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UMI®
AN ETHNOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF THE METHODS
OF DEVELOPING THE TRADITIONAL VISUAL ARTS:
STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE INCOMES OF
TRADITIONAL ARTISTS IN GHANA.

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of
The Ohio State University

By

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The Ohio State University
2001

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographical study explores the socioeconomic relevance of the traditional visual arts to the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages. Open-ended questions, photographing, and archival research guided the study to ascertain: (i) whether the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages have technical and managerial skills related to their traditional visual arts occupations, (ii) whether they have developed any strategies for coping with their production and marketing problems; (iii) whether this form of occupation is one of their main source of livelihood; (iv) whether they are developing a business or they just want to maintain tradition, (v) whether government and non-governmental (NGOs) arts support agencies play any role in the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts; and (vi) under which conditions could the success stories of Central and Latin America be applied to Ghana.

The participants in this study were 80 male and female active traditional visual artists comprising of individuals, families, work groups and cooperatives. Officials and three art support agencies were also intensively interviewed.
Findings of the study revealed that the level of production of traditional visual artists in Kumasi and surrounding villages is low due to a low level of investment capital, inadequate marketing opportunities, and lack of government support programs. Also, the data revealed that increase in production could generate more income for the artists and improve their livelihood. In addition, there is a need for the establishment of an independent organization to be solely responsible for the development, preservation, promotion, and marketing of the traditional visual arts.

This study provides support strategies for all stakeholders who are responsible for the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts in Ghana. It also contributes useful insights for the development of the traditional visual arts industry as a means of livelihood not only for the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages, but also other rural communities in Africa. In addition, this study provides useful data for individuals and institutions that are interested in setting up small-scale rural cottage industries. Finally, this study provides data for future studies for those interested in the maintenance and preservation of art traditions, and for further research.
Dedicated To my Spouse,
Helen and children
Eunice, Portia, Stephen, and Emmanuel
(All Rights Reserved)
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To my wife, Helen, I offer my sincere thanks for her unshakable faith in me, and her willingness to endure the difficulties of our long struggle. To my children, Eunice, Portia, Stephen (Kojo I) and Emmanuel (Kojo II), I thank you for enduring my long absence from you.

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PUBLICATIONS


FIELDS OF STUDY

MAJOR FIELD: ART EDUCATION
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"A people's expressive culture which is the heart of the folklore has a profound significance. It is a powerful statement of what is deeply felt and what gives meaning to people's lives. If it flourishes so does their way of life. Being poor does not mean being culturally impoverished. Development programs that build on cultural traditions are more likely to succeed. Thus, tradition, culture and socioeconomic development need not be opposing processes. Rather, they can be facets of integral processes by which human beings confront, interpret, and ultimately transform their reality" (Kleymeyer, 1994 p. 18).

There is such a worldwide market for ethnic goods, particularly traditional visual arts that some community development-oriented non-governmental organizations (NGOs), artists, craft persons and cultural experts see it as a possible strategy for rural development. This group of experts argues that the traditional arts can revive traditional arts practices, ceremonies, ethnic values, and generate a modest income for rural people (Jules-Rosette, 1989;
Kleymeyer, 1994; Leon, 1987;). Traditional visual artists act as custodians and social commentators of culture and tradition. Therefore, if they cannot make a decent living from their works and are not respected in their communities, their offspring cannot be attracted into the occupation. When the traditional visual arts tradition of any society dies, that society loses a very important bond with the past and a portion of its identity (Goff, 1994).

Traditional or ethnic arts are produced throughout the world but their volume and economic significance differ greatly from country to country. According to Jules-Rosette (1984), trade in traditional visual arts is now a multi-million-dollar industry and the U.S. alone accounts for nearly $2.6 billion worth of the imports of these traditional crafts. About 37% of the total craft trade originates from the Third World.

The Solomon Islands sells only $250,000 worth of traditional crafts each year. Although this constitute a mere $1 per inhabitant, some artists earn as much as $200 to $250 per month (Cultural Quarterly, Vol. 4. 1982). In Barbados, few traditional crafts are exported, yet annual sales to tourists and residents accounts for nearly $6 million. Asia dominates the export market. In Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore alone over one million people earn a total income of about $100 million from crafts through yearly exports (Cultural Quarterly, Vol. 4. 1982).
Craft production is expanding at about 20% annually in Kenya, where woodcarvings alone contribute about $3 million annually. Nearly 35,000 Kenyans are employed in the wood carving industry. Production is for principal markets such as the U.S. (60%), West Germany (11%), Britain (9%), Japan (5%), and France (5%) (Cultural Quarterly, Vol. 4. 1982). In Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, about 20% of the population supplement their incomes from traditional crafts (Braufman, 1987).

According to Phillips (1996), the traditional arts industry in Ghana, which reaped just $30,000 in export earnings in 1986, generated over $2 million in overseas sales in 1995. This figure continues to increase. Significantly, the bulk of revenue generated through these exports does not provide socioeconomic improvement in the lives of traditional artists. Instead, the middlemen and private entrepreneurs are those who benefit most.

The Purpose of the Study

This is an ethnographical study to explore the socioeconomic and cultural relevance of traditional visual arts as a source of livelihood to traditional visual artists in Kumasi and five surrounding rural villages in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Ethnography is the scientific study of societies. According to Chambers (1989), decision-makers have come to acknowledge the fact that some types of information and insight can only be obtained from first-hand experience.
Also, that studying reports and figures cannot be a good substitute for getting into the field. Reasons for this empirical research was therefore based on the following: First, is it about a particular culture, and second ethnographical method of data collection was employed for this study. It can be argued that ethnography has the potential to mediate understanding and solving essential points of cultural conflicts by explaining the occurrence and misunderstanding, and providing clues to their resolution (Chambers, 1989). That is, ethnography does not only give a vivid description of a phenomenon, but attempts to transcend beyond by providing a basis for new understanding. Primarily, this study focused on the production and marketing strategies that are necessary to improve the socioeconomic lives of traditional visual artists.

**Statement of the Problem**

Socioeconomic conditions of most rural communities in developing countries are not encouraging; therefore, traditional visual arts constitute one of the economic activities through which some income is derived for the livelihood of the rural people. There are three categories of traditional visual arts in Ghana. These are: (i) objects that function in various religious rites and ceremonies within the society, (ii) objects used in everyday life, and (iii) objects produced for tourist market. The subjects of focus in this study were those in category (i) and
These traditional visual arts include objects like pottery, woodcarving, straw works, kente weaving, leather works, beads, etc. which are produced with local raw materials by an artist or a group of artists working together in a guild. Odita (1966 & 1991) describes these traditional visual arts as crafts which indigenous artists produce and sell to make a living.

Over the past decades, while government officials, rural development experts, artists and non-governmental organizations have extolled the traditional visual arts as a potential activity for economic and cultural development, some anthropologists and cultural experts have opposed this view (Graburn, 1976; Steiner, 1994). These schools of thought argue that the traditional visual artists would lose their craftsmanship when traditional arts are commercialized. In addition, traditions and socio-cultural values in these societies would be completely lost. Supporters of traditional visual arts "economic boom" however, maintain that when strategic plans are implemented to develop the traditional visual arts, it would provide a sustainable means of livelihood for the rural people (Stephen, 1987). In addition, it would alleviate poverty in the rural communities, as well as preserve and promote the cultural heritage (Kleymeyer, 1994; Braufman, 1989; Leon; Stephen, 1987).

This study deals with the problems concerning the livelihood of people in rural settings for two main reasons. First, it examines problems of people in the
business of production of indigenous crafts as a potential means of livelihood. Second, it examines the problems that undermine the traditions of craftsmanship, which is also part of the living and breathing culture of a society. Yet, no one has looked at these problems at the level of the producers themselves. If our traditional visual artists cannot make a living from their works, they cannot enjoy the respect of their community. In addition, the economic and socio-cultural values of these cultural expressions in rural communities and the country at large could possibly be lost.

In Ghana, the problems of traditional visual artists revolve around low inadequate capital investment and marketing opportunities. Artists have very low investment capital and therefore are unable to maintain an appreciable level of production in order to make a decent living. Also, artists are unable to market their products without the help of middlemen. Consequently, they cannot maximize the income from the sale of their works.

In addition, traditional visual artists cannot attract loans, or short-term credit from commercial banks; neither have they embraced the "Susu" credit scheme (the indigenous credit unions through which most micro enterprises generate working capital). According to the artists, their products, unlike foodstuffs and clothing, do not have quick and high turnover in sales to enable them to generate substantial working capital. The artists are unorganized, and cut off from national and international markets. Also, they have not been able to
form strong and dedicated unions that would enable them as a collective body, to enjoy the economies of scale of their production.

Another problem is the indifferent attitude of macro economic planners who see no need for the development of this rural occupation as a means of livelihood in rural communities. There are also not enough government support mechanisms and programs for traditional visual artists to advance in these occupations. Traditional visual artists have therefore become vulnerable to the exploits of middlemen, tourists and art collectors who buy their work at very low prices and resell them for phenomenally huge profits in local and foreign markets. As an artist, these problems generate a certain set of questions, which my research seeks to address:

Research Questions

This study will attempt to respond to the following questions:

1. Can the traditional visual arts be one of the many viable rural occupations of the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages in the Ashanti region of Ghana?

2. Are the traditional visual artists in Kumasi and surrounding villages engaged in the production of traditional visual arts because they want it to be a profitable business, or just want to maintain tradition?
3. What strategies have these rural artisans developed on their own to cope with the methods of production and marketing?

4. Do they have technical and entrepreneurial skills for the various aspect of the production?

5. What role do the arts support agencies (Government and Non-governmental, organizations (NGOs) play in the development of the traditional arts in Ghana?

6. Under what circumstances can the success stories and solutions of Latin and Central American traditional visual artists be compared to Ghana?

Research Population and Sample

The population from which this study was conducted was 100 active traditional visual artists who engage in the creation of traditional crafts as a means of livelihood. This comprises individuals, families, and cooperative work groups. From this population, the researcher randomly selected 80 participants comprising active male and female active traditional visual artists (Krejcie, Morgan, 1970). Selection of these participants had no statistical basis, but rather the number of years they have been engaged in this occupation, and their willingness to participate in this study (Kumar, Stern, et al., 1993). Since the
Results of this study are an aggregation of opinions, the researcher also
interviewed officials of the traditional visual art support agencies to help throw
more light on the subject under investigation.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for two reasons: First, it ascertained the
socioeconomic and cultural relevance of the traditional visual arts in Ghana.
Second, it investigated the role of traditional visual artists in the development of
Kumasi and its surrounding rural villages. The study determines whether or not
it would be feasible for government and non-governmental organizations
(NGOs) to set up support schemes that will promote the production of
traditional visual arts as a means of livelihood for rural people. It provides data
that can be used by policy makers and NGOs for the development of small-scale
rural art-based cottage industries in Ghana. It also provides valuable
information to agencies that are interested in the maintenance and preservation
of the traditional visual arts. In addition, it provides baseline data for future
research.

Assumptions of the Study

For the purpose of this study the researcher assumed that:

1. Traditional visual artists will be honest and accurate with their
   responses.
2. The traditional visual arts support agencies are reliable sources for assessing the support mechanisms for the development of the traditional visual arts in Ghana.

3. The aggregate responses from participants could provide a reasonable assessment of the socioeconomic and cultural relevance of the traditional visual arts to rural communities in Ghana.

Limitations and Scope of the Study

In order to make this study manageable, the following limitations were adopted:

1. The study was limited to traditional visual artists in Kumasi and surrounding rural villages.

2. The sample population was limited to traditional artists and did not include vendors.

3. The findings are limited by the time of the study.

4. The findings are limited to perceptions and honesty of the informants and the researcher.

5. The researcher does not dispute any margin of error in estimating the exactness of his data.

6. The results of the study are limited to the validity and reliability of the research questionnaire.
Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter two of the study provides a historical review of commercialization of the traditional visual arts from pre-colonial times to present day. This historical overview attempts to counteract notions from schools of thought that commercialization of the traditional arts would necessarily lead to a deterioration of the quality of the works, and values of society. The chapter also reviews the research problem. Chapter three discusses the conceptual framework and the paradigm of the study. Chapter four provides the results of the fieldwork. It also includes the research design and method of data collection. In addition, this chapter discusses the method of data analysis and findings, and addresses the research questions. Also, the findings in this chapter are used to concretize the conceptual framework in of study. Finally, Chapter five summaries the entire study and recommends a model solution to the problems of the research.
CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE TRADITIONAL VISUAL ARTS TRADE IN GHANA.

Introduction

Commercialization\(^1\) of traditional arts in many cultures around the world has been an issue of concern for some cultural anthropologists. Their concern is due to the fear of a possible upsurge of poor quality of these creative cultural expressions, and deterioration of the people's culture. Other schools of thought also argue that the traditional visual arts could become a major source of livelihood for rural people. Some government policy makers and political lobbyists support this view. The supporters, some of who are rural sociologists and community and cultural development experts, assert that the commercialization of the traditional arts can bring about the development of new products. It would give the people a sense of inclusion, and provide an income for their livelihood.

\(^1\) Commercialization or commoditization refers to medium or large-scale production of traditional visual arts in exchange for money.
he purpose of this chapter is to give a historical account of the commercialization of the traditional arts during the ancient Ashanti kingdom of Ghana. Trade in traditional crafts as an economic activity began long before Ghana had contacts with the outside world, although it might not have been on such a skyrocketing scale as we find in contemporary times. This historical backdrop challenges the by some cultural anthropologists that the present commercialization of traditional crafts is a Euro-American machination aimed at exploiting these societies economically, and to destroy their cultural expressions and societal values. The writer’s overall objective in this study is to ascertain the socioeconomic viability of the traditional visual arts and explore how it could be developed as a means of livelihood for the people of Kumasi and some surrounding villages.

The Traditional Visual Art Market in Ghana: The Pre-colonial Period

It will be very difficult to discuss the traditional visual arts of Ghana without mentioning developments of traditional art expressions in other West Africa countries, particularly neighboring Nigeria, Benin, Togo, la Cote D’ivoire and Burkina Faso. This is because these countries not only share political boundaries but are also connected culturally.

Steiner (1994) traces the history of the art trade in West Africa to the period of colonialism, particularly during the first two decades of the twentieth
century with the principal entry ports being Abidjan and Dakar (in Francophone West Africa). Within these countries, principal merchants came from three major ethnic groups, the Woloff of the Senegal, the Hausa of Nigeria, and the Mende of Sierra Leone. There were also other ethnic groups from Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso and la Cote D’ivoire. These ethnic groups have historical links to the spread of mercantile capitalism in West Africa and have been responsible for the formation of cross-cultural trading throughout the region (Steiner, 1994).

According to Anquandah\(^1\) (1997), there are no written historical records of commercialization of the traditional visual arts from ancient times. However, oral history, and 15\(^{th}\) and 16\(^{th}\) century AD carbon-dated materials found in some Akan settlements in Ghana provide evidence of women who were commissioned to make terra cotta figurines or busts called "Nsodia\(^2\)" of the deceased for funeral celebration. Also, oral history and archeological evidence show that in the 15\(^{th}\) century, Dangme\(^3\) settlements in the Accra plains subsisted on the production of pottery for sale in Accra, Tema and Akuapem in exchange for agricultural produce and fish (Anquandah, 1997).

Silver (1981) contends that the history of the traditional visual arts market in Ghana dates from the 17th century after the rebellion of the Ashantis\(^4\) and

---

\(^1\) James Anquandah is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Archaeology, University of Ghana, Legon. He is also the UNESCO expert on rehabilitation and restoration of all historical monuments in Ghana and other parts of West Africa.

\(^2\) These terra cotta busts or figurines (mostly produced by women) are used on the fortieth day to mourn the dead. During this occasion, a special meal of yam mixed with palm oil is prepared and placed on the tomb of the departed person as a sign of feeding him. Some Western historians allude that the practice was due to lack of photographic technology in the past. However, it is still practiced in this modern times (Rattray, 1927, Anquandah, 1997).

\(^3\) The Ga/Dangmes are one of the ethnic groups found in the southeastern and the Accra plains in Ghana.

\(^4\) Also See Appendix B on the History of the Ashantis.
other local chiefdoms against the Denkyira kingdom. The independence of the Ashantis together with its confederacy, against the Denkyira, resulted in a "strong and perfect union" which became the Ashanti Kingdom (Silver, 1981). A strong and elaborate ritual structure was developed to reinforce the political system. Subsequently, the king of the Ashanti (Asantihene) became the one who held exclusive rights to commission regalia, though he occasionally granted some privileges to some of his paramount chiefs (Silver, 1981). The items commissioned were the chief's staves for high-ranking court officials, stools, ornaments, umbrellas, and swords and these were usually designed with intricate symbolic motifs that has deep religious, historical, or proverbial significance. As the empire prospered, the Asantehene grew accustomed to commissioning these objects on a massive scale.

The village of Akuraa1 was founded in the early 19th century to accommodate the growing number of carvers needed to satisfy this burgeoning demand for regalia (Silver, 1976). These commissions monopolized the carver's productive time. On occasions when there were no commissions, carvers produced household items such as bowls, "oware" (game board), spoons, and combs, which they periodically transported to the local markets to sell to the public.

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1"Akuraa" is an Akan word which means village. The researcher is unaware of any village in the Ashanti region of Ghana with this name. However, it is his opinion that Silver (1976; 1981) during his research in Ghana might have heard the inhabitants at his research site repeatedly mention the word, which he mistakenly took for the name of a village. Several villages surround Kumasi and each is noted for its specialty in one or more traditional visual arts.
Artists had individual control over the secular goods they produced and derived full income from their sale. Thus, in the pre-colonial times, the demand for non-commercialization of regalia production caused individual carvers to unite under a leader's direction in order to meet massive commissions (Silver, 1981).

Vansina (1992) argues that the traditional visual art trade in West Africa dates further back to 750 AD during the Trans-Saharan trade several decades before Europeans set foot on the coast of West Africa. According to Vansina (1992), trading was not only limited to gold and slaves, but also ceramic wares and decorative textiles. Boahen and Ajayi (1986) also traced the traditional visual arts trade in West Africa to the period prior to and during the Trans-Saharan trade. Traders traveling from the Sahara region and North Africa along these routes exchanged goods such as glass-beads, bangles, earrings and clothing with gold, slaves and ivory with their counterparts from the forest regions.

The Colonial Period

Anquandah (2000) in his recent works argues that the archaeological excavations, carbon-dated materials, and oral history of the Edinas (people of Elmina) provide some evidence of commercialization of the traditional visual arts during European presence. The Portuguese were the first European settlers to arrive in the Gold Coast in 1492. Apart from their trading activities in gold,
tobacco, textiles, glass beads, rum and slaves, some archaeological and oral historical accounts show that the Edinas also exchanged their indigenous crafts with European settlers (Anquandah, 1997).

The British gained full control over Ghana (then named Gold Coast) after the conquest of the Ashantis in 1902. The reigning Asantehene at the time of the conquest, Nana Agyeman Prempeh, I was exiled to the Seychelles, (an island in the Indian Ocean also under British rule). The deportation of the King curtailed several traditional activities such as festivals, observance of special days and religious rituals during which regalia were used. As a result, the artists had no other means to earn their livelihood than to turn to the production of household items such as stools, fertility dolls (Akuaba), mortar and pestles, combs, etc, which they could sell to anyone to make a living.

