time even though some people would tell me to speak Setswana if I wanted to speak to them*

While S3 confided that

*At home I always sat down and wondered why I was brought in the world as a Moshona person. I always asked myself where I had gone wrong for me to be a Shona.*

For most students it was about what their fellow students said that made them uncomfortable but for student K1

*Many teachers of this school they never talk to me nicely like a person who has feelings. Since I came to school here I told my mother but she never listened to me and now someone is making me suffer in this school even my friends had made me suffer.*



### 5.3.3 Othering / Marginalisation

Marginalisation is a process of becoming or being made marginal to centers of power, social standings or dominant discourses (Kridel 2010:557).

Student S3 had this to say,

*Since form 1 I haven't been so comfortable in this school because of some people who used to discriminate me. I was in 1A class which was always the best class in school and most teachers who transferred in wanted to teach the class. There were a few Tswana girls who always discriminated me; who always told me how they wish this 'Mozezuru' wasn't in their class.*

Student T1 added

*Most times, students in our class would talk about Zimbabweans and they would rather look at me or Nyasha\*<sup>18</sup> and I would know that they are talking about the foreigners*

For Nyasha and student T1, because of their tribes, and colour skin students assume that because they come from up north, they are associated with foreigners especially Zimbabweans.

Despite student F1 seemingly looking to have adjusted well she said,

*Botswana is a good country, but the children of Botswana are disrespectful. Since all the schools I went to, they do not respect other children. They broke our hearts this is what we call it xenophobia. All Batswana students never liked me; I think I have to transfer to a boarding school in Zimbabwe. Right now I am on my own and I will be always on my own.*

Student M1 summed up with,

*Balete students live well in school while the Shona, Kalanga and foreign students never settle well in school since they are victims of discrimination*

### 5.3.4 Discussion

According to Moore (2006:36), “stereotypes—the tendency to categorize individuals or groups according to an oversimplified standardized image and attribute certain characteristics to all members of the group—are central to the formation of bias and the pervasive acts of violence, segregation, and discrimination directed against minority groups (Collins 2000; Kaplan 2004; Walker 2005)”. Writing from the perspective of critical theory and critical pedagogy, Freire (1970/1998:60) describes the nature of social justice education as “a process of humanisation” whereby authentic liberation “is

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<sup>18</sup> \*Not her real name

praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it". As student S3 said,

*I learnt how to accept myself and overcome situations like this. I turned from being a lonely quiet person to being a talkative person. My classmates realised that I was now standing up for myself. I then gained control of my life and started accepting who I am because there was nothing I could change now as I am who I am. When the girls always said "I don't like these Zezurus, makwerekwere" I only told them that they should start living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and back off our lives by minding their own business. One day I would ask if they are really willing to reach Vision 2016 and do what the pillars require them to have; if they are still discriminating by now. Nowadays I am free to do whatever I want without them saying what they want. I have now gained the freedom even though there are still some Tswanas who are still living in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

Her work tackled stigmas and stereotypes which challenge how Mashona are viewed Fig 2 below.



**Figure 2. Lino print Student S3.**

It assisted students to engage in self-reflections about their own biases and develop respect for the differences, and the willingness to approach schooling from a multicultural perspective. This can be a powerful tool to enhance their ability to embrace and affirm diversity of other students. For student S3 she decided to stand for her rights and not believe what other students said about her when she had to discuss her art work and what it meant to her. In other words, the act of education worked as a practice of investigating and deconstructing the world around us, with the aim of rebuilding it in such a way that all people can have equal access to their full human potential. The conception of education