Also, the British control of Ghana brought another outlet for the carvers' works. Carvers were encouraged to produce woodworks such as stools, "oware" game, walking sticks, traditional drums for local sales to the Ghanaian populace, the expatriate community and for export to Europe, particularly Great Britain. During this period, Rattray¹ (1923, 1927), also commissioned a number of carvers to produce a series of naturalistic carvings depicting the Ashanti chief and his court for the British Empire exhibition. This type of theme had never been treated in traditional woodcarving. Therefore, it can be argued that this era

¹ The author of Religion and Art of Ashanti was a British Naval Officer and the representative of Ashanti Province during the Colonial period.
not only marked the beginning of carvers selling their works to the general Ghanaian populace, but also the beginning of traditional visual artists working in European-influenced themes. Marketing during this period was done on an individual basis and included: (i) leaving one's goods on display near the workshops with the hope of attracting occasional buyers, (ii) carrying carvings to the local market, and (iii) selling to professional traders who resold artworks in the coastal towns and cities. Out of the three different marketing strategies, only the third option allowed for moderate sale volume since the first was limited by the scarcity of customers, and the second by the physical difficulties of carrying many goods to the market.

According to Silver (1987), the volume was decent and the successful carvers had the ability to foresee the trends and exploit them on individual basis. In addition, due to the lack of channels for direct distribution of their goods on a large scale, there was very little incentive for growth beyond the family units. Relatives, friends and apprentices who served as the producers, carried out the bulk of the production.

Steiner (1994) also attributed the rise in the art trade in West Africa during the colonial period to two developments in parts of the world that occurred at roughly the same time. The first was the discovery of African art at the turn of the century by European artists and intellectuals such as Matisse, Picasso,
Vlaminck and Apollinaire. The second was their interest in African forms and aesthetics which consequently stimulated a slow rising demand for African art in Europe.

The Post Independence Era

According to Manning (1988), increase in the West African art trade could be attributed to the French assimilation policy during the period of independence in most African countries. Within the French territories in West Africa, the colonial administrators granted special privileges to some of their loyal subjects. For instance in Senegal, men of the armed forces who fought for France during the World II were given social and political recognition in their society (Manning, 1988). This new form of transitional socio-political hierarchy which emerged during this period in the French West African countries, allowed members of certain ethnic groups (such as the Wolof of Senegal) to begin to feel recognized and included in French society (Challenor, 1979; Echenberg, 1991).

Under the protection of European colonial rule, these groups were able to travel throughout the West African region, and their encounter with European merchants brought a new market for each other's goods. Steiner (1994) explains that by the 1950s, African art traders in the French West African countries were regularly traveling to France to sell their objects to European-based art dealers and by the 1960s to the 1970s, the art market in West Africa had reach its boom.
As Nicholas Leman writes: "Not only had an extensive demand been created in Europe, but also the demand had reached the shores of America through the Peace Corps, the Civil Rights Movements, African Nationalism, and the beginning of mass tourism in West Africa, all increased American interest in African art" (Cited from Steiner, 1994 p. 26).

In Ghana, the post independence period of Kwame Nkrumah's government brought a lot of impetus into the production of traditional visual arts. Carvers were organized into cooperatives to market their goods on a massive scale. The ambitious among them were no longer content with merely producing carvings just to allow middlemen to exploit them their profits. The cooperatives sold directly to Ghanaians and foreign companies. Though the cooperative system failed due to mismanagement on the part of some of its leaders, many enterprising villagers began to open shops to sell crafts. Between 1960 and 1974, carvers and some businessmen in Kumasi and its surrounding villages opened several shops, and about 250 to 300 villagers lived full-time on carvings (Silver, 1984). This period also marked an increase in trade of the traditional visual arts in Ghana and across its frontiers (Rattray, 1923, 1927, Silver, 1948).

According to some analysts, the art trade in West Africa began to show a downward trend around the early 1960s during the period of de-colonization (Steiner, 1994). To these observers, many of the buyers and collectors had
become convinced that all the "genuine" African art (presumably the wooden face masks, and other religious objects), which attracted connoisseurs, were taken out of the continent. Steiner (1994) also asserts that in the mid-nineties, while the market in la Cote D'ivoire supported several hundred full-time traders and middlemen, the combined negative forces of diminishing supply and dwindling demand significantly reduced the scale of marketing of traditional visual art.

These historical accounts of Anquandah, (1997), Silver (1984), Jules Rossette (1984), Steiner (1994), Vansina (1992), Ajayi & Boahen (1986) and Rattray (1923, 1927), explicate the fact that traditional visual arts since ancient times were not only produced for ceremonial purposes, but there were also some commercialization or trade of both religious and non-religious objects within many African cultures. Marketing was however, not done on a large scale with its resultant exploitative problems as we observe today. However, one cannot overemphasize the fact that traditional visual arts in the past provided a form of subsistence to people in many parts of Africa where craft production and trade was a form of occupation for the people.

Marketing of the Traditional Visual Arts Today

The marketing of any product cannot be undertaken without the active participation of middlemen. Middlemen are agents who serve as intermediaries
between the producer and the consumer. In trade and commerce, there are two main types of middlemen. These are wholesalers and retailers. Wholesalers are individuals or corporate organizations that sell goods in large quantities to retailers for resale. They also have the storage facilities to store large quantities of goods over a period. A retailer is the one who sells in small quantities and directly to the final consumer. Similarly, there are several categories of middlemen in the traditional visual art market and each of these groups has their levels of involvement in the art trade. There is one group of middlemen who acts as wholesalers (suppliers) and buys the art works in bulk to supply the art vendors. Other middlemen described in this study as art vendors or retailers sell directly to buyers and collectors. There is a third group of middlemen, who are neither suppliers nor retailers, but act as intermediaries between wholesalers and retailers.

Steiner (1994) asserts that success of middlemen in the African art market as in many other large-scale enterprises in contemporary times depends upon the separation of producers from consumers. To maintain the distance between primary suppliers of art and their ultimate consumers middlemen erect social as well as legal and bureaucratic barriers. According to Jules-Rossette (1984), the producers and consumers of art live in quite different cultural worlds that
achieve rapprochement only through the immediacy of artistic exchange. The art vendor provides the linkages at crucial points in a series of cross-cultural exchanges.

Steiner’s (1994) explanation of the vendor fits Eric Wolf’s (1956) definition of the middleman, “a person who stands guard over the critical junctures or synapses of relationships. He is the mediator whose principal role is one limiting the access of the local people to the larger society (Silverman, 1965”. Cited in Steiner, 1994 pg. 131). The middleman’s creates a gap in communication, which must be well protected. As F. G. Bailey (1969) reiterates, "perfect communication would mean that the middleman is out of his job" (Cited in Steiner, 1994 pg. 131). However, in spite of the artificial barriers created by the middlemen, the sale of an African market product is determined by extensive bargaining.

Bargaining in the African Art Market

Steiner (1994) contends that the value of an individual art object in an African market can only be established through an extensive verbal bargaining and haggling over price. Wholesalers and retailers use bargaining as a mechanism both for buying objects from suppliers or vendors, and or for selling objects of workshop artists, collectors, dealers, tourists and other buyers.

According to Steiner (1994), the act of bargaining plays a very important role in the sale of a commodity. This phenomenon is generally found in
economies which are characterized by such features as flexible price policy, the
non-standardization of weights and measures, and the lack of a large scale
information network which serves to inform buyers and sellers about the current
trend in the demand and supply situation (Steiner, 1994). The bargaining process
in the art market follows many patterns found in other sectors of other African
market economies. This also shows the similarities to bargaining strategies
found in market economies in other parts of the world (Alexander and

The price of the object depends on such variable factors such as the source
of the object, the prevalent market conditions, the trader's current financial
situation, the time of the day during which the sale takes place, and the trader's
personal relationship with the buyer (Steiner, 1994). Through bargaining, art
vendors in general earn their living as middlemen, moving objects around
institutionalized obstacles, which in some cases, they have constructed in order
to restrict direct exchange (Steiner, 1994). For example, at the Accra Arts Center,
some vendors would hire one or two shop assistants and pay them a weekly
wage, a commission on sale, or sometimes just a lunchtime meal. Many of these
shop assistants are members of the art vendors' extended families who have
moved from the village, or have lost their jobs in the city and are looking for
temporary employment until they can find another one. Most often, they assume
full control over all sales and in a way, help vendors or shop owners avoid bargaining with prospective buyers or trading their wares with other vendors in the market.

The Credit System in the African Market

Unlike many other market systems in West Africa, the African art market is not structured around formal credit organizations, or marketing cooperatives that advance business capital to their members (Silver, 184). In addition, one does not find the rotating credit associations that are characteristic of many agricultural and textile markets. Nor does one find money-lending like the commercial banks, which finance the agricultural produce in various parts of West Africa (Steiner, 1994). In the African art market, credit is hard to come by and capital is even harder to find.

In Ghana, there are indigenous credit associations called “Susu” associations or groups. Individuals or groups of people may either establish these associations as a means of mobilizing business capital or savings for their members. An individual who sets up a “Susu” group or association provides a high interest loan for its members who are mostly are petty traders. Each beneficiary or borrower is registered and given a membership card. Repayment of the loan is done on a daily basis and it is by appointed agents who are given commission by the financier. Furthermore, a group of ten or more individuals may come together under a memorandum of understanding to contribute $100
or more on weekly or monthly basis as the group desires to generate business capital or savings. Similar to the pyramid scheme in America, the total contribution is then given to one member. The process is repeated until every member of the group benefits from this collective contribution and then the process is repeated. Most often, decision as to who collects first, second or third is determined by group ballot. Sometimes, an individual may decide to switch his or her turn to assist an individual who is in deep financial crises or to pay for supply of goods or services. During this study, the participants revealed through interviews that whereas some of the artists use the "Susu" credit system to generate business capital and savings, others claim it is not rewarding. Reasons for the latter are that their sales turnover is not as good as that of the market women who sell foodstuffs and clothing.

Steiner (1994), however, observes that the reasons why the art market does not follow a typical West African market strategy of money lending or credit relation is due to the nature of the commodities the art traders' buy and sell. In the traditional visual arts trade especially, the quality of the objects vary so greatly and the supply of first rate items are limited. Suppliers have no idea what they will find when they go into the rural areas in search for saleable goods. The artists also claim they only work in anticipation of demand or orders placed by vendors.
Marketing of the Traditional Visual Arts in Ghana

Due to problems artists' face in marketing, they have devised several strategies to facilitate the marketing of their products. In Ghana, marketing of traditional visual arts are done through collectors, market-place vendors, door-to-door vendors, street hawkers, shop assistants, internal market peddlers, market-place credit, client credit, galleries, roadside vendors, and workshop outlets.

In Accra, the Center for National Culture (The Accra Arts Center) operates a craft gallery where works of the traditional artists are displayed. An artist willing to sell his or her work presents samples to the crafts gallery committee for review. According to Mr. Samuel Ashong, the Administrative Officer of the Center and chairperson of the Crafts Gallery Committee, the review of these works is to ensure that works are original and of high quality. Artists whose works pass these tests are registered and then allowed to submit their works for display and sale. During the registration, a fee of about $5 is charged. At the end of every month, the artist visits the gallery to ascertain the possibility of a sale and collects money due after a 15% commission is deducted.

A monthly fee of about seventy thousand cedis\(^1\) ($10) is charged for the space provided by the Center. Although this avenue provides an opportunity to make a living from their works, some of the artists complain that the fee is too high.

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\(^1\) In Ghana, the currency unit is in "Cedis" and "Pesewas" which at the time of this study was C7,300 to the US $1 dollar.
According to them, the Center does not make any effort in publicizing their works to attract the buyers. In addition to providing a kind of consignment arrangement for artists, the Center provides space for individual artists and art vendors to erect stalls to sell their wares. Within the confines of this market, most of the vendors have storehouses, which provide one of the avenues through which vendors market their works. Sometimes, these shops may contain objects which vendors may consider inferior; nevertheless, they provide few instances where storage and accumulation is possible for holding different kinds of artworks in anticipation of getting better prices in the future.

Activity at the Accra Arts Center is very brisk as people from all occupations come in and out in search of various types of art to buy. However, due to the poor layout of the market and the high degree of similarity of merchandise, traders are always in economic rivalry with one another leading to a constant tension between competition and cooperation. Furthermore, there are some individuals, who acting as brokers, hang around the shops of friends or relatives, and occasionally take advantage of buyers looking for specific items.

Many of the "wealthy" art vendors who cannot speak English hire assistants to carry out the daily business of selling art to local and foreign buyers. Although the wealthy art vendors are present everyday at their shops in the marketplace, they usually do not deal with customers directly, unless someone is looking for special objects such as antiques or other collectible items. Sometimes
they are present only to wait for their suppliers to bring them shipments of goods, or to honor scheduled appointments with a prospective customer.

Other vendors also employ young men to roam the market in search of prospective buyers as they approach the stall. In this way, art vendors either sell directly on the street or are able to lure buyers to their stalls in the market-place. However, the measure of accomplishments of these assistants depends on their aggressiveness and ability to "catch" buyers in the market-place.

There are also arrays of vendors often described as internal market peddlers, who take goods on credit from the art vendors to sell to earn a meager livelihood. The very successful market peddlers increase their sales by picking up different types of objects, which they sell on commission basis. Primarily, their role consists of selling stock from one art vendor to another in the market place. Periodically, these market peddlers offer the best assistance when an art vendor needs to raise a small amount of cash in a hurry in order to pay the rental fee on his stall, buy a desirable object from a supplier, pay an overdue loan, or liquidate a group of objects from overdue stock. Sometimes, in order to liquidate an object or stock, the art vendor gives item(s) to one of the market peddlers who he usually deals with. The art vendor then sets a price (which is usually below the price-range of the objects). The internal market peddler walks through the market calling out the types of objects he has for sale. Most often, he tries to get anything above the owner's price. Usually because the objects are sold
inexpensively and fast, the peddler's profit tends to be very low. Through internal market peddlers, art vendors are able to acquire small amounts of cash without "lowering" their status to the level of petty hawker. This invariably alleviates the vendor's temporary financial problems.

Art vendors who do not have shops or merchandize in the market place can still participate in the art trade as commissioned sellers or agents for other market place vendors. These vendors do not have enough capital with which they can buy stock. As buyers are wandering through the market, looking at the art objects in the various shops, this type of vendors follow them from shop to shop, and from one section of the market to another. By their action, they create an illusion that the market is homogeneous where one can pay for any item at any register. Therefore, if a prospective buyer picks up an object, which is the property of a particular art vendor, the commissioned seller would conduct the bargaining. He usually knows the approximate price of the object and so he will conduct the bargaining without the help of the owner until the very last moment before the sale is finalized. If a successful sale appears imminent, the commission seller then confirms the final price with the owner speaking in the local language, which the buyer presumably does not understand. When the buyer leaves, the commission seller then gives the entire amount of cash to the art vendor from which he is paid a commission.
Another way by which vendors sell their goods is through the market credit system. Under this system, a vendor who does not have a particular type of object a buyer wants would obtain the item from another trader in the marketplace. At the time of borrowing the art piece, the two traders must quickly negotiate a sale price, on extremely short-term credit. Whatever the outcome of this rapid bargaining of price negotiation, the vendor who pursues the buyer draws his profit by getting whatever he can above and beyond the owner's asking price. Prices set in this manner tend to be relatively high.

Since the art vendor knows that the middleman has a potential buyer who is interested in the item, he sets the price higher than he might otherwise have in his stall. For the reason of self-respect, an art vendor might not openly refuse to give out an object to a middleman, but rather set the price very high to deter borrowers. Sometimes, an art vendor may claim his profit margin is too small to pay a higher commission and this brings about a lot of confusion and arguments. Notwithstanding these problems, the process provides a lucrative form of trade in which art vendors without stock are also able to participate.

There are some traditional visual artists and art vendors who have a set of regular clients who are either collectors, dealers, businessmen and women, expatriates, teachers, attorneys, medical doctors, university professors, friends,
family members, or corporate representatives who occasionally purchase
artworks. In this circumstance, the art vendor carefully guards the knowledge of
customer and buying preferences.

Like most African countries, the roadsides in Ghana are also filled with
stalls and artists' workshops where artworks are displayed for sale. Young
middle and secondary school graduates parade the busy streets of the cities with
bags of art objects for sale to motorists. Some sell to tourists at the beaches. In
addition, in-groups of two or three, some of these young men visit the homes of
these expatriate clients with several bags of art objects to sell. The art galleries in
the cities and urban centers also buy and sell both contemporary and traditional
art works.

In Accra, there are five private galleries. The Loom, Artists Alliance,
Fretiti Studio Gallery, Frema African Art Gallery, and Studio Wiz. The art
galleries generally contain most of the items sold in the art markets. However,
unlike the market place there is a fixed price on each of the works so bargaining
over the price does not occur. These galleries are more quiet and non-aggressive
atmosphere, and unlike the open market, provide an alternative to the bustle and
confusion of the outdoor market-place making for a good sales tactic. Galleries
take between 35-45% commission on the sale of the artist's work.

Despite these marketing strategies, which invariably favor the
middlemen, the artists are still faced with problems of low investment capital,
inadequate credit facilities from the banks, and lack of modern technical and entrepreneurial training. Artists are also unorganized and cut off from national and international markets. Other problems are lack of support mechanisms and the indifferent attitude of macro-economic planners. These problems have incapacitated traditional artists and therefore are unable to maintain appreciable levels of production of their works that would enable them earn a decent living. This recapitulation of the art trade in Ghana as supported by Steiner’s (1994) observation of the African art market in La Cote d’Ivoire is graphically illustrated by the researcher in Figure 1.

In this figure, the art support agencies, middlemen and the art consumers are linked by a dark and heavy line to signify their connectedness on one hand. However, the broken or dotted lines on the other represent the present administration of the traditional visual arts support agencies, which disenfranchises artists in the marketing business.
Figure 1  Representation of the traditional visual artists within the present macro economic structure in Ghana.
Presently, there are no effective network and support for the artists. Even if one would argue that there are, this study reveals that these support mechanisms are being manipulated to the benefit to the art support agencies. Therefore, there is a need for a systematic development strategy to minimize these problems and to boost the traditional visual arts industry for the benefit of the traditional artists. The next chapter, which presents a discussion of the conceptual framework for this study, will provide a basis for suggested developmental strategies for the development of the traditional visual arts as a source of livelihood for rural people.
CHAPTER 3

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THIS STUDY

Introduction

Cultural expressions such as the traditional visual arts constitute one of the primary economic activities for many rural populations around the world. This form of occupation requires little or no machinery and most often, uses available local raw materials. It also generates employment and income that can be equal to agriculture or labor wages. Most often, women in the home alongside other household activities engage in the production of traditional visual arts.

By providing a means of livelihood, the traditional visual arts can help reduce rural-urban migration. In addition, profits from the sale of these handicrafts can also be channeled into other activities for the benefit of the entire rural community. There is evidence that as part of an ethnic survival strategy for indigenous people, traditional handicrafts can provide foreign exchange earnings for the government, attract the attention of producers and consumers to the values and the beliefs they represent (Cultural Quarterly, 1982).
This chapter discusses the concepts of culture, development theories, and reexamines the role of cultural expressions such as the traditional arts in rural communities. At the end of this chapter, a conceptual framework for the development of the traditional visual arts as a means of livelihood in rural communities will be provided. In addition, some recommendations will be made for its inclusion in the macro-economic development plans of Ghana.

The Concept of Culture and Development

Maybury-Lewis (1980. Cited in Kleymeyer, 1994) asserts that since ancient times people have speculated about how to improve the moral and physical lots of mankind. The end of the World War II generated some optimistic feeling among some economists about how to achieve these improvements. It was assumed that development was only related to industrialization and modernization. As Daniel Bell (Cited in Kleymeyer, 1994) puts it in The Coming of the Post Industrial Society, those countries that sought development would have to become progressively industrialized, modernized, and Westernized. Within this context, culture was treated as a residual activity of society. However, a generation later when their prescriptions did not have any impact, development theorists remembered culture and used that as an explanation to the problems that propel against planning and implementation of development plans Kleymeyer (1994).
Culture has always been blamed as one of the obstacles to development all over the world. This is because the word "culture" invokes in some peoples' minds certain negative societal customs and traditions that retards societal progress. To some Ghanaian intellectuals and policy makers, culture signifies certain life styles or past traditions that must not be revered. Others consider it manifestation of traditions for entertainment purposes such as drumming and dancing. In Ghana, a cultural display, mostly drumming and dancing may be employed to climax a celebration such as the visit of an international personality, during national anniversaries, or a community or family celebration. People's misconception about culture is due to their lack of deeper knowledge and understanding of the totality of culture. Culture is the bedrock of the existence of every society. A dynamic phenomenon has never been static in the history of mankind.

According to Klemeyer (1994),

"Culture is the center of human experience. It is the major force that shapes the behavior and social structure; it is formed and reformed by the cumulative impact of those behaviors and structures. Culture addresses the fundamental and pressing needs of a people. It expresses ideas, forms and structures through which people try to resolve and satisfy their needs" p. 27.
Culture in the widest sense is the whole complex of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or group. It includes not only the arts and literature, but also modes of life and economic production, the foundation of human rights, value systems traditions and beliefs.

Culture helps us to define who we are and how we think of ourselves and act towards others. As a people, we have material, social, and cultural needs as well. We learn how to relate to others, achieve a survival and fulfillment through collective efforts, and express what we feel and yearn for (Klemeyer, 1994). Our material and socio-cultural needs are infallibly linked. We must not only attend to our physical needs, but also carry on our cultural traditions and continually reform them to adapt to changing conditions.

Society and mankind cannot survive without continuous reference to its very structure of existence. There is the traditional culture, which includes matters about the belief system such as the ceremonies and customs. There is also the contemporary culture, which evolves as a result of political and socioeconomic changes in a society, or due to external influences. In totality, culture includes the beliefs, behavior, language, customs and traditions, ceremonies, technology, and inventions and the entire way of life of a particular people. Therefore, culture should not be seen as an impediment to development, but rather the foundation on which the development of every society is steadfastly built.
The question which is left unanswered is: In what way can cultural expressions such as the traditional visual arts be developed as a means of livelihood for rural people? This question is important because development in contemporary times tends to be a "monster" to the mass majority of people in the so-called developing world. In addition, the approach of formulating and implementing strategic economic development policies has been "top-down" around the world (Korten, 1989). Government policies are implemented without due consideration to the people whose lives it affects. The term "development" is generally used to describe a biological process through which the potentialities of an object or organism passes, as it reaches its natural, complete, full-fledged form (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1989). The use of the word got into the social sphere during the 18th century when it was employed by Justus Moser (1967 to allude to the gradual process of social change.

The term development is sometimes used as a synonym for economic growth and employed to describe a change in a country's economy involving qualitative as well as quantitative improvement in the lives of the people. According to Kofoworola, (1997, Cited in Hagher, 1990, Kidd, R., & Colleta, 1980), "development can be described as a process of positive socio-economic change which is aimed at raising standard of living, quality of life, and

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1 "Top down" is a term used to refer to an administrative or management structure where decision making and control is hierarchical.
human dignity" pg. 19. These authors contend that this definition of development which is in line with the United Nations concept of development, is based on the following principles:

(i) The realization of the potentialities of the individual or group in harmony with the community should be seen as the central purpose of development.

(ii) The individual or group should be regarded as the subject and not the object of development.

(iii) The individual or group must be able to participate fully in shaping its own reality.

According to Gustav (1971), the word “development” was also used by Harry S. Truman, American’s thirty-third President regarding U.S. foreign policies on economic development for the so-called Third World countries in his assumption of office on January 20th 1949:

We must embark on a bold new program for making benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. The old imperialism, exploitation for profit, has no place in our plans. That, which we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic dealing” p. 156

Since this pronouncement, the concept of development has been given a neo-colonialist and Western interpretation which has till today rob-off peoples of other cultures the opportunity to define their own social lives. Therefore,
developing strategies for the improvement of socioeconomic conditions in rural communities in this study is very crucial. However, are these strategies going to be based on Euro-Western development theories, which though are purported to improve the livelihood of people around the world, have continually failed?

Theories of Development

Since the end of World II, several theories of development have been formulated as a means of promoting economic, political and social changes in societies. These theories of development do not give clear-cut definition of what really constitutes development. Presently, there are five theories of development: (i) the modernization theory, (ii) dualistic economic development theory, (iii) dependency theory, (iv) growth with equity theory, and (v) the grassroots or people-centered development theory.

The Modernization Theory

According to So (1990), the modernization theory of Rostow outlines four major stages of development: from traditional society (largely agriculture); to a transitional stage, in which the human and technological conditions are being prepared for rapid advancement; to a take-off stage; and to the mature stage marked by large-scale production. Rostow (So, 1990) argues that a stimulus is needed in order to propel developing countries beyond the preconditioned
stage. This can be a political revolution that restructures major institutions, a technological innovation such as the invention of the steam engine during the Industrial Revolution, or a favorable international environment with rising export prices. Rostow argues that, after moving beyond this stage, a country that wants to have a self-sustained economic growth must have the following structure for take-off: Capital and human resources. These things must be mobilized to raise productive investment by 10% of the gross national income, otherwise economic growth cannot take place.

**The Dualistic Economic Development Theory**

Lewis (1954), in his dualistic economic development theory divides the economy into the traditional and modern sectors. The traditional sector includes not only peasant agriculture, but also other types of traditional occupations in which production methods are highly labor intensive and use relatively "primitive" technologies. The modern sectors include both manufacturing and modern agricultural productions. The technology used is up-to-date and intensive, and there is extensive use of capital. The modernization theorists see development from this perspective as a displacement of the traditional. Thus, based on modernization theory, the traditional sector in itself does not serve as a source of development. Instead, it is seen as a supplier of resources to the modern sector for the rapid improvement of the latter.
The Dependency theory

The Dependency Theory which evolved in the 1970s and 80s is dominated by scholars such as, Andre, Frank Gundar, Gunnar Mydral, Samir Amir, Frantz Fanon, Paulo Friere, Louis Ramero Beltram, and Raul Prebisch from developing countries (Chirot & Hall, 1982 Cited by Brandon, 1994). According to Black (1991), the underpinning assumptions of the dependency theory are: (i) that the present economic interest of the Western world has dominance over culture in determining the distribution and status in national and international areas; (ii) that the causes of under-development are not to be found in the national system alone, but must be sought in the pattern of economic relations between hegemonic, or dominant institutions, and their client states.

Proponents of this theory tend to think that development is not only increasing industrial output, but also providing the means for improving standard of living for all in the periphery (Black, 1991). This theory also states that it would be damaging for developing countries to have contacts with developed countries. It supports developing countries cutting ties with the developed countries, thus relying on their own paths of development. Chilcote and Edelstein (1974) by this theory cite development as the elimination of foreign penetration, which maintains the “status quo”. This theory also argues that the
international cooperation between developed and developing countries has rather strengthened or maintained a system of economic imbalance between rich and poor nations.

The Growth with Equity Theory

The Growth with Equity Theory, which was in vogue in the 1970s and 80s rejects the assumption that a social revolution must take place before development must occur. It also rejects the modernization theory's assumption that favors capital-intensive development. This theory advocates meeting the needs of the poor as a primary goal. Weaver & James (1978) cite six examples which purportedly combine growth with equity. These are: (i) employment generation and appropriate technology; (ii) redirect investment; (iii) meeting basic needs; (iv) human resource development; (v) agriculture and rural development; and (vi) the new international economic order.

According to Brandon 1994, (Cited by Agunga, 1992), the basic intent of the growth with equity theory are: (i) the need to change the rules of development in favor of the have-nots, (ii) the need to stop treating developing (particularly African) countries as if they are a homogeneous group of countries, but view them as a conglomerate of heterogeneous states with varying experiences and interest in the world economic order, (iii) to see economic growth as not synonymous with development, (iv) to abandon central top-down
planning in favor of participatory planning which satisfies majority of the poor; (v) to restructure public services to ensure that the goods and services reach the poor, increasing attention to growing more food for local consumption, and (vi) to provide credit, extension services and other agricultural inputs such as land, seeds, fertilizer, and water.

Some economists can allude to the fact that most developing countries have seen some considerable economic and industrial transformation. However, one big question remains unanswered. Have the "top-down" policies of development continually initiated by developed countries improved the economic growth and standards of living of the people in most developing countries? Also, have this administrative or management structure of decision-making and control improved the socioeconomic lives of people in rural communities around the world?

It is obvious that the theories and processes of development discussed in this chapter, which economists attempt to apply as the panacea for developing countries, have failed. This is because it had no link with people for whom the planning is being done. Instead of allowing development of the people to evolve from the bottom-up (sometimes defined by economists as grassroots development), it has always been the opposite.
Grassroots Development Theory

The 1980s and 90s have witnessed some interesting debates by cultural anthropologists about the failure of various development strategies which purport to better the lives of the have-nots throughout the world. Within these debates have emerged a new development theory which sees development as a gradual and systematic process of gaining control over one’s own environment so that one is less and less a victim of it, but more and more its master. It is a process of empowering people to develop a critical consciousness of the problems they face and try to overcome them” (Brandon, 1994). According to Agunga (1992) and Brandon (1994), the proponents of this theory advocate the transfer of decision-making process from international development agencies to local ministries (government or state departments), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of developing countries who work closely with the people at the grassroots level.

Also, studies conducted by Riedel and Schmitz (1989) on survival of Ghana’s population on cottage industries in the years of Ghana's economic crisis revealed its significance as a bed-rock for micro enterprise development. Other studies of cottage industries in rural communities around the world also provide insights into feasible and desirable patterns of growth in manufacturing and employment (Liedholm and Parker, 1989). Therefore deeper understanding of how small firms evolve vis-a-vis the factors that affect the implementation of
support strategies for traditional visual arts for economic and cultural
development in Ghana and other developing countries are very essential. These
requisites provide insight for designing appropriate policies and support
programs that tap into the potential of these enterprises to the benefit of
producers and the community at large.

The Role of Cultural Expressions and Development

Khan and Basin (1986) contends that the development strategies and
programs implemented during the last three decades have failed to attack the
causes of rural poverty. That, the benefits of whatever development has taken
place have not trickled down. Landlessness has increased and so has
poverty, unemployment and unequal distribution of the national wealth.
Peasants, landless people, plantation workers and women have been
marginalized. In addition to this, environmental destruction, the very resource
base of the people is also being rapidly destroyed (Khan and Basin, 1986).

According Khan and Bhasin (1986), the "top-down" development planning
denies the broad masses active participation in determining their political,
economic, and social welfare. Consequently, it has led to the failure of many
development projects.

Many reasons have been advanced to explain this state of affairs. They
include the global and national unequal distribution of capital and wealth as the
main cause. In addition, attempts to achieve equal partnership for developing countries in the trade and financial systems, and international terms of exchange continue to affect the living standards of the majority of people in these countries. At the national level, equitable distribution of the gross national income remains a source of tension, with a few amassing wealth and privileges at the expense of the majority. The concentration of industry, technology, and finance in countries of the developed world continues to create dependent economies for developing countries.

Khan and Bhasin (1986) argue that the neglect of culture is a major contributing factor for the failure of most development projects in many developing countries. They also concur that development strategies have over-emphasized national economic growth at the expense of the social and cultural factors that are crucial to the well being of the people. To date, economists continue to focus on structural changes such as, increase in financial opportunities and incentives, and assume that externally defined rational reactions to such interventions would result in appropriate behavioral changes for development. Khan and Basin (1980) therefore contend that development planning has solely become a preserved function for economic planners, technological experts and their local and foreign political masters, and benefactors.
According to Kleymeyer (1993), cultural expressions tell us of the past, the present, as well as what the future holds for us. He explains that by encouraging the human imagination, the creative arts can promote the belief that change is possible. In addition, community control of resources and the maintenance of strong ethnic identity can be essential to grassroots development and self-reliance for most rural communities (Kleymeyer, 1994).

Swantz (1985) argues that a mentality of trust in one’s own cultural heritage is very vital. In addition, it allows deep understanding of different cultural patterns and ways of perceiving and conceptualizing situations very crucial for development (Cited in Khan and Bhasin 1986).

According to Breslin (1992), development is usually thought to mean a change for the better in material standards of living. He argues that if the material standards of living of people are to be improved, many other kinds of changes in society may be required. This includes changes in the patterns of land use, ownership, and distribution of land; in the forms of ownership, management, and employment in the workplace; in access to and control of credit, capital and commodity flow; in observance of human and civil rights; and in the treatment of minorities. There is another element to development besides change. Sometimes people must fortify their base before they sally out to change the world. Breslin (1992) maintains that no matter how poor their material conditions may be, people have resources available: intelligence, imagination,
language, the skill of their hands, history, a sense of identity, a cultural heritage, pride, a certain piece of land. Breslin (1992) therefore concludes that sometimes development is not so much of a physical change, as it would be about the preservation and strengthening of those cultural resources.

A New Development Model

Based upon previous discussions in this study, one would reasonably object to the views of Euro-American development experts who promote the idea that economic development can only be measured by a country's level of scientific and industrial development. This is because most industrial countries themselves have not been able to eradicate poverty, homelessness, and income inequalities within their own domain. Also, the prescription for structural changes in developing countries has always been economic and technical assistance from the "obsolete" reservoirs of advanced science and technology of developed countries. For many years, practical development that has been embarked on in developing countries is seen as simply a transfer of technology in health, agriculture, and education. Developed countries should acknowledge the fact that developing countries may differ significantly in their cultural aspiration, human resources and in the level of technological advancement.

Some scholars allude that traditional cultural forms are by their nature unchangeable. Contrary, evidence has shown that they have evolved over
generations in a never-ending process of resistance, elimination and active borrowing from various cultures. Tradition, culture and socio-economic development need not be opposing processes. Rather, they can be facets of an integral process through which human beings confront, interpret, and ultimately transform their reality for a change. This change is significant not only for the development of culture, but also for the culture of development. The overall objective of development is to maintain a sustainable growth that would alleviate poverty among rural dwellers. These approaches must not deny people who they are, or opportunities for better lives and reduced suffering by the people themselves.

A meaningful objection can also be raised about Agunga (1992) and Brandon's (1995) grassroots approach of assisting people through the local ministries and non-governmental organizations. Their approach to development could perpetuate the present "top-down" method of development, which alienates ordinary people from the true process of development.

Korten (1984) and Gran (1983), leading proponents of people-centered development, contend that the present system of development is based on a production-centered society. Consequently, a massive consumer-centered society evolved and created great bureaucracies that in effect organized society into efficient production units centrally controlled and functionally defined (Korten, 1984). In addition, trading and financial systems that linked all nations
was added. Korten (1984) argues that for several decades, the persistent use of
the "top-down" paradigm of development has not solved the socio-economic
problems of mankind. This is because the production-centered development
subordinates the needs of the people to those of the production system.
Similarly, a people-centered development consistently subordinates the
production system to the people.

It is worth noting that the socio-economic problems of our times require a
new approach to development. This approach must be one, which is people
empowering and participatory. It must be development, which would
enhance human growth and well-being, equity and sustainability. According to
Gran (1983), this development process must be that which give the individual the
role of an actor who defines the goals, controls and directs the process affecting
his life (Cited in Korten, 1984 pg. 300).

While this research supports the views of Swartz (1995), Breslin (1983),
(Gran 1992), Khan and Basin (1986), Kleymeyer (1994), Korten, (1984), this
researcher proposes a people-empowered development as a new model for
development. This new model can develop cultural expressions such as the
traditional visual arts developed through the support of government, art support
and non-governmental agencies as a means of livelihood for rural communities
around the world.
Much as a people-centered development and a people-empowered development may look alike, there are differences. A people-centered development is that which is planned with the main aim of assisting people, but that which the people may not be part of the planning process. On the other hand, the writer’s vision of a people-empowered development is that in which the people must be directly involved in its planning and execution at all levels. It should not be a process that only provides our rural artisans with the needed capital, entrepreneurial training, and marketing opportunities, but forges moral support that would enable them gain control over production and marketing of their products directly to the art consumers as illustrated by the bold arrow in Figure 2. By this action, traditional visual artists can be more empowered in their own economic environment and thereby boost their production. Also, through these socioeconomic strategic schemes and access to the art consumers, the artists would be able to generate better incomes, better their lives, and become capable of supporting development efforts in their communities.

It would not be practicable to eliminate middlemen completely from the art trade. This is because some of them render partial financial support for artists as illustrated by the thin connecting lines in Figure 2. However, a people-empowered development must stress and support local initiatives and diversity. It must also focus on independent systems that evolve from the local communities, inclusive and participatory. These self-reliant systems must then
Figure 2. Conceptual framework of a “people-empowered” method of developing the traditional visual arts.
be buttressed by technical and financial support from government or non-governmental (NGOs) agencies and all other stakeholders. Also, as is illustrated by the thin lines connecting the art support agencies and the middlemen, a people-empowered development must stress on cooperation rather than competition. In addition, such support schemes must serve as a driving force, which does not alienate, but empowers traditional visual artists to develop an understanding as to how to take their destiny into their own hands. As the old Japanese adage goes, “it is better to teach a man to fish than to feed him with fish”.

As the forces of exclusion and intolerance are again on the rise, the attention given to cultural expressions should even be more essential if individuals and rural communities are to reconstruct better ways to live. This conceptual framework would therefore provide some insight for a model solution into the findings and the recommendations of this study.
CHAPTER 4

THE FIELDWORK, METHOD OF
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

Fieldwork offers an opportunity to interpret the meanings of situations and to discover relevant conditions of human behavior from the settings in which people interact. The intensity of inquiry associated with fieldwork permits the researcher to probe the social and cultural background from which a particular human activity emerges in order to substantiate assumptions or facts about that phenomenon (Chambers, 1994).

Field experts often describe themselves as being where the action is because their primary goal is to understand human behaviors in naturally occurring contexts. They are committed to achieving in-depth and holistic knowledge and understanding of the contexts from which observations about human activities, behaviors, and values are derived.

According to Theodorson and Theodorson (1994), "one cannot understand, interpret, or evaluate social and psychological phenomena
meaningfully unless the phenomena under study are seen with special reference to the role they play in the larger social or cultural system. That, the customs of a culture can only be judged or evaluated vividly by considering what values are associated with them, what needs are being satisfied, and their general relationship to other obligations, expectations and moral codes of conduct of that particular culture” (p. 94).

For example, those who are not knowledgeable about the Kung of the Kalahari Desert of South Africa might think that these people are inferior and uncivilized. The Kung wear very little clothing, have few possessions, live in meager shelters and enjoy none of the so-called luxuries of the technologies of Western society (Encyclopaedia Brittanica, 1989). To them, life in their society is as great as it is to those of us in the Western World.

Also, many political decisions that were taken by colonial administrators in countries they colonized led to very disastrous results due to lack of cultural knowledge. A classic example is the Ashanti war with the British in 1901. This war was provoked by the forcible demand of the British governor of the Gold Coast on the Ashantis, to surrender the Golden Stool, which is sacred relic and a symbol of sovereignty that is not to be exposed to profane eyes. Thus, people of one culture cannot objectively judge the culture of any group of people as
superior or inferior. Similarly, one cannot understand why people in rural communities engage in the production of traditional visual art, unless one knows its significance to them.