as offered by Freire<sup>19</sup> can help to understand the world we live in and can make people better prepared to transform it. Art can be an especially effective catalyst for developing a critical awareness of issues of race, discrimination, difference, and privilege. The social margins result from encounters across differences between in terms of race, language, ethnicity and nationality to name a few. In this context the study revealed that art questions our actions and motives and their moral contexts. As a school community it showed that we are struggling with a contested multiculturalism having diversity tribes who have been dominated and marginalised by the majority Setswana speaking tribes. The first challenge is to overcome existing stereotypes potentially held by both students and teachers. Overt racist beliefs are likely to arise at some point during classroom interactions. Challenging stereotypical statements and prejudiced or racist ideology will dispel misperceptions as well as allow minority students to feel respected and valued. Efforts to establish an atmosphere in which every student feels comfortable voicing his or her opinion is an important prerequisite for discussing stereotypical beliefs and racist ideology (Schoem, Frankel, Zuniga, & Lewis, 1993). Given the existence of negative and culturally shared stereotypes about intellectual ability, educators must work to minimize the conditions leading to stereotype threat. Some of the participants felt that the teachers made the situation worse especially when they endorsed some of these words or name calling towards the minority students. As noted above by the students teachers encouraged the labels and stigmas upon the minority when they assumed that some of these dark skinned students were *makwerekwere* or non-Batswana despite being in the Setswana classes. Understanding the differences in culture and language and how these differences affect children's learning could help teachers understand or establish effective strategies to improve the social and academic achievement of their students. Embracing and affirming diversity implies equal opportunities for all students to learn in a safe and conducive environment. Additionally, a student from any racial or cultural background can excel if challenged with high expectations and provided with the best opportunities and appropriate tools to achieve.

Thus combating stereotypes and stigmas requires empowering students and teachers to contribute to constructing a school environment that is culturally more inclusive and socially accepting. The inflexibility of conventional education structures to accommodate alternative student experiences does little to improve overall outcomes in Taung Junior Secondary School. This system potentially threatens the cultural identities of minority learners. Attention is also paid to the shades of skin colour. The idea that foreigners, Bazezuru and Bakalaka are 'too dark' or 'too black' is part of the collective Botswana fantastic imagination. So is the idea that 'they dress funny' or 'very bright' or 'they are ugly' (**Figure 2 above**). Students like Nyasha as mentioned by the participants endure the constant labelling or stigma due to their physical appearance and the teachers do not make it any easier for

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<sup>19</sup> In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire contends that words contain both reflection and action.

them. It is therefore the function of art to disturb, in the productive sense, to provide a counter story to the dominant story, to gnaw away at the foundations of the status quo.

## 5.4 Conclusion

Identity construction by dominant cultural orders is a complex set of historical processes as that which works to devalue and marginalise those orders. This study explored ways to open up a space to negotiate such orders as marginalisation, stereotypes and stigmas within the spaces of learning at Taung Junior Secondary School. It was aimed at helping students to develop an understanding and acceptance of others who are different from them. Through the verbal utterances from the students, the study highlighted a major part of identity formation occurs through the institutionalisation, formal and informal of essential functions, as Kling (2001:146) asserts, “this serves as sites both of group affirmation and of resistance against the impress of hegemonic orders and values”.

Art in this case has tremendous potential to develop students’ intellectual competences and offer opportunities for perceiving alternative ways to critically consider assumptions on issues of race, difference and discrimination. Knight notes that “some contemporary artists recast stereotypes and images from visual culture in order to shake up our conventional views of things” (cited in Graham 2009:156). The students managed to discuss a variety of issues they were brainstorming on ideas of their art project under the Emerging Issues module. The themes of difference and discrimination were discussed. By linking art-making to student experiences that are personal and meaningful, learning became a process that was active, purposeful and critical. As student S2 noted when they were discussing, a linoleum block print on paper **Figure 2 (above)**.

The mosaic piece **Figure 1** above as opened up a discussion on what languages people must speak and why. The students addressed the issues of language, race, citizenship and belonging as the owner \*Nyasha<sup>20</sup> described what the different colours stood for. Language issues were tied with culture and heritage, and these were discussed in the process of producing art works. This is so because students cannot be sensitised to the existence of people who are not like them by merely being told to like others. Attitudes are hard to change; one must break down barriers of prejudice. Art can develop understandings by depicting experiences that are common to all, by reflecting things that make each cultural group special.