**The Objectives of this Study**

The objectives of this study are to ascertain the economic relevance of traditional visual arts as a source of livelihood to traditional visual artists in Kumasi and surrounding rural villages in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Primarily, the research focused on a number of issues pertaining to the production and marketing capability of traditional visual artists. These issues are:

1. Whether traditional visual arts is one of the many viable rural occupations of the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages in the Ashanti region of Ghana.
2. Whether traditional visual artists in Kumasi and surrounding villages are engaged in the production of traditional visual arts because they want it to be a profitable business, or just want to maintain tradition.
3. Whether there are strategies these rural artisans developed on their own to cope with the methods of production and marketing.
4. Whether the artists have technical and entrepreneurial skills in the various aspects of the production.
5. Whether government and non-governmental (NGOs) arts support agencies play any role in the development of the traditional visual arts.

6. Under what circumstances can the success stories and solutions of Latin and Central American traditional visual artists be compared to Ghana?

This study identified three different types of traditional visual arts in Ghana. These are: (i) objects that function in ceremonies within the society, (ii) objects used in everyday life, and (iii) replicas of traditional religious objects, which are made for the tourist market. The subjects of focus in this research project were traditional visual artists in categories (ii) and (iii). These included objects such as pottery works, woodcarving, straw works, kente weaving, leather works, and beads produced with available local raw materials by an artist or a group of artists working together in a guild. Presently, there are new forms of traditional visual arts, consisting of animals, reptiles, fishes, dolls, a combination of straw and pottery work which now constitute a source of livelihood to some artists. These objects which are for decoration, have also become collectible art forms for tourists and art collectors.
**Why was Ghana chosen for this Research Project?**

Ghana and Kumasi in particular were considered an ideal place for this study for a number of reasons. First, the researcher is a Ghanaian artist and a former senior cultural officer responsible for the fine arts and cottage crafts department at the Community Youth Cultural Center in Ghana from 1990 to 1992. The researcher’s encounters with youths and traditional visual artists brought to light some of the production and marketing problems that confronted Ghanaian rural artisans. Yet, despite nine lapse years, contacts in Ghana still reveal an exploitative attitude of middlemen, tourists and collectors. In addition, massive export of traditional visual arts over the last decade does not offer the traditional artists in Ghana the opportunities to earn a decent living from the sale of their works.

Comparative field studies of rural communities in Latin and Central America, Mexico, the Philippines, the Appalachians, Native American communities in the U.S. show that traditional visual artists make decent living from the sale of their works. Yet, in Ghana, the situation is not so. Artists do not have adequate investment capital and there are no effective support mechanisms to boost the production and marketing of their works. The importance of Ghana in this study also lies in the variety of cultural expressions of the Ashantis, which is intertwined with their mythology, artistic dominance, and their rich and sophisticated traditional system of governance.
A Brief Description and Location of Kumasi

Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti region and the second largest city in Ghana, is 169 miles north of Accra. It has about 24 districts (which can be likened to counties in the U.S.) made up of several towns and villages, to form a cultural enclave. Kumasi, popularly described as the “cultural capital” of Ghana, has an ever-growing population of over one million people. It was the headquarters of the Ghana National Cultural Center (now Ashanti Region Center for National Culture) established by Ghana’s first president, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. The Ashantis are part of the Akan language family and the largest ethnic group in Ghana.

Agriculture is the main economic activity of the region. Its forests provide a natural environment for staple food crops such as maize, plantain, cassava, rice, fresh fruits and vegetables, and a variety of export crops, which include cocoa, coffee, pineapples and timber. The Ashanti region of Ghana is also endowed with mineral resources such as gold, diamond, bauxite, ceramic clay and iron ore. Cost of living in the entire country is high and may require a minimum of about one million cedis ($150) per month for an individual to live in the cities in Ghana. However, in Kumasi, prices of foodstuffs, accommodation, transportation and other social services are relatively lower which makes life more pleasant than most cities and towns in Ghana. The average expenditure for any income earner living in Kumasi is about 800,000 Cedis (US$110) per month.
Apart from agriculture, the traditional visual arts also constitute an important economic base of the Ashanti State. Traditionally, Kumasi and its surrounding villages are noted for their expertise in a variety of specialized crafts, which include weaving, woodcarving, ceramics, and metallurgy. These villages, illustrated in Figure 3, were also its vassal states during the ancient Ashanti Kingdom.

Woodcarving has many branches, among which the major products are wooden sculptures of prime artistic quality and the talking-drums ("ntumpane"). The famous wooden "stools" are symbolic ritual objects rather than items of furniture. In the Ashanti region a generation ago, every stool in use had its own special name that denoted the gender, or social status, or clan of the owner.

Weaving is also a highly developed craft, with dozens of standardized and named textile designs. In recent times, resurgence of batik cloths and embroidery have become popular traditional visual arts in both rural and urban communities around the country. At Ntonsu, traditional embroidery and the production of the "adinkra", cloth is the major traditional visual arts occupation. One of the most specialized Ashanti crafts is in metallurgy. Ashanti metal smiths are noted for their mark of excellence in creating works of art in iron, brass, bronze, silver, and gold.
Figure 3. Map of Kumasi showing its surrounding Rural Villages.
The "cire perdue" or the lost-wax process is utilized in their manufacture. Agricultural implements and other metal utensils are made of iron. Brass (and evidently bronze) is used for one of the most widely known artistic products, gold weights (mrammue), which are cast in geometric, human, or animal forms, or in forms representing inanimate objects. Although these objects are of interest to art collectors, their original functions are practical. They were standard weights used to weigh gold dust.

Methods of Data Collection:

The method of data collection in this study was through participant observation, which included informant and respondent interviewing, photographing, archival study, and direct participation. Participant observation is a research method in social science in which the researcher observes social action by becoming a member of the group under observation. There are two ways to engage in participant research. First is the active participation in which the observer tells the group that he or she is a researcher and participates in activities of the group or society. The second is passive participation in which the researcher adopts a role in the group to disguise his or her identity.

According to McCall and Simmons (1969), participant observation is not a single

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10 The lost-wax technique, also called "cire perdue" is a traditional technique of metal casting. By this method, an image or object, either a human figure or animal is carved or molded in wax. The wax model is then covered with clay or plaster of paris and allowed to harden. Heating the entire piece then burns the wax. A molten metal is then poured into the mold. This is allowed to cool. After which the clay or the plaster of paris is chipped or broken off in order to take the cast metal piece of art (Golloh, 1995, Rattray, 1927).
method, but combines several methods and techniques. They include interviewing, taking notes, photographing and videotaping and sometimes participation in the day-to-day activities of the people under study.

Interviews in this study were guided by a two-part opened-ended questionnaire format and were augmented with field notes, tape-recording, photographing, and direct participation in day-to-day activities at the workshops. The questionnaire also focused on general demographical information such as name, age, gender, and marital status. The importance of this demographic information is to determine the ratio of gender (male and female) participation, the age groups and all others who are actively engaged in the traditional visual art industry in Kumasi and the surrounding rural villages. The second part of the questionnaire focused on whether artists understand what they need to do to engage in profitable business. It included questions such as artists level of education and training; length of years in occupation; whether working as an individual or in a cooperative, partnership, or work groups; whether they have any other alternative occupation, amount of money invested in the business, level of production, types of crafts produced; whether their artworks are for ceremonies or used in everyday life; as well as the marketing avenues, sales level, monthly and annual income. Also, interviews of the art support agencies were guided by an open-ended questionnaire consisting of the following: (i) the nature of the organization, (ii) whether it is a government or
non-governmental, (iii) sources of funding, (iv) years of operation, (v) whether they support traditional artists in their work, (vi) type of technical and financial support they offer artists, and (vii) knowledge of what they consider the most difficult problems faced by traditional artists, and their understanding of the artists' problems.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Field encounters create mixed feelings, and can be either encouraging or frustrating. Sometimes interviewees' perceptions of the researcher can impede the smooth collection of the data. Some rural dwellers overtly exaggerate problems in their environment beyond imagination creating the impression that without help from the outside world, they cannot succeed. In addition, the perception of these inhabitants about any research is that, once an inquiry has been carried out into a problem confronting them, then the solution will be found shortly thereafter. When one is confronted with situations of this nature, getting local informants to assist in the collection of the data becomes a difficult task.

Analyzing research data collected through interviews pose unique problems. Most often one tends to forget that the data collected are not necessarily the true outcome of the research. This situation becomes more laborious in empirical research where the collection of data is done through
interviews for which there are no definite responses from all interviewees. Also, the problems of analyzing a qualitative data become more compounded when computers are used. This is because the researcher must first learn how to use the program before using it to analyze his data. Most computer programs provide very little help with the process of content analysis, although their search capabilities can be a very useful tool to the researcher’s interpretation. The greatest advantage computers offer is the prompt and easy re-examination of research data once it is produced.

According to Gay and Arasian (1996), regardless of the kinds of data collected, some form of analysis is necessary. Some research data are best analyzed using quantitative, numerical and a variety of statistical approaches. Other research topics, which are qualitative in form, rely on forms of narratives, tape-recording, and field notes. A fundamental aspect of qualitative research is the frequent re-examination of the entire data set (Gay and Arasian, 1996). Although computer programs support data analysis, they cannot do everything for the researcher. A researcher using phenomenological, statistical, or content analysis must also make the important interpretive judgments inherent in any research project.
Content Analysis

During the last few decades, content analysis has been developed as a means of describing the content in communication in a systematic form. According to Selltiz, Wrightsman and Cook (1976), although the technique of content analysis is frequently used in the mass media, it is also applicable to other materials. Content analysis is a method for objective, systematic and usually quantitative description of various characteristics of verbal communication (Selltiz, Wrightsman, Cook, 1976).

Holsti (1969) also defined content analysis as the application of scientific method of documentary evidence. According to him, content analysis is objective because each step is made explicit and systematic. Also, data findings through content analysis are broader and of more theoretical relevance.

Content analysis was the method applied to analyze the data of this study. The data was analyzed by compiling, grouping and comparing responses gathered from personal interviews to draw conclusions. The day-to-day observation and interaction with artists to draw inferences and conclusions also buttressed the data. Since detailed interviews were conducted with officials of the traditional visual arts support agencies, but were not observed on a daily basis like the artists, those interviews were tape-recorded and also analyzed through content analysis. In addition, responses from opened-ended questionnaires were coded and analyzed through frequency tabulation using
Microsoft Access. Microsoft Access is a relational database computer application, which can be used for planning databases, creating data, files, creating a table, or analyzing quantitative and qualitative research data.

**Questionnaire Coding & Frequency Tabulation**

Frequency tabulation which can be done either manually or electronically is a method of analyzing any data to determine the number of times an event or situation has occurred in a given period of time. Based on the research questionnaire (Appendix A), a correspondent response data was designed with numerical codes assigned to the research questions and responses in a numerical order of 1, 2, 3...96 as Response Data Sheet in Appendix B illustrates. The purpose of this response data sheet was to determine the frequency of artists' responses to each question. This information was fed into the Microsoft Access program to provide the frequency of occurrence of the answers as Appendix C illustrates. The final answer file already in Microsoft Access was further used to generate the pie charts in figures 13 to 23. The reasons for illustrating the data by pie charts and tables was to provide readers with both graphical and statistical information about responses of the outcomes of the research and for easy references.
Responses to the Research Questions and Findings

The overall purpose of this study was to ascertain the socioeconomic relevance of the traditional visual arts for the people of Kumasi and surrounding rural villages. The ensuing paragraphs therefore present responses and findings of the study pertaining to the research questions listed in Chapter One of this study. This section also provides additional information from the researcher’s written comments and personal interviews to clarify the responses and findings.

Question 1

Can the traditional visual arts be one of the many viable rural occupations of the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages in the Ashanti region of Ghana?

Ahwia is in the Kwabre district, and is about seven miles from Kumasi. It is the heart of the wood working industry and is well known for its wood carving traditions. It has a lineal geographical settlement, with one main road that traverses the village to other surrounding villages. With the exception of a few buildings, with modern architectural designs, most houses are built with clay.

In Ghana, it is very common to find the workshops of rural artisans along the roadsides. While some artists use this as a strategy for attracting customers and building their clientele, others use it to advertise their works. At Ahwia
several artists have their workshops in dilapidated sheds and under trees along the road. There were a few workshops without master artists. Some time was spent in participating and observing the day-to-day activities in the workshops. Proportionally, participation included assisting in the sale of art works, loading completed works vendors have purchased, off-loading raw materials brought in by suppliers, and assisting apprentices with their carving. The period of this research coincided with the tourist season in Ghana so there were several buyers including tourists moving from one shop to another bargaining for works to buy and taking photographs. Figure 4 shows traditional wood carvers at work and Figure 5 is a showroom of a local vendor.

In one of the workshops, an apprentice disclosed that his master has been working for the past twenty-five years and produces a variety of stools, and drums. These art works are produced with both traditional carving tools but occasionally use lithe turning machines. Most often, the production of the stools starts with the chain saw, which is used in cutting the large unwanted parts of the wood and later finished with traditional carving tools. Machines are only utilized when the volume of work is high. According to him, he completed his apprenticeship three years ago but has decided to remain and work with his master. There were other apprentices who work full-time and perform various levels of tasks in the workshop with the new ones performing the less difficult tasks, and the more experienced performing the more complex tasks. In addition
Figure 4. A group of traditional wood carvers at Ahwia.
Picture taken by Anku Golloh
Figure 5. A variety of wood works at a local vendors showroom at Ahwia. Picture taken by Anku Golloh
to their apprenticeship training, some of the apprentices are farmers and drivers' assistants, while others do various types of unskilled jobs in Kumasi. The artists at Ahwia have a cooperative society, with an established office space (it was closed during the times the researcher visited). According to one of the interviewees, the society exists, but it does not function very well. "Presently, the only benefit we derive as a cooperative is monetary contribution that we make to assist a member who is in serious financial difficulties or bereaved. Although, all the artists operate in the same workshop, everyone works independently. Most of the artists also have clients who are vendors and exporters in the cities," he added.

At Ntomsu, one of the artists lost an uncle so and several of the artists traveled to attend the burial. Activities in the workshops therefore seem to have come to a standstill. However, the researcher observed Kojo Gyamra, one of the artists who was printing an "adinkra" cloth as illustrated in Figure 6. There was a lengthy discussion about his business operations and the strategies he uses in coping with his production problems. According to Kojo Gyamra, he studied the "adinkra" cloth vocation from his late uncle and has been in business for the past thirty-five years. Although Gyamra works full-time, he makes time to do some farming to supplement his income. He expressed some concerns about the rising cost of the yarns they use in decorating the cloth and the difficulties they face in storing dyes extracted from tree barks, roots, and leaves for a long time. Asked
Figure 6. Researcher observes adinkra artists at Notnsu
Picture taken by Anku Golloh
why he does not produce the cloth on a large-scale, he complained of inadequate operating capital. Also, because the meager income generated from the cloth production is what sustains his immediate family of six, he is unable to reinvest his profits. He however, agreed that with adequate financial support he can increase his output and generate more income. Apart from borrowing from his relatives, and some little income derived from his cocoa farm, vendors who place orders also provide partial financial support for production. The artist therefore commended the researcher and expressed optimism that this study will provide some insight and solutions that would help boost the production and marketing of their products.

Bonwire is the village noted for the weaving of "kente" cloth in Ghanaian history. As we drove into the village, several young craft vendors rushed to the vehicle each offering various kinds of traditional visual arts for sale. The weavers were few and most of them were young men working in their homes or obscure parts of the village. Figure 7 shows a kente weaver at work. Like Ahwia, most of the vendors' shops are located along the main road leading to the village. During interviewing, it was revealed that many several weavers have moved to the big towns and the Capital city of Accra. Artists complained of the escalating prices of the yarns used in producing their cloth as a major problem. This inhibits them from maintaining an appreciable level of production. In addition, their works are pre-financed by vendors who do not make prompt payment
Figure 7. A Kente Weaver at Bonwire
Picture taken by Anku Golloh
making their flow of business very cumbersome. Kente, adinkra cloth, brass ornaments and leather crafts were some of the traditional visual arts sold in the village. Kwesi Mensah, one of the study interviewees is a middle-aged man who has a large shop filled with various kinds of kente, adinkra cloths and other embroidered clothing.

According to Mensah, he was previously a weaver but now finds the marketing of the cloth more lucrative. Though he commented that the traditional visual arts is a profitable venture, he lamented about the production and marketing problems he encountered as a production artist. Some of these problems include lack of prompt payment of products ordered and inadequate revolving capital to engage in continuous production. Though he was reluctant to disclose his monthly sales turnover as a vendor, he acknowledged that was financially better off now than when he was a weaver. Asked whether designs had any religious or social significance, he maintained that every pattern has its own meaning and the occasions they are meant to be used.

There was a signpost in front of one of the shops, which the researcher was informed, was the office of Bonwire Kente Weavers Cooperative Association. The office was always closed during my visits to the village therefore efforts to interview its executive members proved futile.

Glass beads are produced at Ohwin and Foase in the Atwima district. Time spent with the bead-makers was just overwhelming because the researcher
assisted in carrying firewood and crushing bottles in preparation for bead production while discussing their business operations. Figures 8 show a bead-maker working in his studio and 9 are samples of his works.

Some of the bead-makers confirmed that they have received some materials from Aid to Artisans and the UNDP, but these were inadequate. Others said they needed revolving capital and more local and foreign exhibitions to expose their works and to sell without middlemen. The bead producers also have a cooperative society of which most of them are members. Members pay monthly dues of 600 Cedis ($0.12), which is used to support members when they are in financial difficulties, particularly, when they are bereaved. However, these contributions are also inadequate. The society has executives who are artists as well, and are elected every two years.

At Manhyia, a suburb of Kumasi and the seat of the Asantihene, (King of the Ashantis), there was a group of artists who produced some of the regalia for the King. These artists can be described as court artists who work to maintain tradition and in the process generate some meager income for their livelihood. Figure 10 shows a leather artist at work, and 11 brass works on display at the artists' workshop.

"Opanin" (an word which means an elder) Osei Bonsu illustrated in Figure 12 is the owner of one of these workshops at Manhyia. Opanin Bonsu always sat in a reclining chair directing affairs at his workshop. Due to his age
Figure 8. A Bead maker at Ohwin
Picture taken by Anku Golloh
Figure 9. Samples of beads on display at an artists' workshop.
Picture taken by Anku Golloh
Figure 10 A leather artist producing traditional sandals. Picture taken by Anku Golloh
Figure 11 Brass works displayed at the artists workshop.
Picture taken by Anku Golloh
Figure 12. Opanin Osei Bonsu (an artist who produces the King’s Paraphernalia) busily working with one of his apprentices.
Picture taken by Anku Golloh
he cannot produce the works himself, but he has several young apprentices who he supervises to produce his designs. Once a full-time artist, he has been designing the King's regalia for the past forty years.

All the apprentices were working on their daily assignments during my visit. During the interviews, it became evident that several of them have completed their apprenticeship and are waiting to be discharged. Later, some of the apprentices shared their training experiences, especially of the various processes of designing and producing different traditional visual arts. While some expressed their desire to begin their own businesses at the end of their apprenticeships, others were troubled about the difficulties entailed in attracting business capital to establish their own businesses.

Culturally, people are superstitious about disclosing information concerning the finances of their business for fear of competition, losing their business, or harassed by the Internal Revenue Service. Consequently, the artists were reluctant to give information about financial operations. Also, prices of the art works are not fixed and are only determined through extensive bargaining. In addition, the production level of the artist is very low. Most of them only works on contract basis and produce one or two types of objects.

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11 In Ghana, like many developing countries, there is no efficient tax system. Tax education is poor so the people, particularly those who live in rural communities and cannot read or write do not acknowledge the importance of payment taxes. Consequently, only few people, particularly those in the civil service and companies, tax pay the bulk of the taxes. Most companies also pay various types of taxes to the central government. In 1998, a Value Added Tax (VAT) was introduced to cover all goods and services, and ensure that every citizen pays his or her fair share of taxes.
However, based on the prevailing production and market prices during this study, artists can increase their income level if they produce a variety of items and also increase the level of production.

Also, based on the researcher's observations, the use of machines helps to increase production. However, with the present ever-growing rural population with its unemployment problems, it is imperative for artists to develop work-groups. When this is implemented and division of labor is applied to operations, young school graduates can be employed to maximize production, improve incomes and better standards of living. By this action, artists would not only maintain the tradition of craftsmanship, but also develop and preserve their artistic skills and curtail unemployment that plague rural communities in Ghana.

Findings from data in Figure 13 shows that about 85% of the artists work daily and either operate these businesses themselves or with the help of family members or apprentices. It could therefore be argued from these findings that this percentage of artists who work daily are committed to building a serious business as a means of livelihood. Also, 40% of the artists in Kumasi and the surrounding villages illustrated in Figure 14 are engaged in other businesses such as petty trading, professional driving, and farming although they continue to maintain their traditional visual art occupation. While some schools of thought would argue that these people are maintaining traditions, the artists themselves asserted that other businesses they do supplement incomes they earn
Figure 13. Artists' regularity of work.
Figure 14. Response of the percentage of Artists who have other form(s) of occupation.
About 89% of the traditional artists in Figure 15 were males between the ages of 25 to 60 years. Although these figures show that the traditional visual arts are male-dominated occupations in Kumasi and surrounding villages, it was also observed that most of these artists are in their youth. These findings provide a positive indication of a strong manpower potential for the development of traditional visual arts cottage industries. In addition, about 80% of the artists in figure 16 have attained basic level of education, which makes it imperative to integrate the traditional visual arts into the school curriculum.

Also, about 65% of the traditional arts workforce in Kumasi and surrounding villages in figure 17 are in woodcarving, brass works, rattan and cane, and “adinkra” printing and kente-weaving. These traditional visual artists comprised individual artists, family groups, and cooperatives, and indicate the existence of a positive attitude towards the industry, and as a means of generating livelihood. However, 40% of the artists in Kumasi and surrounding villages illustrated in Figure 14 are also engaged in other forms of occupations as a means of supplementing incomes they derive from traditional visual arts. One would argue that the active participation of these groups of people in the varieties of rural occupations is positive indication of their determination to succeed or make a livelihood through these occupational endeavors.
Figure 15: Age Group of Artists.
Figure 16. Artists' level of education.
Figure 17. Types and percentages of traditional visual arts produced by Artists.
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It is evident from the researcher’s observation and findings that artists who work in groups (guilds or family)\(^{12}\) produce more and have a higher turnover from sale of their works. Therefore one can conclude that given the impetus and the needed investment capital, artists can boost their production and improve their socioeconomic status. Also, available evidence from the various marketing avenues both local and foreign make a strong case in support of the fact that the traditional visual arts can become a viable means of livelihood for the people of Kumasi and the surrounding rural villages.

**Question 2.**

*Are the traditional visual artists in Kumasi and surrounding villages engaged in the production of traditional visual arts because they want it to be a profitable business, or just want to maintain tradition?*

Pankrono is a village noted for its ancient pottery traditions in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Pottery-making is predominantly a female activity in this village. In the past, only men were allowed to fashion pots or pipes represent anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figures. Traditionally, pottery was hand-molded when the use of the powered-wheel was unknown. However, over the last decade, most potters are now using locally designed hand-turning potter’s wheels. Most of the potters were women over forty years old who said they occasionally had workshops organized by the Ghana National Council on

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\(^{12}\)It is not uncommon to find groups of artists from a single or more families working together. As a workgroup, each member is given a specific task within the production process. For example, in the carving of traditional stools, one blocks the wood, another carves and puts in all details, while another finishes and makes it ready for sale.
Women and Development, and some other women's organizations based in Accra. Also, two hand-turning potters' wheels were donated to them several years ago but all have broken down at the time of this study.

During interviewing, it came to light that most of the women got into this occupation at a tender age through their mothers or grandmothers. Although some of them have other means of livelihood, they enjoy doing pottery, which they assert supplements their income. One of the older women said that she is occasionally commissioned by families to produce "nsodia" which are terra figures used for funeral rites.

Also, pottery-making in Pankrono is more of a family business where parents pass on the knowledge, training, and the entire business to their children. According to some of my informants, Akan tradition does not allow women to participate in the production of certain traditional crafts, which includes woodcarving, metal smiting and kente weaving. Though reasons for these restrictions may or may not be religious, some argue that these occupations require some physique and long hours of sitting which most women cannot endure (Asihene, 1973; Rattray, 1927; Sarpong, 1990). Nonetheless, interaction with some of the women who were working in these so-called male-restricted occupations revealed that they are happy with their work. At Ohwin,
one of the artists, an elderly lady, said that her involvement in bead-making and trade for the past thirty years has been to maintain traditions that were passed on by her great grandparents.

It is also significant to note that 19% of the traditional visual artists (in Figure 15) are over sixty years of age, but actively working. Several responses from them indicate that they are working to promote and maintain the cultural heritage. In addition, evidence from this study show that they are valuable human resources whose knowledge and skills can help train unskilled young adults and the youth in traditional visual arts through workshops and in schools in the rural communities.

About 11% of the artists surveyed illustrate in Figure 18 were women above the age of fifty years and are predominantly engaged in pottery. 5% were widows (Figure 19). Asked why there were no younger women in the pottery business, one of them claimed that the young women are reluctant to undergo the training. The participation of women and widows in the traditional visual arts industry should be considered a unique contribution to socio-economic growth and must be financially encouraged by the government. Government and traditional visual arts support agencies should also encourage more women to take to this form of occupation in areas where there are less restrictions on women in this industry. Women's involvement in the traditional visual arts industry should be seen and an opportunity for women to become financially
Figure 18. Gender of Artists.
Figure 19: Marital Status of Artists.
Figure 20. Socioeconomic and cultural significance of Artists' works.
independent. Also, their commitment, should not only be seen as means of works preserving and promoting the heritage, and present opportunities for the development of new products.

**Product Development Versus Maintaining Traditions**

Mr. Adu-Mensah, the Director of Exports of Ghana Export Promotion Council, an art support agency was questioned whether the idea of "product development" would not jeopardize the socio-cultural practices of traditional arts industry. Mr. Adu-Mensah substituted "product development" with the concept of "product adaptation". In his view, the Ghanaian traditional resting chair (called "akpasa" in the Ga-Adangbe ethnic group in Ghana), for example has the back reclining about 180 degrees without consideration for adjustment. However, this product has been redesigned to make it more marketable in other countries. Mr. Adu-Mensah said the new design has not changed the form of the object nor its function. Rather, one would argue that it has been made more attractive to both local and foreign consumers. Therefore, to make our traditional arts more attractive and marketable to people of other cultures, there must be new designs and the old ones improved without changing their functions.

Mr. Adu-Mensah further contended that apart from its aesthetic appearance, the concept of the African "gimbe" drums now being produced have not changed. Presently, the unseasoned and unprocessed goatskin has
been replaced with cured or processed leather, which is used in making bands and other Western percussion instruments, and comparatively more durable. The trunk wood from which the drums were carved is now produced on lithe turning machines with better finishes. Despite these physical changes, it remains one of the drums used solely or in combination with other drums for entertainment or traditional ceremonies in which drumming is required. He noted that the traditional visual art forms that are being produced now do not differ in terms of their concepts but the designs and materials.

Also, when questioned if product development and commercialization currently embarked upon by his organization would not lower the quality of crafts, Mr. Adu-Mensah argued that before commercialization, most of the traditional visual art forms were getting lost. Young men and women who should have taken over this laudable occupation from their parents did not seem interested. However, with the present economic boom in the sale of traditional visual arts, several self-trained and College educated artists are seriously involved. Mr. Mensah alluded that the involvement of these highly trained groups of artists has improved the quality of works as well as the designs.

About the present level of sale and income generation capacity from traditional visual arts, Mr. Adu-Mensah maintained that presently, artists donot make enough money from the sale of their products in the short run. According
to him, the boom just began around the early 1990s and there is a need for artists to develop some entrepreneurial skills coupled with other forms of support in order to become more productive. Some of relevant skills are proficiency with the use of new tools and equipment, developing more managerial and marketing skills, as well as the ability to acquire short-term loans. Mr. Mensah contended that these strategic efforts would not only improve the quality of the products, but also increase demand, which invariably will boost incomes of the artists.

Mr. John Teye, the Financial Controller of Aid to Artisans, a non-governmental art support agency disagreed with those schools of thought which argue that commercialization of traditional visual arts would jeopardize their cultural values. Figure 20 shows that only 5% of the works produced are for religious functions. Mr. Teye stated, “there is a difference between objects of antiquity and handicrafts. He reiterated that objects of antiquity are those, which are preserved and used for specific functions within traditional cultural settings, and it is illegal to sell them. These are the treasures of our land and selling them would just be selling one’s birthright. The traditional visual arts trade in Ghana is as old as the society itself. Also, the present commercialization of traditional crafts has not only helped to preserve and promote traditional visual arts both home and abroad. It has also tremendously improved the well
being of some artists and their families”, Mr. Teye added. He explained that his establishment and other art support agencies are planning a periodic workshop to help artists’ develop an understanding of the cultural symbolism of the traditional visual arts in Ghana and in other countries where Aid to Artisans operate. These workshops are also meant to transmit important socio-cultural knowledge of the arts to the young ones in the schools.

Questions 3

What strategies have these rural artisans developed to cope with their production and marketing problems?

The majority of the artists interviewed complained of low investment capital and poor marketing opportunities. Particularly, hit are those who produce leather works and the King’s paraphernalia. These groups of artists are few, and are found in obscure places around Kumasi and the surrounding villages. Also, their level of production is low due to the small nature of their workforce, which is along family lines. In addition, most of them are over seventy years old and are therefore not very active. However, they are able to create designs, which their apprentices or other artists finish.

79% of artists surveyed (figure 21) have received technical and management training from some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). About 16% have
Figure 21. Percentage of Artists who have received various forms of support.
attended workshops organized by these agencies. Some of these agencies have provided support in tools and equipment to the artists, which they are required to repay after they sell their works. Most of the artists, however, reiterated that the supports are inadequate and infrequent. Artists therefore would like more marketing avenues and financial support from the government.

Some artists also complained that payments for works produced for the King's palace and to some of their vendors were overly delayed. During the interviews, the artists agreed that since their livelihood was primarily based on orders placed by vendors, maintaining multiple production lines to keep them in business has always been their desire. However, to do this, will require a substantial amount of revolving investment capital which most of them do not have.

At Ntonsu where adinkra cloths are produced, artists also attributed their low production to lack of capital investment capital. Artists also complained that most of the dyes they used in producing their cloths is extracted from three barks, roots and leaves. However, due to lack of preservatives, they are unable to store them for a long period.
Batik making\textsuperscript{13} and embroidery are newly developed forms of Ghanaian traditional visual arts occupations in Kumasi. Nigerian migrants who lived in Ghana in the late 1940s and early 50s introduced batik making. During that period, the prices of wax prints were very expensive and only few people could afford. The artists interviewed produced fabrics, which they themselves either use for designing dresses or are sub-contracted to tailors and dressmakers to be converted into clothing. Batik-making also require heavy investment capital, consequently, there were very few artists in this traditional visual arts occupation. The batik artists complained that the dyes and other chemicals used in production their cloths are very expensive because they are imported. A substantial amount of foreign exchange is required, which most of them could not have and are therefore unable to produce consistently all year round.

According to the artists', their push for government support is because the arts promote the culture of the country both nationally and internationally. Also, the traditional visual arts are increasingly becoming a lucrative export business generating millions of dollars in foreign exchange for the country. The artists' therefore contended that they see it as a responsibility of the government to

\textsuperscript{13} Batik (Javanese word for wax painting) is a technique of textile design by negative or resist dyeing. Designs are first painted on both sides of the cloth with melted wax. The cloth is then dipped into dye, which is absorbed by the uncovered areas (areas not covered by the melted wax) of the cloth but resist by the waxed areas. The process may be repeated several times with other colors to achieve great intricacy of design and richness of color. Boiling or ironing removes the wax. The Javanese and the Indonesians developed batik, known to the ancient Sumerians, into an art of great beauty. They use traditional geometric or floral motifs, often of religious or social status, most frequently in blues and brown tones. Dutch merchants introduced batik into Europe in the 17th Century. The batik process has become commercialize in Indonesia and other parts of the world (Encarta 98 Encyclopedia, 1993-1997, Microsoft Corporation).
promote the development of the traditional visual arts. Some statistical figures made available by the Ghana Export Promotion Council indicate that export trade in traditional crafts between 1900-1999 was about $500 million, and estimated to be about 8% Ghana’s Gross National Product.

Also, 68% as in Figure 22 sell to local vendors. While commending the role of vendors in sustaining artists in business, its ramifications must not be overlooked. The researcher cannot overemphasize that with the initial production capital provided by vendors, artists have no control over the prices of their works and to whom they sell. As the old adage goes, “he who pays the piper calls the tune.”

Also, findings illustrated in Figure 23 shows that to cope with production and marketing, majority of the artists borrow money from families, their friends and vendors. Others also rely on the plough-back-profits and personal savings to pre-finance the greater part of their production. Artists who are engaged in farming and petty trading activities in other products manage to raise working capital from these sources to support their businesses. However, observations from these findings revealed that these financial provisions are very meager and cannot support large-scale production. Therefore, there is the need to build a financial base either through the re-establishment of local “Susu” credit societies, participation in the existing ones, or through other alternatives. This alternative
Figure 22. Artists' methods of marketing.
Figure 23. Strategies which Artists have developed to cope with their production and marketing problems.
can be one of many viable ways, and can provide a solid a financial base to enable allows the artists themselves to put their destiny into their own hands.

**Question 4**

*Do the traditional visual artists have technical and entrepreneurial skills related to various aspects of production?*

Most rural artisans may not have highly sophisticated entrepreneurial and managerial skills and modern methods of record keeping. However, as Figure 21 shows 79% of the artists have benefited from various technical and management training programs organized by some art support agencies.

Finding from this study also revealed that, the GPEC in partnership with USAID and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) had provided training in product development, accounting, business management, pricing and marketing for artists and the executives of traditional visual arts industries and cooperative societies.

While some artists commended training programs organized by the art support agencies, others expressed concerns that they are not continuous. According to the artists, training programs initiated by the art support agencies are not artist-oriented, and only occur when the art support agencies have to meet some demands of their clients.

Training must therefore also be year-round to keep artists abreast with changes and innovations that would boost production within the traditional
visual arts industry. Artists contended that start-up or revolving running capital and marketing opportunities must also back their training and workshops.

According to Amaa Amposah, an eighty-year-old woman and a potter at Pankrono, “I cannot read nor write but I can remember all my debtors as well as my creditors.” When asked how she kept records of production and sales, she pointed to various marks on the wall of her workshop that indicated her creditors and debtors. In addition, her children also kept some of the records to buttress what she had. She said she started making pots when she was very young and has been doing this throughout her life and derives her livelihood from it as well as a small subsistence farm she keeps.

Field observation also shows that while some of the artists kept pocket notebooks and accounting journals, children or apprentices assisted others. Also, from observation and findings of this study, it would be erroneous to think that artists do not have any business and marketing skills and therefore cannot manage a business. Even if this assertion were true, one would argue that it might be due to lack of formal education and not their experience and expertise.
Question 5

What role do the government and Non-governmental (NGOs) arts support agencies play in the development of the traditional arts in Ghana?

National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI)

The traditional visual art support agencies are few and are located in Accra. In an interview, Mr. Yaw Boateng, a senior project officer of the National Board for Small-Scale Industries outlined the history of his organization. He said the Board has been since 1986. The board was later amalgamated with two autonomous government institutions, the Ghanaian Enterprise Development Commission (GEDC) and the Department of Rural Housing and Cottage Industries (DRHCI). Before this merger, the role of the Ghanaian Enterprise Development Commission was to encourage Ghanaian citizens to participate in the economy after the enactment of the Alien Compliance Act of Ghana in 1970. Before the passing of this law, most of the Ghanaian small-scale trading enterprises were predominantly owned by foreigners.

The enactment of this law was to abrogate the ownership of these businesses, and to provide small loans and other credit schemes through the GEDC to the newly-emerged Ghanaian small-scale business entrepreneurs to enable them to operate successfully. In addition, as the name suggests, the role of the Department of Housing and Cottage Industries was to initiate plans for the development of intermediate technology and raw materials for housing in rural communities in Ghana. Presently, NBSSI is only playing the role of a catalyst in
developing and implementing government plans for rural industrialization in Ghana. It has also taken over the administration of the small credit scheme operated by the Ghanaian Enterprise Development Commission.

According to Riedel and Swartz (1993), the National Board for Small-Scale Industries was established in February 1985. Its primary responsibility was to assist the Ministry of Industries, Science and Technology in the formulation, development and implementation of a national program for encouraging and accelerating the growth of small-scale industries. It also enables small-scale industries to contribute effectively to the growth and diversification of the national economy.

The functions of the Board as spelled out by Act 434 are as follows:
- To establish the criteria that constitutes a small-scale industry;
- To identify and define the types of small-scale industries in the country;
- To assist the Secretary responsible for industries in the development and support of small-scale industries;
- To implement policies in relation to small-scale industries duly approved by the Government;
- To design, develop and implement specific plans of action to meet the needs and expectations of organized groups;
- To establish the infrastructure required to accelerate the implementation of policies and programs;
- To organize a field extension network that will identify projects, collect relevant data, disseminate information and provide feedback;
- To render advice on the approval of applications for the establishment of small-scale industries as well as advice on the approval of import licenses for small-scale entrepreneurs;
- To coordinate through the Secretary responsible for industries the efforts of all agencies, ministries and donor
countries to ensure proper flow of information and avoidance of duplication of efforts and waste of material resources;

- To encourage the formation of associations, co-operatives or groups and build industrial estates or any other organizations deemed beneficial to small-scale industries development;
- To control through the Secretary responsible for industries, the inflow and outflow of all foreign aid and foreign loans granted by donor countries for the development of small-scale industries;
- To monitor through the Secretary responsible for industries the utilization of all funds derived from Ghana Government budget and subsidies earmarked for small-scale industries;
- To approve the funding of all projects for amounts within the financial limits determined by the Secretary responsible for industries;
- To appoint agencies that shall implement specific programs in the areas of finance, technology and management development, define their role and determine their responsibilities and duties;
- To assign to the appropriate agencies the implementation of projects and programs commensurate with their terms of reference and their ability to implement such projects and programs;
- To assist the implementing agencies in improving their capabilities and overcome their weaknesses so as to provide better service to the organized groups;
- To ensure that all assignments delegated to the implementing agencies are duly fulfilled;
- To ensure that all programs related to the development of small-scale industries meet the national objectives. (P.63)

According to Mr. Yaw Boateng, the Board currently operates two different credit schemes: 1. The NBSSI credit, through which, it offers loans to small-scale businesses. 2. The small revolving loan scheme operated by the GEDC that it took over. According to him, since the amalgamation of the three organizations,
there have not been any additional funds from the government to support these schemes. Also, due to macro-inflationary conditions, the value of these revolving loans has been completely eroded.