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<sup>20</sup> \*Not her real name

## Chapter 6: Conclusions and Implications

### 6.1 Introduction

This research study was mainly concerned with the experiences of the marginalised students at Taung Junior Secondary School and how they negotiate labelling within spaces of learning. Reference was made to the research question: What are the reactions of students to a project that, through the process of art making, aimed to create a safe space to openly engage in dialogue about stereotypes, labelling and stigmas experienced in Taung? One major challenge at Taung Junior Secondary School is the denial by the school authority of the existence of and cases that arise as a result of diverse cultural beliefs and identities.

### 6.2 Conclusions and Implications

Based on the case study drawn from Taung Junior Secondary School, the data captured through the reflections, semi structured interviews and discussions held as students worked on their art projects, two themes and five sub-themes were identified. The first theme was Difference and identity and the sub-themes included: Language, race and ethnicity and Nationality. The second theme identified was Discrimination with stereotypes and stigma, feeling of discomfort and outcast as well as marginalisation /Othering as its sub-themes within spaces of learning.

I share a philosophy that a school system, especially the classroom, must provide the space for each learner to understand both his/her privileges and oppression and to develop effective oppositional resistance to domination. It encourages a negotiation within education which helps shape the way students and teachers discuss some of the fundamental issues in pedagogy. In this context, I am aware that anti-colonial education continually meets with open resistance - such as denial of difference - that provides the context for power and domination in our society.

It is evident from the research that some of our students experience many difficulties. The accounts of stereotyping and prejudice emphasised here may be a more common result of group interaction and lack of acknowledging that different cultures exist in modern diverse classrooms and teachers need to provide the necessary accommodations for those differences. In order to free the students from being discriminated against due to their background, the school needs to develop methods through which teachers and pupils open up the critical consciousness<sup>21</sup> of the affected students -both those discriminated against and those discriminating- to bring out common themes from the diverse groups viewing education as a political act transforming schools towards pursuing social justice. I argue that through art-making processes students can gain experiences, contexts, and tools through which to learn about difference; broaden their worldview, form bridges that cross racial and ethnic lines, creates a special and almost sacred learning space, and taps into multiple ways of learning and

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<sup>21</sup> Freire's critical liberatory pedagogy enables students and teachers to develop a critically conscious understanding of their relationship to the world.

knowing. I contend that arts participation is an underused way of coming to know and value the diversity in our complex, interrelated, and changing world where art is given as an optional subject to the students. I am aware that it is an expensive subject, but fundraising avenues can be organised to assist with funds.

The study revealed that, understanding the differences in culture and language and how these differences affect children's learning can help teachers understand or establish effective strategies to improve the social and academic achievement of their students. Diversity is valuable because it empowers teachers and students; decreases stereotypes, prejudice, and racism and generally promotes equity and social justice. As such teachers' understanding of the cultural context of children's behaviour and the explicit teaching of classroom rules such as respect for other cultures and people allows a student who is culturally diverse a successful transition from home to school culture. As students revealed language and dialects are fundamental components of culture that should also be supported by the education system. The multicultural and linguistic diversity of Taung School compels us to view every group as heterogeneously unique and important in its own ways. The challenge is to create learning opportunities that will allow students to gain understanding and appreciation of the differences among the people who are in their midst.

The Botswana education system should move beyond the homogenous-thinking doctrine that everybody can learn the same through the use of Setswana and English, and embark on a more pragmatic and identity-friendly dimension, whereby the teaching-learning experiences could be designed such that they promote and respect our complex diverse cultural identities. Introduction of cultural clubs, culture day in the school can be one effective way to ensure that diversity is catered for. Allowing students to converse in their ethnic languages on selected days or lunch break could be another way to foster unity amongst the students at Taung and possibly Botswana as each school in our country has a diverse pool of students as us. I am of the opinion that these issues are not unique to Taung as such may multiculturalism education needs to be emphasized from training institutions as most teachers are not fully equipped to handle multicultural diverse classes. There is a lack of understanding that we are citizens of multiple communities, local, national and global. We have a challenge of getting the school educators to acquire skills to teach students to appreciate multiple points of views and recognise stereotyping. There is a lack -by both students and teachers -to appreciate the interconnectedness and interdependence of people, to respect and other tribes that are not considered as majority protect cultural diversity as evidenced by the way specific derogative speeches are carelessly thrown around. We need to prepare students to become critically conscious, active citizens aware of socio-political contexts within which they live and work. I believe it is our responsibility to provide ample opportunities for students to experience and develop commitment to more critical understandings of diversity.