In addition, since there has not been any significant replenishment of these funds from the central government, it has been very difficult for the Board to meet the credit needs of the ever-increasing small-scale cottage industries in the country. During interviewing, it was discovered that the Board does not have any funds specially set aside for the traditional visual arts, but treats artists the same way it does other small-scale businesses. In the Ashanti region where the traditional visual arts is one of the predominant rural occupations, the Board has assisted craftsmen and women in kente and rattan weaving, basketry, wood works, brass and metalwork with small loans to expand their businesses. In addition, the Board was planning a pilot scheme to provide full financial assistance to craftspersons in two districts, Mampong and Bonwire in the Ashanti region. The NBSSI also envisions opening more offices in other districts to accelerate the growth of rural cottage industries. However, due to lack of personnel and other logistical support, these plans have not yet materialized. The government of Ghana recently expanded the law, which established the National Board for Small-Scale Industries to cover all small-scale businesses in all sectors of the economy. Yet, it does not give any clear and definite stand on the development and promotion of traditional arts in the country. He contended
that political statements are continually made about developing the traditional visual arts, but no serious efforts are being made to that effect.

**The National Commission on Culture**

As one of the primary objectives for its establishment, the National Commission on Culture (NCC) was established in 1991 by PNDC Law 229 to be responsible for the formulation and implementation of all national cultural policies, the traditional visual arts being no exception. However, since its inception, there has not been any clear and definite government statutory legislation on the arts. Also, government grants for the development and promotion of the arts and culture continue to dwindle over the last decade, making it virtually impossible to embark on any meaningful cultural programs. Apart from the payment of staff emoluments and other administrative expenses, there is very little money for arts and cultural programming.

Archival findings in this study show that National Commission on Culture is faced with inadequate funds. Apart from funds allocated for the payment of staff emoluments and administrative expenses, it has very little funds for cultural programming and the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts. Presently, the Commission has no well-defined strategic plan for national cultural development. Some policy makers therefore not only view it as an institution, which is just paying lip service to national cultural
policies, but also a misfit of the government administrative machinery. The Commission therefore has to demonstrate its commitment to the development and promotion of the arts by ensuring that a law on national cultural policy is passed and enforced.

Other findings also show that some past executive directors of the former Arts Council of Ghana such as Saka Acquaye, I. B. Phillips, Frances Sey (Ms.), and the late A. O. Bartimeus, attempted to initiate plans for the establishment of an endowment for the arts. Unfortunately, these efforts failed long before they got to the decision-making levels. Yet, there has never been any strategic policy and legislation for funding of the arts.

Other archival evidence demonstrate that in 1990, the National Commission on Culture and the Ministry for Youth and Sports initiated the idea of Community Youth Cultural Center to address the socio-cultural needs and aspirations of young people in Ghana. The desire and decision to initiate such a program was made for two reasons: First, to create requisite conditions that will enable the youth to develop their creative abilities in the traditional arts. Second, to ensure that they are in a position to contribute positively to the development of the nation. As an immediate measure, the program was aimed at counteracting the growing trends of a peer culture among the youth that is not only morally decadent and reprehensible, but also undesirable and anti-social. Based on the recognition that the nations youth constitute a very crucial and
indeed restive social category whose desires need to be productively channeled, the program is expected to respond to the immediate expectations and anxieties of this segment of the population. In the long run, it is expected to create the basis for the evolution of a Youth and Cultural Movement. Such a youth movement is to be national in character and identity and international in its outlook. Also, in view of the tendency of many youth to misuse their leisure, the initial thrust of the program was to concentrate on engaging them during their recreational and leisure times. That includes an out-of-school program that is culturally and creatively inclined and capable of supporting the aging population. Although there were few successes in the initial years, the program has now lost its momentum due to lack of funds.

According to Mr. Quaye, director of project implementation and monitoring, the National Commission on Culture does not provide direct financial assistance to traditional visual artists. Instead, it makes funds available through its regional and districts Centers for National Culture for the implementation of its policies and programs. He said the Commission would therefore continue to play a catalyst role while allowing individual artists and private entrepreneurs to participate in the crafts industry.

According to him, the Commission has completed proposals to set up pilot craft centers throughout the country to propel the development of the traditional visual arts industry for the local and foreign markets. However, he
disagreed with the notion that the development of the industry would lead to the deterioration of the quality of crafts and the extinction of revered cultural practices.

In his view, culture is dynamic and must evolve to facilitate a change for a better society tomorrow. "It is for this reason that we should appreciate the new and innovative forms of traditional visual arts. These products do not only reflect the excellence of craftsmanship of our traditional artists, but also the dynamism and growth of creativity of our artists," Mr. Quaye concluded.

Interview from Mr. Quaye was confirmed through personal conversation with some employees of the Accra Arts Center. Mr. S. N. Ashong, the administrative officer at the Greater Accra Center for National Culture asserted that the National Commission on Culture does not give direct financial assistance to traditional visual artists but provides indirect assistance through programs and activities. He reiterated that the Commission has offices in the nine regions and in some districts within the region. Through its regional and districts centers (Centers for National Culture), funds are allocated for art workshops, seminars and exhibitions. However, the regularity of these activities depends on the availability of funds. Therefore, there are no support programs such as loans or technical assistance programs from which artists' could benefits directly.
Also, in an exit interview with Nana Brefo-Boateng, the Acting Chief Director of the National Commission on Culture, it was reemphasized that on paper, the Commission might appear to be doing well. However, like any other government agency in the country, it is facing the precarious problems of inadequate funding from the central government to meet its administrative mission. He therefore supported this research project with the hope that its findings can be used to address the problems of funding of the arts in Ghana.

One cannot over-emphasize the role art guilds and associations can play in the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts. Archival studies however, revealed that there are numerous small-scale traditional visual artists scattered all over the country whose economic potential can provide growth and support to the national economy. Yet, the activities of these very important rural artisans are not properly coordinated to yield the maximum returns.

The Ghana Association of Visual Artists (GAVA) was established in 1974 to promote the development and growth of the visual arts. For the past decades, GAVA has been defunct and inactive for several reasons. These include the lack of effective leadership and inability to collect dues from members. Due to lack of leadership, the association is unable to stand as a recognized body to act on behalf of its members. Consequently, the artists have not been mobilized to make any significant impact on the development and promotion of the visual
arts in the country. Therefore, there is a need for all traditional artists, cooperatives, and other artists’ guilds to be registered under a unified body. When this action is implemented, it would promote a flow of information on marketing strategies, access to raw materials, bank loans, supply of tools and equipment and work to maintain the quality of the traditional visual arts.

Aid to Artisans (NGO)

The interview with Mr. John Teye, the Financial Controller of Aid to Artisans proceeded without any hitch. According to Mr. Teye, his organization is helping to create employment within the handicrafts industry around the world. In Ghana, his organization does this by providing rural artisans with loans, equipment, and technical training through workshops and seminars to enable them to advance in their respective occupations. Technical assistance also covers workshops and seminars on product design, and entrepreneurial development.

Aid to Artisans also conducts business on behalf of artists by searching for markets for their products around the world. However, his organization does not provide individual craft persons with capital to set up their own businesses. Rather, when the market for a product is secured, his organization sublets the contract to the artist and assists him with materials and equipment from its tools and equipment bank. This assistance may sometimes take the
form of short-term cash advancement, materials, tools, or equipment, which
would enable the artist to produce the works. The artist then pays back the loan
after the completion and sale of the works. However, his organization has
realized that some of the equipment and materials loaned to artist do not match
their needs. For example, bead makers are traditional artists who use broken
bottles and firewood, but at the time of the supply, they may not need it. Aid to
Artisans has therefore instituted a loan scheme, which is now administered by
the artists who work in cooperatives. By this system, the artists make decisions
regarding borrowing, and how to retrieve loans from defaulters. In effect, the
artists then have the prerogative to decide which materials they require at a
particular time based on their own needs.

Aid to Artisans has also been able to organize these craft persons into
work groups and cooperatives in rural communities where artists produce the
same products. Most often, artists work independently and only cooperate to
pool individual resources together for the purchase of equipment or make bulk
purchases of raw materials.

As asked how Aid to Artisans assists in marketing the work of the
traditional artists, Mr. Teye said his organization does this through a number of
ways. First, through craft exhibitions, it organizes for craft dealers and
collectors around the world by its subsidiary company based in the U. S. These
exhibitions give dealers the opportunity to see the samples of the art works and
order them through this subsidiary company. Also, his organization holds a mini exhibition of artists' works for buyers who come directly to the office in Accra. These exhibitions give buyers the opportunity to meet artists whose works they would like to buy as well as artists whose works they have previously bought and would like to buy more. In addition, his organization encourages buyers to visit the artists at their workshops to see at first-hand, the variety of things they produce.

When questioned further whether his organization sees any significant improvement in the social and economic life of the artist his organization serves, Mr. Teye responded in the affirmative. He said occasionally, artists themselves come to the office to give testimonies such as growth in business, purchase of a new truck, or expansion of their studio space.

The Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC)

Interview with Mr. Adu-Mensah, Director of Trade for the Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC), about his organization's support for the traditional overwhelmingly as he shared deep insight of the operations of the Ghanaian traditional visual art producers.

According to Mr. Adu-Mensah, the GEPC, in collaboration with some Ghanaian and German craft consultants had just started a project in product development of Ghanaian traditional handicrafts. The project, code-named
"Europe and African Cooperation on Handicrafts," received some technical and financial support from the European Economic Community (EEC). This support was aimed at training Ghanaian traditional visual artists to design and produce more sophisticated and usable crafts for all categories of persons, without changing the concepts of the art works. It was also to identify some of the production and marketing problems encountered by traditional artists. These consultants have assisted traditional artists at Krofuforum and Ahwia and other crafts centers.

Mr. Adu-Mensah said that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Ghana has also embarked on trade investment in the traditional visual arts industry in Ghana. Under the program, USAID has sponsored the construction of fifteen craft centers around the country, which are now been used by more than thirty-five traditional visual artists. These artists produce several varieties of crafts, which include clothing and textiles, brass-casting, pottery, ceramics, straw weaving, bead making, and kente weaving. Before the construction of these craft centers, artists in most of these villages worked under trees, dilapidated workshops, or on the verandas of their homes. According to Mr. Mensah, a weaver who works in his house has to abandon his work when a member of his or her family dies. In addition, during the rainy season, artists are unable to work under the trees and poorly constructed workshops. The establishment of these craft villages has therefore provided
artists the needed space to enable them to work consistently. He said crafts persons were also assisted through small loans to expand their workshops. They have also been encouraged to form grassroots cooperative societies and elect their own executives.

One question still lingered in my mind unanswered. Do the art support agencies really act as catalyst for accelerating the development of traditional visual arts in Ghana? The findings from the archival research of the NBSSI suggest that it has not played any active role in providing technical and financial assistance for rural artisans in Ghana. Yet, the laws establishing the National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI) shows that it is actively involved in the development of all small-scale industries, including the traditional arts.

Another observation, which was paramount during this study, was the contradiction in the responses between artists and the support agencies. The artists argue that support they received from the art support agencies are inadequate and are only available based on their own secret agendas. In contrast, the art support agencies also claim they have supported the artists.

Based on observation from this study, the National Commission on Culture, Aid to Artisans, and the Ghana Export Promotion Council operate like middlemen who provide some form of operating capital for artists to produce works for them to market. Also, findings about the present administration of the
arts support agencies, which is graphically illustrated in Figure 1 on page 35, show how artists are marginalized in the marketing of their own works.

Evidently, traditional visual artists in Ghana are not benefiting much from the traditional arts support agencies. In addition, most artists interviewed claimed that they do not benefit from Aid to Artisan’s loan scheme. Also, one does not see the effects of their catalyst role of assisting in the development of small-scale cottage industries as the art support agencies tried to claim. Even those who have somehow benefited complained that they are loans and other technical supports are inadequate.

It may appear significant to readers that 71% of the products are sold to local vendors and in the artists’ showroom. However, observations from this study revealed that this figure represents vendors who purchase the artworks and either resells locally or for export. Since the level of production of most artists is appreciable and the artworks are purchased at very low prices, artist do not make substantial amount of money. Rather, the bulk of the profits accrue to the middlemen and the art support agencies that resell or export these art works. Another exploitative observation was that most of the art support agencies have show-rooms where works of artists purchased cheaply are displayed and resold at market prices. Even if one would argue that these show rooms are used to expose the works the traditional visual artists, this study sees it as more beneficial to the art support agencies than to the artists.
Question 6

Under what circumstances can the success stories and solutions of Latin and Central American traditional visual artists be compared to Ghana?

The African Experience

Studies conducted by Jules-Rossette (1987) reveal that indigenous craft production in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, and La Cote d'Ivoire contributes substantially to the foreign exchange earnings of these countries. Her studies, however, fail to indicate how the foreign exchange generated had contributed to the improvement of the lives of rural artisans.

The Djene Women's Cooperative in Mali, West Africa that produces the "Bokolofini" (mud cloth), which are sold at weekly markets to tourists, contributes substantially to income of several households (LaDuke, 1991).

Document research conducted during the pilot study for this study in Ghana revealed that efforts initiated to form traditional visual artists into work-group cooperatives after Ghana's independence in 1957 by Nkrumah's government failed. This fact was confirmed during an interview with Nii Amon Kotei and Mr. Saka Acquaye, two renowned Ghanaian artists. According to Nii Amon Kotei, these attempts became futile because of poor management by leaders of the cooperatives who were not artists themselves. Other observers also attributed its failure to the fact that the cooperatives did not evolve from the artists.
In the 1970s, the International Labor Organization (ILO),\textsuperscript{14} in collaboration with the government of Ghana started a rattan weaving pilot project in Tarkwa in the Western region of Ghana as a means of creating an alternative form of employment for rural communities in this region. The project, however, failed due to lack of adequate funds and commitment from the government of Ghana. Likewise, the ILO has also initiated income generating craft activities in basket weaving, batiks and tie and dye, pottery and ceramics for women in some rural communities in Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Botswana to provide them with income generating employment (ILO Quarterly Bulletin, 1990). While this study commends the ILO for assisting rural communities to seek socioeconomic growth, it cannot determine the extent of success attained by these projects in the afore-mentioned countries.

In Ghana, the problems of traditional visual artists revolve around low inadequate capital investment and marketing opportunities. Artists have very low investment capital and therefore are unable to maintain an appreciable level of production in order to make a decent living. Also, artists are unable to market their products without the help of middlemen. Consequently, they cannot maximize the income from the sale of their works. In addition, traditional visual artists cannot attract loans, and short-term credit from commercial banks. Also, the artists are unorganized, and cut off from national and international markets.

\textsuperscript{14} International Labor Organization (ILO) is one of the United Nations specialized agencies which seeks to promote social justice and internationally recognized human labor. http://www.unitednations.com/.
Another problem is the indifferent attitude of macro economic planners who do not see the need for the development of this rural occupation as a means of livelihood in rural communities. There are also no government support mechanisms and programs for traditional visual artists to advance in their occupation.

Traditional Visual Arts Success Stories

Studies conducted by Kleymeyer (1994), however, show that the Associacion Columbiana de Promocion Artisanal (ACPA) is a unique organization in Columbia, Latin America, which has developed three strategies for reviving craft traditions. First, the organization concentrated its efforts on educating the Columbian public about its cultural heritage through the Museums in Bogota with the hope of increasing the demand for quality handicrafts and creating support for artisanal production. A second strategy involved working with the local artisanal groups throughout Columbia to help them revive and preserve craft traditions and improve their social and economic well-being. At the third level of its activity, the ACPA collaborated with the Ministry of Education and other public and private institutions to design and implement an innovative program of rural education.

Also, studies conducted on traditional art industries in the Oaxaca Valley in Southern Mexico commended the efforts of the Mexican government in setting
up a bank and a cooperative society, which provides loans to artists who show a boost in their production (Stephen, 1987). In Peru, the Antisuyo, non-profit craft marketing cooperative was created in the 1970s to help traditional artists generate income and employment. Today, studies have shown that it has not only helped reinforce cultural traditions by encouraging the production of high quality crafts, but has also contributed to the recovery of lost techniques (Leon, 1978). In Mexico, the government used tourism and economic policies to encourage craft industries as an alternative income-generating strategy in rural communities, thus raising the standard of living of its peasant population (Stephen, 1989).

According to field studies conducted by Stephen (1989), during the 1960s, the government of Oaxaca formed the BANFOCO (Bank de Fomento de Cooperatives) with its primary objective to provide loans to craft-producing Reptilian cooperative groups in the Oaxaca Valley for the purchase of raw materials. A second attempt by the Oaxaca government towards the development of crafts was through the setting up of FONART, an offspring of BANFOCO. The main mission of FONART was "to conserve, rescue, and promote popular traditional arts with commercial support and credit through the supply of raw materials." FONART also acted as a market for craftsmen and women by buying their finished products. Today, FONART continues to serve as one of the major buyers of Teotitlan rugs and blankets.
Teoticos traditional artists prefer to make their own contacts with clients or simply with local merchants because the government is unable to make prompt payment when weavers are prepared to sell. They rejected government-sponsored cooperatives because of their desire to support enterprises that originate from the community. Further studies show that weavers also receive interest-free loans and raw materials from the merchant population who are now the main financiers of this industry (Stephen, 1987). Money generated through the traditional art industry has been invested in public projects such as schools, new market-place sports facilities, the building of bridges, and the revamping of their irrigation systems (Stephen, 1987).

Sna Jolobil (meaning house of weavers), a Chiapas Weavers Cooperative was started in 1976 with a membership of about 650 weavers from Tzotzil and Tzeltal Maya communities in the Highlands of Chiapas in Southern Mexico (Stephen, 1987). Its aim was to help the weavers revive the ancient, sacred and rich artistic traditions of the Highland Chiapas Maya weaving, and assist weavers who make high quality textiles in receiving good profits for their works. Today, the operations of Sna Jolobil have improved the quality of production, increased sales and profit margins at the outlet stores of its members (Stephen, 1987).

In Peru, the crafts produced by many indigenous groups are varied and of very high quality. Antisuyo is a non-profit crafts marketing cooperative that
aims at helping Peruvian indigenous artists through the provision of working capital to generate income, employment, and to assist in marketing their goods at reasonable prices (Leone, 1987). This action has helped to reinforce cultural traditions by encouraging the production of high quality crafts, and in some cases, help to recover lost techniques. Studies conducted by Leon (1987) also revealed how the Antisuyo has achieved this through constant contacts with indigenous artists in the Peruvian highlands and eastern jungle. It also pays good prices for the artists' products that are sold in cooperative shops in Lima and holds periodic exhibitions throughout the country to educate the public and promote the sale of traditional handicrafts (Leon, 1987). Antisuyo promoters also make regular visits to communities of producers and organize training courses about quality control, pricing, accounting and management skills.

Though archival studies of traditional visual arts success stories of Latin and Central America cannot be replicated for Ghana, it provides some useful developmental strategies for the traditional visual arts in Ghana. These strategies include the provision of marketing outlets, the establishment of an independent body to manage the arts, assisting artists to participate in local and international exhibitions, entrepreneurial training and provision investment capital, and national recognition. The concluding chapter, while addressing the
significance of this study, would also provide a model solution that would alleviate the socioeconomic problems presently facing the traditional visual artists industry in Ghana.
CHAPTER 5

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY
CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The debate over commercialization of the traditional visual arts continue to rage on for several decades. While some school of thought sees commercialization as an opportunity for rural people to make a living and have a sense of belong and inclusion, others see it as an acculturation and degradation of culture.

Graburn (1999), in his recent publication *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, again attempts to recapitulate the problems of authenticity of traditional arts in most ethnic societies. In his view, due to international commercialization traditional arts have inhibited cultural and historical factors that promote local production their unique forms of cultural expressions. According to Graburn (1999), many traditional values are now dead, and many more are on the verge of extinction, or being replaced by Western lifestyles. Valuable art forms, which serve as the mirrors of cultures and should have been kept for posterity, have been sold for want of money. The
exogenous demand has not only encouraged art traders to drain villages of artistic wealth, but also led to the creation of new forms of material culture (hybrid styles, invented genres, and "fakes"), which has developed as debris of colonial culture contact. The traditional arts are now souvenirs for visitors of the to traditional societies.