Art as another way of knowing allowed the students to move out of their comfort zone and learn to view the world through multiple frames of reference. It became an effective way for them to understand and appreciate differences among people. The creation of a work of art allowed students to develop their own vision and personal voice in a visual language that allowed for enormous departure and creative responses. This could demonstrate how the making of art could be a powerful way to engender understanding and intercultural dialogue, and engage students in critical thinking about cultural assumptions and diversity. The project generated spaces for students with different backgrounds to tell their stories and a context for other students to hear their stories. In the process, both the students and myself were changed, becoming more knowledgeable about the complexities of culture and hybrid culture, more culturally competent and sensitive, more willing to consider another person's viewpoint, and more appreciative of the richness of their community. The project gave direct simple clues on how meaning is constructed through familiar symbols and visual imagery. Art making process assisted in exploring the taken for granted status of ethnic categorisation in contemporary society. Art in this case contributed to the global conversation.

Such a process will require unlearning all the myths of superiority and inferiority deeply ingrained in most students through holding culture days in which different tribes dress and or bring their cultural artefacts to share with the rest. This can show students how to engage in social analysis, examining art as a mode of communication about issues and concerns of diverse communities and of compelling interest of young people. Education in this instance becomes self-reflexive as students become aware of their role as cultural interpreters and ethical and social responsibilities accompanying that role.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Institutional Permission



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Consent form **TAUNG JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL**

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#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

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Consent form Taung Junior Secondary School, Taung, Botswana

Title of study: **When Art informs: A case study to negotiate social stereotypes and stigmas through Art at Taung JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL**

The Art Department students are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Donlisha Moahi, for a Masters in Curriculum Studies at the Visual Arts Department at Stellenbosch University.

#### **Students**

Were selected as possible participant in this study because this research focuses on expectations and perceptions of power relations in the Emerging Issues module that is offered as part of Art Craft and Design course.

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

To explore ways to encourage students to connect meaningfully to an unfamiliar topics and visual thinking strategies for expressing understandings of complex issues such as stereotypes, culture and citizenship through art making.

#### **2. PROCEDURES**

The students participating in this study will be asked to do the following things:

Participate in semi-structured interviews about their experience at Taung Junior Secondary School and the expectations and perceptions of power relations.

Discussions during classes will only take place if all students agree to participate.

Interviews will take place in the Art Studio at Taung JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL.

### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

I do not foresee any concrete risks to participants but it is true that the researcher is in a power position that may be influenced by what students say in interviews. This is something that I will be very aware of, and I will try my best not to be influenced by the responses from participants that may influence their course work or relationships in the department. The power position and relation of the teacher (researcher) and student, student and student will also be an aspect that I will address as a critical issue in my studies.

When sensitive issues are discussed, there is a risk of uncontained emotions. I have asked for the Guidance and Counselling Teacher to assist me in class situations, in case any participant would like to have follow-up sessions with a Counsellor.

### **4. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participants will not receive payment for participating.

### **5. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you as participant will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of keeping all written notes and voice recordings safe in a locked drawer in my house. I am the only person who has access to the keys for the drawer. Any participant may request to look at the notes or listen to the voice recordings of their individual contributions at any stage. Participants may review or edit any information mentioned in interviews or observation sessions.

Results will be reported in the Master's thesis, but any student may decide to edit or review their comments at any time before it is published. The publishing date will be made available to all participants and a suitable time frame will be allowed for responses. Information will be erased when the Masters study is published.