Steiner and Phillips (1999) concur that the consequences of innovative designs of traditional art objects as well as new production and marketing techniques raise questions of their authenticity. This is because makers of these objects have frequently manipulated production in order to serve economic needs. These accusations of authenticity are also based on the assertion that the producers themselves produced for external markets and not for use commodities.

Steiner and Phillips (1999) however, argue that scholars sometimes ignore the plain fact that colonized people around the world most often did not wear the same kind of garments and ornaments they sell as souvenirs. Also, many forms of aesthetic expressions within indigenous societies are profoundly transformed by their makers’ intensified involvement in producing for the market (Phillips, 1999). Furthermore, by tying the definition of authenticity of traditional art forms of non-Western cultures to putative pre-industrial quality, scholars also deny the art makers their place in modernity (Phillips, 1999).
Ettawageshik (1999), however, argues that whenever any school of thought questions the authenticity of traditional arts, it also questions the authenticity of the producers. Ettawagistik (1999), who grew up in a Native American traditional craft community, argues that art is a reflection as well as an interaction with other cultures. Also, the changes traditional arts undergo is a manifestation of the changes societies go through rather than their extinction. Ettawageshik contend that his family’s traditional crafts business and those of others have helped preserve the traditional art forms in the communities of Little Traverse Bay Bands of the Odawa Indians of the northern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan. According to Ettawageshik (1999), tourists and resort ships that docked the harbor regularly provided a steady market for the art and crafts made by members of the Odawa community, thus providing them some meager income for the family. Although the income was small its importance cannot be overlooked because it provided food for most families.

Ettawageshik (1999) further contends that forty years ago, quill working was considered to be well on its way to become lost traditional arts in northern Lower Michigan. However, today, there are nearly seventy-five quill workers in the little Traverse Bay area. Many of the quill workers who were taught by women have made tremendous impact on the preservation of traditional arts in several communities in little Traverse Bay. This is a reflection of cultural
continuity and adaptation in the face of enormous pressures to relocate, assimilate, or fade away. We should therefore consider the commercialization of the traditional arts as a manifestation of dynamism and growth of cultures, rather than a sign of their extinction. Ettawageshik (1999) concludes that if contemporary scholars would argue that traditional American Indian arts are not authentic, then it cannot be long that the federal bureaucrats would conclude that today’s American Indians are no longer authentic.

Silverman (1999) also argues that the traditional arts of people of Eastern Iatmul in Papua New Guinea meaningfully express local experiences and processes as the Sepik River community become enmeshed into the wider global system. Despite commercialization, their art traditions still convey messages about village, regional and national ethnicity.

Heyzer (1995) contends that recent approaches to development have emerged debates on what sustainable and people-centered stands for, and for whom. He argued that sustainable development should not be understood as sustained profits for private and public sector interests at the expense of the people or women, particularly women. According to Heyzer (1995), the 1990s has been characterized by globalization of the world economy. On one hand, there is emphasis on renewed growth through the development of market economies. On the other hand, there are concerns with environmental

\[\text{Ettawageshik is an American Indian born in Harbor Spring in Little Traverse Bay in northern Lower Michigan.}\]
degradation because of economic growth. Heyzer (1995) further argues that the existing realities of globalization have to be recognized and addressed. He contends that it is important to fully pursue and improve the socioeconomic well-being of rural people in most developing countries. This is because although their lives are embedded in the international economic order, growth-oriented and profit-driven development continues to widen the gap between rich and poor countries.

Korten (1995) also contends that it is now common knowledge that the elitist ideology of neo-liberal economics which were forcefully pursued through institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) have not offered any workable solutions to poor countries. People in developing countries around the world are continually struggling to eradicate poverty, hunger, disease and better their living standards without much success.

Kleymeyer (2001) draws on his 20 years experience of working in rural communities in Central and Latin America to provide a conceptual overview of the ways in which cultural heritage underlies and shapes civil society. A key illustration of this dynamics is the use of traditional visual arts to carry out community-based development projects. According Kleymeyer (2001), to the term traditional refers to people who rely on maintaining a certain level of
continuity as they draw upon their cultural foundations and their ancestral technologies to guide them through innovations.

Kleymeyer (2001) argues that people are not static, nor are they unwilling to change. Rather, they choose to evolve in a self-reliant, self-directed manner that draws more from their own heritage and from other cultures or socioeconomic strata at one time or another. Traditional people are often overlooked as a human resource of vast untapped potential. Yet, they are key stakeholders who can protect and promote the existing traditional institutions for which more action and financial resources must be directed.

According to Daniel Salcedo (2001), president and co-founder of PEOPlink, the current economic conditions present a window of opportunity to democratize access to the tools of global E-commerce (Internet commerce). PEOPlink is a non-profit organization that pioneers the benefits of E-commerce to grassroots in remote locations around the world. Salcedo (2001) argues that coordinated efforts are needed to empower grassroots producers to participate more directly in this technological bonanza to achieve a more direct access to markets. PEOPLink does this by equipping individual it designates as trading partners (Trading Partners, TP) with digital cameras and trains them on how to capture images and edit them in a compressed format suitable for transmission via the Internet.
PEOPLink was hatched while Slacedo was traveling throughout Haiti, Guatemala and Peru. In 1979, Daniel Salcedo, President, and Marijke Velzeboer Vice-President of PEOPLink (both from Mexico), started Pueblo to People, a similar nonprofit organization that markets crafts from Central and Latin America through a mail order catalog. Pueblo to People was a very successful model of a self-sustaining development initiative to empower the poor. It grew in annual sales to $3.5 millions dollars and supports three thousand families in Guatemala, Mexico and several Latin and Central American countries. These families are organized grassroots groups that include craft cooperatives, widows groups, refugee associations, and peasant leagues. Also, in Uganda, PEOPLink has assisted Helen Mutono, a Ugandan woman who now uses the Internet to sell Ugandan baskets, to raises funds to help children who have been orphaned by AIDS. This form of technical assistance is a good example of the writer’s empowering development philosophy.

The crux of this present socioeconomic development age should be neither commercialization nor about the authenticity of objects, but about peoples’ livelihood. Unfortunately, the attitude of Western anthropologists and economists to blame traditional societies for causing their own predicament will not contribute to alleviating the problems of rural people. Many a time, the solutions offered for these problems challenge the very essence of their existence, usually threatening to assimilate them into a dominant culture. Also, efforts to
produce a mono-culture sought by bottom-up development experts result in conflicts, alienation and impoverishment of the people for whom development is planned. Rural artisans all over the world are faced with the same difficulties in product design, capital formation, and marketing. Therefore, as we develop solutions for one group, they can be transferred to others.

Presently, the Internet allows us to reach out to groups in most countries in the world. As a result, buyers are attracted to a wider-range of products from many countries through the Internet. Internet commerce is in its infancy, however, most governments have not decided how to shape or regulate it. The writer would, however, like to caution that even though Internet commerce can revolutionize international commerce and improve marketing of traditional visual arts, one is not certain as to what shape it will ultimately take. Primarily, most traditional visual artists who though cannot read and write the English language and live in remote corners of the world can benefit. It is imperative for International development institutions to harness the Internet resource as a tool for development, reaching out to marginalized people all over the world and to ensure that the interests of poor producers are protected.

Cultural expressions help keep diverse technologies and worldviews alive by transmitting and supporting them within the broader web of society. Maintaining ethnic autonomy and cultural self-determination is a basic right
which is fundamental to broad-based development. It is therefore time to put all rhetoric's of development behind and get into a positive action of people empowerment.

The traditional visual arts can be a source of livelihood in many rural communities in Ghana and around the world. Yet, in Ghana, inadequate strategic support mechanisms have not accelerated its development and growth. This absence or low level of support, limited investment capital and marketing opportunities has to be addressed. One can argue that the art support agencies or financial institutions in Ghana have not support the traditional visual arts, because the evidence of their level of support is very low.

Little or no elaborate research has been conducted to ascertain the economic relevance of the traditional visual arts in Ghana as this study has done. This ethnographical study therefore elucidated the socioeconomic relevance of the traditional visual arts to the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages.

The participants in this study were 80 male and female active traditional visual artists consisting of individuals, families, work groups and cooperatives. Officials of three art support agencies were also intensively interviewed. Open-ended questions, photographing, and archival research guided the study to ascertain: (i) whether the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages have technical and managerial skills related to their traditional visual arts occupations, (ii) whether they have developed any strategies for coping with their production
and marketing problems; (iii) whether this form of occupation is one of their main sources of livelihood; (iv) whether they are developing a business or they just want to maintain tradition; (v) whether government and non-governmental (NGOs) arts support agencies play any role in the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts; and (vi) under what conditions can the success stories of Central and Latin America can be applied to Ghana.

Significantly, findings of the study revealed that the level of production of traditional visual artists in Kumasi and surrounding villages is low due to the low level of investment capital, inadequate marketing opportunities, and government support programs. Also, the data revealed that increase in production could generate more income for the artists and improve their livelihood. In addition, there is a need for the establishment of an independent organization to be solely responsible for the development, preservation, promotion, and marketing of the traditional visual arts. This study provides support strategies for all stakeholders who are responsible for the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts in Ghana. It also contributes useful insights for the development of the traditional visual arts industry as a means of livelihood not only for the people of Kumasi and surrounding villages, but also other rural communities in Africa. In addition, it provides useful data for individuals and institutions that are interested in setting up small-scale rural
cottage industries. This concluding chapter therefore provides some useful insights for model solution for the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts in Ghana.

**Model Solution for Development**

As part of government decentralization in Ghana, the Ministry of Local Government, the District Assemblies, (the government administrative bodies at local level) and the German Agency for Economic and Technical Cooperation (GAZ) have entered into a bilateral financial and technical agreement to develop sustainable economic resources in rural communities. Yet, the definition of what constitutes a viable economic activity in Ghana’s rural communities is narrow and does not include the traditional visual arts.

During this study, the researcher had the opportunity to meet a German economic consultant working on some rural development projects in Ghana. The researcher was attracted by the catch phrase, "rural development project" in a newsletter of this agency and therefore visited the project office to inquire about the possibilities of securing a grant for his fieldwork. After waiting for several hours at the reception, I was directed to his office. Without waiting for me to brief about him about this research project, the consultant just retorted, "We do not have funds for supporting artists. Our goal in these projects is to identify the economic-resource-potential of District Assemblies and I do not see
how you fit in," he added. When he was questioned as to whether or not traditional crafts such as pottery and ceramics, textiles, basketry, cane and rattan, leather, brass works and woodwork are not rural economic activities that need to financial boost, he was startled. He then opened up for a dialogue on my research, and at the end of our meeting asked if I would be interested in working as a consultant for his organization after the completion of my doctoral program. The negative attitude of macro economic planners and policy makers, which alienates traditional visual artists' who contribute to socioeconomic development of rural communities, is one of the problems this study seeks to address.

While studies of the development strategies in Central and Latin American are worthy of emulation, there is a need to forge a collaboration between traditional visual artists and art support agencies in Ghana, for a positive action. This study contends that the new empowerment model should catalyze new strategic efforts to boost the development of traditional economics resource in rural communities in Ghana and around the world.

It is evident from this study that, for several decades, the development and promotion of the traditional visual arts in Ghana has been a sole responsibility of the national government. It is therefore time to allow joint support from other sectors of the society that have a stake in the development, preservation and promotion of the arts. These institutions includes but not limited to the National Commission on Culture, the Ministry of Youth and
Sports, National Board for Small-Scale Industries, the Ghana Export Promotion Council, Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Tourism, the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and entrepreneurs and businesses.

Presently, works of art bought for export are sent to the Ghana Museums and Monument Board and a permit is issued to enable the buyer to transport the art work(s) outside the country. Many times, care is not taken to check whether or not they are cultural properties, which are not allowed to be exported.

Several weeks of field observation at the Accra Arts Center where a representative of the Ghana Museums and Monument Board is stationed, did not show any seriousness with the issue of these art permits. Occasionally, one has to go around the offices of the Center in search of the officer whenever someone came in to “purchase” a permit. Permits were just issued to whoever brought in any art object such as traditional drums, paintings, straw baskets, leather crafts to be exported. The owner is charged a fee ranging from 3,000 to 7,000 Cedis ($1-7,300) and issued with a certificate to allow the works to taken out of the country. One however, wonders what this fee really represents. Is this money collected an export tax or art tax? Upon what criteria is the collection of these tariffs based and what is the educational and professional qualification of the officer collecting this money?

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With the recent increase in the volume\textsuperscript{17} of export of traditional visual arts, it is imperative for all the art supporting agencies, such as GEPC, the National Commission on Culture, National Board for Small-Scale Industries, and the Ghana Museums and Monument Board to collaborate efforts to establish a Traditional Visual Arts Development and Credit Union.

The Traditional Visual Development Arts and Credit Union (TVADCD), must be an independent non-profit organization and legally registered. It must be a voluntary organization and open all to all artists with a responsibility to provide technical training, and financial and marketing support for traditional visual artists. TVADCD must not only be limited to providing support for the traditional of the arts, but must also work in close collaboration with all the art support agencies to promote and preserve traditional visual arts and cultural heritage.

Qualified business professional with extensive knowledge of the arts should manage this organization. It must have the prerogative to raise funds and act as an intermediary between artists and other financial institutions to enable artists secure credit from other financial institutions for its members. The management will make decisions pertaining to day-to-day administration. However, there must a Board of Directors composed of representatives of all categories of traditional visual artists and will be responsible for approving all

\textsuperscript{17} Ghana Export Promotion Council, Trade Bulletin, 1999.
strategic management decisions. These decisions will include issues pertaining to loans to artists, debt collection, development promotion and marketing of the traditional visual arts.

The TVADCU must establish quality control standards for the traditional visual arts. Artists, cultural officers, and export development officers must be trained to administer quality control policies on the traditional visual arts for local and foreign markets. These quality control officers would not only ensure that artworks that leave the shores of Ghana are of high quality, but also competitive to other traditional visual arts from other parts of the world.

TVADCU must also be responsible for the training of artists to maintain high standards and give professional finish to their products. Monies that accrue from the art export permits can be mobilized into the national arts endowment fund for the benefit of the artist and to promote the arts.

Most traditional visual artists are not well-educated. It must therefore be the prerogative of TVADCU in partnership with the art support agencies, to provide them with continuous technical and managerial opportunities to facilitate their development and growth. Artists must also be taught techniques of seeking financial investment capital for the expansion of their businesses. Evidence from this study shows that about 70% of the traditional visual arts produced are sold locally. This figure is a significant indication that these products have local patronage. However, the figures only represent activities of
vendors. Nationally, the level of public appreciation of traditional visual arts is not high. The TVADCU and the traditional visual arts support agencies must embark on an intensive cultural promotion through the news media to stimulate the public interest in homemade traditional crafts. They should not only set the pace by word but by encouraging government agencies, schools, public buildings, and recreational parks to use local traditional arts for decoration. For example, decorative batik cloths can be used for curtains and cushion covers in public buildings. Also, the TVDACU must work in collaboration with government agencies to adopt some of the traditional product such as batik fabrics as uniforms for its employees.

Developing the local market for the traditional visual arts in Ghana should not be the end. The TVADCU must expand its marketing activities to other countries of the West African sub-region and the entire African continent. In addition, TVADCU and all traditional support agencies must collaborate efforts to promote the works of traditional visual artists through workshops, international seminars and exhibitions. Evidence from this study also indicates that about 29% of traditional visual arts are exported. While this figure may seem insignificant, it is likely that some of the traditional visual arts that are sold locally find their way into the export market. Also, since traditional visual arts earn substantial amount of foreign exchange to exporters and the country at large, the industry needs to be properly organized to yield its maximum output.
Finally, the TVADCU, in collaboration with all the art support agencies, must ensure that traditional visual artists are supported to enable realize their realize the full creative potentials and not to decide what in their minds is best for the artists.

The contribution of this research might not have covered all aspects of the traditional visual arts and its contribution to socio-economic development in Ghana in its entirety. However, the snap-shot provided of artists in Kumasi and Its surrounding villages present unique insights into future policy and implementation of traditional visual art programs. In addition, it presents a challenge to all art lovers, philanthropists, tourism experts, art educators and administrators, cultural experts, private and public agencies, entrepreneurs and businesses to support efforts of the government towards the development of the traditional visual arts. For, if this research did not provide any useful information for all stakeholders interested in the maintenance and preservation of art traditions, it provides some data for future research on the traditional visual arts in Ghana.
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APPENDIX A

AN ETHNOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF THE METHODS OF DEVELOPING THE TRADITIONAL VISUAL ARTS: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE INCOMES OF TRADITIONAL ARTISTS IN GHANA

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRADITIONAL VISUAL ARTISTS/CRAFTS PERSONS

A. Name of Artist/Craftsperson  Age  Sex  Marital Status
B. Level of Education/Training
C. What types of traditional visual artworks do you produce?
D. How often do you produce these works?
E. Do they have any special or specific functions in Ghana?
F. Do you work alone or work in a group?
G. How long have you been engaged in this occupation?
H. Why did you go into this form of occupation?
I. What was your initial start-up capital?
J. Do you have any other form of occupation?
K. How do you market your products?
L. Have you ever received any form of assistance either private or government for your business?
M. If yes, what form of assistance did you receive?
N. How do you cope with your production problems? Explain

O. In what ways do you think the traditional visual arts and crafts industry could be organized to benefit all traditional artists in Ghana?
APPENDIX B

AN ETHNOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF THE METHODS OF DEVELOPING THE TRADITIONAL VISUAL ARTS: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE INCOMES OF TRADITIONAL ARTISTS IN GHANA

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE ART SUPPORT AGENCIES

1. What is the name of your organization?
2. For how long have your organization been working in Ghana?
3. Is your organization privately or government sponsored?
4. What are the sources for your operation?
5. Does your organization have any preference for institutions they sponsor? Explain.
6. Does your organization support the work of traditional visual artists?
7. What type of assistance do you provide?
8. Is your organization aware of problems it considers the most difficult for traditional visual artists and crafts person in Ghana?
9. What support strategies can your organization propose to boost the present level of support for economic and cultural development?
APPENDIX C
RESPONSE DATA SHEET

A. Artist's age
1. Under 10 years
2. 10-25 years
3. 20-35 years
4. 30-45 years
5. 40-55 years
6. 50-65 years
7. Over 60 years

B. Sex of Artist
8. Male
9. Female

C. Marital Status Artist:
10. Married
11. Single
12. Widowed

D. Level of Education
13. No Formal education
14. Middle school
15. Traditional apprenticeship
16. Junior secondary school
17. Senior Secondary school
18. Technical school
19. College degree

D. Types of traditional arts produced by artist
20. Wood carving
21. Beads
22. Rattan and Cane Weaving
23. Pottery
24. Kente weaving
25. Brass works
26  Embroidery
27  Batik
28  Kings' paraphernalia
29  Adinkra Cloth
30  Leather works

E.  Do the objects you produce have any special significance?
31  Everyday use (cultural object)
32  Celebration
33  Social
34  Decoration
35  Religious

G.  How often do you produce your art works?
36  Daily
37  Once a week
38  Twice a week
39  Three times a week
40  Four times a week
41  Five times a week
42  Six times a week
43  Weekly
44  Monthly
45  Quarterly
46  Bi-annually
47  Annually

H.  What is the nature of your business?
48  One-man-business
49  Family
50  Cooperative
51  Partnership
52  Limited Liability Company

I.  How long have you been engaged in this occupation?
53  Less than a year
54  1 - 10 years
55  20 - 30 years
56  40 - 50 years
57  50 - 60 years
58  60 - 70 years
59  Over 70 years
J. What motivated you into this form of occupation?
60. Talented
61. Family influence
62. Financially rewarding
63. Hobby
64. Vocation

K. What was your initial capital investment? (Amount quoted in Cedis: $1 - 7,300 cedis)
65. Less than C10,000
66. C10,000 - C30,000
67. C30,000 - C50,000
68. C50,000 - C70,000
69. C70,000 - C100,000
70. Over C100,000

L. Do you have any other form of occupation?
71. Yes
72. No

M. How do you market your product?
73. Artist showroom
74. Local Vendors
75. Art Galleries
76. Middlemen
79. Tourists and Exporters

N. Have you ever received any form of assistance for your business?
80. Yes
81. No

O. What form of assistance?
82. Bank Loans
83. Government subsidy
84. Management and technical training
85. Workshops and Seminars
86. Exhibitions
87. Government acquisitions

P. How do you cope with your production problems?
88. Rely on friends, relatives, and vendors for revolving capital.
89. Plough-back profits
90. Bank Loans
91. Government subsidy
92 Personal funds
93 Refinancing by local vendors

EXIT QUESTION
Q. In what way do you think the traditional visual arts industry can be organized for the benefit of the traditional visual artists in Ghana?

94 Set a Department that will administer the development and promotion of traditional visual arts

95 Involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and district assemblies

96. Government should provide loans with low interest rate access to artists.
### APPENDIX D

**TABLE SHOWING FREQUENCY OF INTERVIEW RESPONSES OF THE TRADITIONAL VISUAL ARTISTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question &amp; Codes</th>
<th>Frequency of Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Artist’s age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Under 10 years</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>2. 10-25 years</td>
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<td>3. 25-35 years</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>4. 35-45 years</td>
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<td>5. 45-55 years</td>
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<td>6. 55-65 years</td>
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<td>7. Over 60 years</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Sex of Artist</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Male</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Female</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Marital Status Artist:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Married</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Single</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>12. Widowed</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Level of Education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. No Formal education</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Middle school</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Traditional apprenticeship</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>16. Junior secondary school</td>
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<td>17. Senior Secondary school</td>
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<td>18. Technical school</td>
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<td>19. College degree</td>
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<td>E. Types of traditional arts produced by artist</td>
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<td>20. Wood carving</td>
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<td>21. Beads</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Rattan and Cane Weaving</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Pottery</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Kente weaving</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Brass works</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Embroidery</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Batik</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Kings' paraphernalia</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Adinkra cloth</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Leather works</td>
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<td>F.</td>
<td>Do the objects you produce have any special significance?</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Everyday use (cultural object)</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Celebration</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Decoration</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Religious</td>
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<td>G.</td>
<td>How often do you produce your art works?</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Daily</td>
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<td>37.</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Six times a week</td>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>Annually</td>
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<td>H.</td>
<td>How do you work?</td>
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<td>48.</td>
<td>One-man-business</td>
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<td>49.</td>
<td>Family</td>
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<td>50.</td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
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<td>51.</td>
<td>Partnership</td>
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<td>52.</td>
<td>Limited Liability Company</td>
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<td>I.</td>
<td>How long have you been engaged in this occupation?</td>
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<td>53.</td>
<td>Less than a year</td>
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<td>10 - 20 years</td>
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<td>56.</td>
<td>20 - 30 years</td>
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<td>57.</td>
<td>30 - 40 years</td>
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<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<td>58. 40 – 50 years</td>
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<td>59. 50 - 60 years</td>
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<td>60. 60 – 70 years</td>
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<td>61. Over 70 years</td>
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<td>J. Why did you get into this form of occupation?</td>
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<td>62. Talented</td>
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<td>63. Family influence</td>
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<td>64. Financially rewarding</td>
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<td>65. Hobby</td>
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<td>66. Vocation</td>
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<td>K. What was your initial capital? (Amount quoted in Cedis)</td>
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<td>67. Less than C10,000</td>
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<td>68. C10,000 - C30,000</td>
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<td>69. C30,000 - C50,000</td>
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<td>70. C50,000 - C70,000</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>71. C70,000 - C100,000</td>
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<td>72. Over C100,000</td>
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<td>L. Do you have any form of occupation?</td>
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<td>73. Yes</td>
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<td>74. No</td>
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<td>M. How do you market your product?</td>
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<td>75. Artist showroom</td>
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<td>76. Local Vendors</td>
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<td>77. Art Galleries</td>
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<td>78. Middlemen</td>
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<td>79. Tourists and Exporters</td>
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<td>O. Have you ever received any form of assistance for your business?</td>
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<td>81. Yes</td>
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<td>82. No</td>
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<td>If yes what form of assistance</td>
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<td>84. Government subsidy</td>
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<td>85. Management and technical training</td>
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<td>86. Workshops and Seminars</td>
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<tr>
<td>87. Exhibitions</td>
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<td>88. Government acquisitions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
O. How do you cope with your production problems?
89. Rely on friends, relatives, and vendors for revolving capital 12
90. Plough-back profits 15
91. Bank Loans -
92. Government subsidy 10
93. Personal funds
94. Refinancing by local vendors 43

EXIT QUESTION
P. In what way do you think the traditional visual arts industry can be organized for benefit traditional visual artists in Ghana.

95. Set a Department that will administer the development and promotion of traditional visual arts 45
96. Involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and district assemblies 12
97. Government should provide loans with low interest rate access to artists. 23
APPENDIX E

MAP OF GHANA
The country took its name from the ancient Ghana Empire that flourished and wielded its influence in the Western Sudan between the 4th and 5th Century A.D. Its former name, the Gold Coast was given by the early European explorers who identified it by the quantity of gold that was available at that time. Some of the early explorers were the Portuguese who landed at Elmina in 1471 and were later followed by the Dutch, Swedes, the Danes, and the British. There were several reasons for the presence of these European countries in West Africa, the most obvious being to obtain gold and slaves to supply the expanding demand in the Americas (Adu-Boahene, 1979). During the "Scramble for Africa", Ghana became a colony of England and was colonized for 113 years (Asihene, 1973; Awoonor, 1990). Figure 1 is a map of West Africa showing the location of Ghana. It was the first country south of the Sahara to gain independence from the British in 1957. Since 1992, Ghana has reverted to democratic rule. For 11 years, a revolutionary government ruled it. Prior to this, it went through a series of military regimes from 1966 to 1981.

Geographical Survey

It is a tropical country and lies four degrees north of the equator. The climate is warm and humid all year with an average temperature of 80 degrees Fahrenheit. The average annual rainfall is about 65 inches but decreases as one moves inland. It has a variety of vegetation, which follows the rainfall
distribution pattern. The thick tropical forests are found in the southwestern and central parts of the country. The forests deplete into a semi deciduous forest as one moves inland. In the northern parts where the weather is warm and dry, it has grassland vegetation (Boateng, 1960).

Ghana has an area of about 92,100 square miles, approximately about the size of the states of Illinois and Indiana combined. The country is divided into ten regions with regional capitals. These are: Accra, which is the capital of Ghana, Kumasi, Ho, Koforidua, Sekondi/Takoradi, Sunyani, Tamale, Bolgatanga, Cape Coast, and Wa (Kinsey and Dixon, 1984). It has a population estimated to be about 19.5 million (Ghana Statistical Service Bulletin, July 1999). It is composed of different ethnic groups: 40% of which are Akans, 13% Ewes, 10% Moshie-Dagombas, 8% Ga-Adangbes and others. Life expectancy is estimated at 41 years among males and 45 years among females. The ratio of infant mortality rate is 156 per 1000 births and the illiteracy rate is estimated at about 60%.

The Economy and Politics
Ghana is classified as a "lower-middle" country with per capita income of about $595 U.S. dollars. The economy is predominantly agricultural, cocoa being the main export crop. Nearly 600,000 metric tons are exported annually, which accounts for 60 - 70% of the country's foreign exchange earnings. It has other natural resources such as gold, diamond, manganese, iron ore, salt, and two hydroelectric dams in Kpong and Akosombo (IMF Report on Ghana, 1984).

Between 1970 and 1982, Ghana's economy saw a steady decline. This situation was caused by poor political stability and persistent inflation caused by government deficit financing during the 1970s to support an inefficient parastatal system, and to provide public employment. The exchange rate of the country's currency is over-valued creating high cost imports and exports and a severe
balance of payment deficits. As income from exports fell, the government tax base was weakened resulting in the deterioration of the infrastructure. This situation was further aggravated by the high prices of crude oil (with the establishment of OPEC), the deportation of over one million Ghanaians from Nigeria, and a long drought which destroyed most of Ghana's food and export crops (particularly cocoa, coffee, and timber). At a glance, the economy of the country can be summarized as follows: (1) a fall in per capital income by 30%, (2) a fall in imports by one third of its previous level, (3) a decline in exports earning by 52%, (4) a fall in the rate of investment from 21% to 4%, (5) an increase in the importation of petroleum products by 50%, (6) a rise in deficit financing from 0.4% to 14.6% of the GNP, and (7) a decline of real wages by 80% (World Bank, 1984).

The Economic Recovery Program

In April 1983, the Provincial National Defense Council (PNDC) decided to adopt an Economic Recovery Program (ERP), sometimes referred to as Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP) supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), after attempts to solicit financial aid from Eastern Europe to revamp the deteriorating economy proved futile. The main objectives of the ERP were stabilization, rehabilitation, and growth of the economy, structural adjustment and infrastructural reforms. This included a reduction in both domestic and foreign-oriented expenditure in order to boost export earnings. Traditional exports such as cocoa, coffee, timber, gold, bauxite, and manganese were rehabilitated and non-traditional exports such as furniture, fruits, and handicrafts were encouraged. Special attention was given to the rehabilitation of the economic infrastructure such as roads, harbors and the telecommunication network. In 1986, the foreign exchange became market-driven and exporters were allowed to retain part of their export earnings. In response, the real GNP
growth increased by 6% between 1984 and 1988. The public deficit of 63% in 1982 was turned into a surplus by 1986 (World Bank, 1984). However, in spite of the recent economic growth rates in Ghana, which average about 5% per year, there is not much optimism with economic analysts about the future progress of the country's economy. This is due to the country's over-dependence on foreign loans with high interest rates and long-term moratoriums.

**Education**

Education has been mandatory and free from kindergarten to junior secondary school (basic level). English is the official language, however, all the major ethnic groups have their languages, which are also taught, in schools. The Ministry of Education is responsible for all forms of education, both public and private. There are two main sectors of this Ministry; the Formal and the Non-formal.

In 1974, a new Structure and content of Education for Ghana was approved by the government and accepted for implementation. The need for the reform was based on the recognition that any system of education should aim at serving the needs of the individual, the society in which he lives, and the country as a whole. Thus, a country like Ghana should aim at instilling in the individual, an appreciation of the need for a change directed towards the development of its human resources. Equally important, it must generate in the individual an awareness of the ability of man, using the power derived from science and technology, to transform his environment and improve the quality of life (MOEC, 1987).

During the past decade, the government has embarked on educational reform with focus on formal schooling. This has been partially financed by the World Bank and the IMF with focus on the development of primary (K6).
secondary (K79), and tertiary (universities and colleges) education. The government however, continues to subsidize all tuition and boarding fees for students at colleges and the university.
APPENDIX G

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ASHANTIS

Twi is a linguistic term designating a language, which belongs to the Akan branch of the Kwa subfamily of the Niger-Congo language family (Greenberg 1966: 8; Manoukian 1950: 10). The Twi-speaking peoples, who are concentrated in southern Ghana (formerly the British colony of the Gold Coast), include the Akwamu, the Akwampim (Akuapem), the Akyem (Akim), the Asen-Twifo, the Ashanti (Asante), the Fanti, the Kwahu, and the Wasa.

The Ashanti constitute a political confederacy or state, which developed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the central part of southern Ghana, West Africa (ca. lat. 6 degrees-7 degrees 30 minutes N and long. 0 degrees-2 degrees W). According to Fortes (1949, the Ashanti state was created and maintained by war, and a military ideology remained a central feature of its cultural orientation to the end. Before its annexation by the British in 1901, this state was a confederation of nine originally autonomous founding chiefdoms and a number of subsequently incorporated communities. At the center of the state was the wealthy and powerful chiefdom of Kumasi, whose hereditary ruler was acknowledged as the Asantehene, that is, the head of the nation, or king. The Golden Stool (sika 'gua) was created as the politico-ritual symbol of unity, and was believed to embody the spirit or soul of the Ashanti nation. In fact, it was due to an attempt by British officials to confiscate the Golden Stool (based on
ignorance of its true significance) that precipitated the so-called War of the Golden Stool in 1900-1901, resulting in the defeat of the Ashanti and their final incorporation into the British colonial system.

The Ashanti Confederacy covered an area of about 24,560 square miles. If early population estimates are at accurate, the Ashanti population has expanded significantly during the twentieth century. The population was estimated at about 250,000 around 1900, at approximately 578,000 in 1931, and at over 822,000 in 1950 (Busia 1951; Fortes 1969; Manoukian 1950; and Steel 1948). The 1960 census lists a total population of 895,360 (Kaplan et al. 1971: 88). Recent population figures are estimated at about 2 million within the Kumasi metropolis alone.

Throughout the Ashanti area, the climate is tropical, with an annual mean temperature of over 80 degrees F. There are two distinct seasons, a rainy season from about April to November, and a dry season the rest of the year. The average annual rainfall around Kumasi, the former Ashanti capital, is 57 inches, but there are considerable annual variations. Despite this tropical setting, the Ashanti territory is divided into two quite different ecological zones, northern and southern. The northern zone is drier and is characterized by a savannah-forest type of vegetation, with stunted trees scattered over large expanses of grasslands. The natural vegetation of the southern zone consists of high forest, but little virgin forest now remains. The most common vegetation today is that of the cultivated plots of cacao (cocoa) trees and the natural growth of brush on formerly cultivated land. These differing ecological zones have given rise to contrasting types of agriculture. In the north the main subsistence and cash crop are yams, followed by guinea corn. By 1950, there still had not been any large-scale development of export crops. In the south, a much larger variety of subsistence crops are grown, including especially yams, cocoyams, cassava, and maize. Also, there has been widespread development of major commercial crops.
such as the kola-nut and particularly cocoa. In fact, cocoa farming has become the main economic activity in the southern zone.

The Ashanti have a high national pride and social vitality, and have maintained their principal traditional values and institutions. When the Gold Coast government in 1935 restored the Ashanti Confederacy, a total of 21 constituent chiefdoms, designated as "divisions," were recognized. These divisions consist of Kumasi, Mampong, Juaben, Bekwai, Essumeja, Kokofu, Nsuta, Adansi, Kumawu, Offinsu, Ejisu, Agona, Banda, Wenchi, Mo, Abeasi, Nkoranza, Jaman, Berekum, Techiman, and Dorma.

Crosscutting these political units is a system of eight major, exogamous, matrilineal sibs (abusua), which are ranked hierarchically, with the royal sib at the top. The localized matrilineage traces its descent from a known common female ancestor for a period of 10 to 12 generations, and it is the basic unit for political, legal, and ritual purposes. Succession and inheritance rules stress sex, generation, and age, with men having precedence over women, "brothers" over "sisters' sons," and senior over junior. Consistent with the emphasis on matrilineal descent is the fact that the system of kinship terminology is of the crow type.

Contrary to the views of some earlier writers, the Ashantis do not have a true double-descent system. While there are groupings in which membership is transmitted patrilineally, these are neither exogamous nor corporate groups, nor are "jura" or political rights or duties derived from paternal descent. What is involved is the concept of "ntoro", the male transmitted "ntoro" (spirit) which forms a unique spiritual bond between father and son. Following this principle, every person belongs to one of a limited number of named quasi-ritual categories, the "jura" divisions. Members of the same "jura" division are required to observe certain taboos, perform certain rituals, and are believed to have some common personality characteristics.
Marriage restrictions include matrilineal sib exogamy and a prohibition on marriage between the descendants of a man in the male line up to the fourth generation. The ideal marriage is with either cross cousin, although there is a preference, for men, for marriage with a mother's brother's daughter (wofa ba). Again, marriage with a member of one's own village or chiefdom is preferred to marriage with an "outsider." Polygamy is permitted, but in modern times at least, some 80 percent of all married men have only one wife at a time. Chiefs may have a large number of wives, but commoners rarely have more than three at the same time.

Data is not readily available concerning the average population size of the Ashanti communities, but it is clear that during recent years there has been a marked increase in the number of towns and in their size. In 1911 only Kumasi, the Ashanti capital, had a population of more than 2,000, whereas by 1948 as many as 40 towns exceeded this number. Kumasi itself is estimated to have had a population of about 10,000 in the nineteenth century; this had increased to over 70,000 by 1948 (Steel, 1948: 74).

Most long-established Ashanti villages or townships was until recently divided into wards or sections (brono), in each of which the majority of the residents were members of a single matrilineage. In a large town such as Wenchi (capital of Wenchi Division, population 5,310 in 1931), each section consisted of several lineages. But again, each lineage inhabited a particular area of the section, and the houses of the lineage members were grouped closely together around the house of the lineage head (Busia, 1951: 3).

Domestic organization long remained one of the most ambiguous aspects of Ashanti social structure. It was Fortes who finally delineated the key structural principles and processes through his research in the 1940s in the communities of Asokore and Agogo. He succinctly characterizes the situation in the following passage: "The most striking feature of Ashanti domestic life
appears vividly in one of the common sights in any village or township. As night falls, young boys and girls can be seen hurrying in all directions carrying large pots of cooked food. One can often see food being carried out of a house and a few minutes later an almost equal amount of food being carried into it. The children are taking the food from the houses in which their mothers reside to those in which their fathers live (Fortes 1949: 63-64).

Essentially, three major household types may be distinguished, each based on a different residence pattern. First are households grouped around an effective minimal matrilineage or part of it, such as a woman and her sister or daughters, or a man and his sister or sister's son. Such households are based on duo local residence, with a husband and wife living apart in different domestic units. About 62 percent of the households in Agogo were of this type. Second are households consisting of a man, his wife, and their children, sometimes including other kinsfolk. This type of patrilocal or virilocal unit constituted about 22 percent of the households in Agogo.

Finally, there are households made up of combinations of the previous types (e.g. a man, his wife and children, plus his sister's children. Often these reflect an avunlocal residence pattern. The matrilineal domestic group is usually preponderant in the larger communities, while virilocal or patrilocal households are the most common type in small farming villages or hamlets. But all the three should be viewed simply as phases in a domestic cycle. In the early years of marriage, residence is predominantly duo local, but with the passage of time this could shift to avunlocal or patrilocal/virilocal.

The Ashantis have a complex religious system involving elaborate ceremonies, ancestor worship, the "ntoro" concept and ritual, witchcraft and sorcery, beliefs in many kinds of spirits, divination, shamans, and so forth. The greatest and most frequent religious ceremonies are those whose purpose is to recall the spirits of the departed rulers, offer them food and drink, and ask
their favor for the good of all the people. These ceremonies, called the "Adae", occur every 21 days. Funeral and mourning rites are also important. Islam has had little success among the Ashantis. Christianity has been more successful, although Busia (1951) estimated the total number of Christians to be less than 20 percent of the population in the early 1940s. The classic authority on the Ashanti is Rattray (1923; 1927; 1929), a British Army captain turned ethnographer. His monographs form the basis of our knowledge of Ashanti ethnography. He did extensive field research through much of the Ashanti area in the 1920s.