The students who contribute to the research will be briefed, and their participation is voluntary. All students will be informed of the action and be free to withdraw from the class during observation sessions without any consequences regarding their course or relationships with teacher, the Arts Department or Taung JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL.

To protect the identities of participants, I will not reveal any names. The information provided by students will be kept confidential. Information about participants will not be shared with other lecturers.

### **6. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

The students may choose whether to participate in this study or not. If they volunteer to be a part of this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. They may also refuse to answer any questions they don't want to answer and still remain part of the study. The investigator may withdraw them from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

### **7. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Donlisha Moahi, at +267 71203062 or at work +267 5390114, Taung Junior Secondary School, Ramotswa; or the

supervisor, Dr Elmarie Costandius at +27 825109790 or at work +27 21 8083053, Visual Arts Department office 2023, Victoria Street, Stellenbosch..

## 8. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

**SIGNATURE OF SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

School Representative

The information above was described to me by Donlisha Moahi in English and I am in command of this language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent for the school to participate in this study.

I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of School Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to the School representative

\_\_\_\_\_ [name of the representative]. [He/she] was encouraged and

given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and no translator was used.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix B: Consent Forms (Students)

### Consent form (Students)



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#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

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### Consent form for Taung Junior Secondary School learners.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Donlisha Moahi, for a MA in Visual Arts Department at Stellenbosch University.

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**Title of study: When Art informs: A case study to negotiate social stereotypes and stigmas through Art at Taung Junior Secondary School.**

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#### 9. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To explore visual art as a learning platform to negotiate social and cultural meanings and inform understandings of self.

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#### 10. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in art project making



2. Semi-structured interviews that will take between 10 – 20 minutes.
3. Interviews will take place at the Taung Junior Secondary.
4. Write reflections.

**5. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

I do not foresee any concrete risks to participants.

---

**6. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

Participants will not benefit from the participation.

---

**7. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participants will not receive payment for participating.

---

**8. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that could be identified with you as participant will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of keeping all written notes safe in a locked drawer in my house. I am the only person who has access to the keys for the drawer. Any participant may request to look at the notes or listen to the voice recordings of their individual contributions at any stage. Participants may review or edit any information mentioned in interviews or observation sessions.

Results will be reported in the Masters study but any learner may decide to edit or review their comments at any time before it is published. The date of publishing will be made available to all participants and a suitable time frame will be allowed for responses. Information will be erased when the Masters study is published.

The learners will be briefed, and their participation is voluntary. All students will be informed of the action and be free to withdraw without any consequences regarding their relationships with the Arts Department.

To protect the identities of participants, I will not reveal any names. The information provided by learners will be kept confidential.

---

## 9. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You may choose whether to participate in this study or not. If you volunteer to be a part of this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain part of the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

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## 10. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Donlisha Moahi, at +267 71203062 or at work +267 5390114, Taung Junior Secondary School, Ramotswa; or the supervisor, Dr Elmarie Costandius at +27 825109790 or at work +27 21 8083053, Visual Arts Department office 2023, Victoria Street, Stellenbosch.

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## 11. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Maryke Hunter-Hüsselmann (mh3@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4623) at the Division for Research Development.

<b>SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE</b>
--

The information above was described to me by Donlisha Moahi in English. I am in command of this languages or it was satisfactorily described to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this form.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent / Legal Representative (if applicable)**

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant / Parent or Legal Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_ [name of the participant] and/or [his/her] representative \_\_\_\_\_ [name of the representative]. [He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and no translator was used.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix C: Citizenship Project



Figure 1 Mosaic Student M1



Figure 2 Lino Print Student S3



Figure 3 Mosaic Student M2



Figure 4 Montage Student S1



Figure 5 Mosaic Student S2



Figure 6 Photo montage Student F3



Figure 7 Photo montage Student G1



Figure 8 Montage Student F2



Figure 9 Paper weave Student T1



Figure 10. Collage Student K1





Figure 11 Collage Student F1



Figure 12 Collage Student M3