

**Promoting Art Education in the Asamang Community
Through Mural Paintings**

By

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ABSTRACT

Visual Arts Education is gradually becoming unpopular in the Asamang Community. Teachers in the basic schools either refuse to teach Visual Arts or give little attention to its teaching. In the Junior High Schools (JHS), the Visual Arts component of Basic Design and Technology (BDT) is entirely ignored since all five schools in the community do not offer it. Hence the students lack the requisite level of knowledge in Visual Arts expected of J.H.S. students that will even propel them to choose the programme in the Senior High School. The situation is the same in the S.H.S. where few students offer Visual Arts as a result of many challenges. The population studied consisted of students, primary school teachers, BDT teachers, heads of schools, one education officer and ordinary citizens in the Asamang community. The purposive sampling technique was used to select five heads of schools, 26 teachers and one education officer whereas the stratified sampling technique was used to select 65 students and five citizens from whom data was collected in the Asamang community. The research revealed that primary school pupils are not given the needed tuition in the Creative Arts. Besides, most teachers in the primary schools were not trained to teach Art thus making them handicapped as far as the subject is concerned. The situation was not very different in the Junior High Schools where there is lack of qualified teachers to handle the Visual Arts part of the BDT subject. These problems have adversely affects the students' entry into Senior High School to the extent that Asamang SHS has very few students in the Art department. In all schools, basic tools, materials and equipment used for teaching and learning of Art were lacking. This study was therefore geared towards the promotion of Visual Arts Education in the Asamang community of Ashanti Region. This involved the researcher organizing some S.H.S Visual Arts students to paint murals that depicted careers in the field of Art to serve as a tool for creating awareness for Art as a subject of

study. The research methods employed were action and descriptive research under the qualitative research methodology with interviews and questionnaire administration as the research instruments. The study recommended that the Sekyere South District Education Officers should find a means of organizing in-service training in the Creative Arts for the teachers to ensure that they would teach the subject in the schools. They should also invite resource persons in the art industry to organise in-service training programmes and to enable them sensitize all teachers and heads in the primary and JHS on the need for creativity development for the pupils. Students in the JHS should be given regular orientation courses in all the Art subjects to help them select their SHS programmes of study. Also, the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders in education should help in the supply of basic art tools, materials and equipment to enhance effective teaching of Art in the schools.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

This chapter discusses the background to the study, the problem statement, its objectives as well as the research questions or hypotheses. It also gives an insight into the specific coverage to the study that is the delimitations and the limitations, definition of terms, the significance of the study to national development, and lastly, organization of the rest of the text.

1.2. Background to the study

Asamang is a relatively small community which is located in the Sekyere South District of Ashanti Region, Ghana. Its population is estimated to be 10,000 with majority of them being predominantly farmers. The community is made up of five major groups of families which came to settle there. These are the Dako and Oyoko families who are believed to be the original indigenes of Asamang; and the Konya, Brehoma and Aburaso families.

According to Nana Korankye (personal communication, 15th November, 2010), the *Dako* and *Oyoko* families moved from Asantemanso to Adumang where they joined the *Nsuta* family with their chief (Nsutahene). The Nsutahene then led these two families to find a permanent settlement. As they moved on towards the north, they came across a small river known as *Kunkum*. The *Kunkum* river goddess ordered the *Dako* and *Oyoko* families to stay there as the *Nsuta* family continued their journey but they disobeyed the river goddess' order and followed the *Nsuta* people to a place where they came across another river called *Nsuo Taa*. The *Nsuo Taa* goddess also told the *Nsuta* family to stay there. They obeyed and the *Dako* and *Oyoko* families continued to settle at a different place called *Nsuta Ankamadua*.

After staying there for some time, they realized that life was very difficult so they returned to where the *Kunkum* river goddess had told them to stay earlier and settled at a place near the *Kunkum* river. As they became comfortable there, the place turned to be their permanent settlement. On the return of the Dako and Oyoko families to settle near the river *Kunkum* where they had earlier been ordered to settle, they were given the name *Asaaman* in Twi which is translated to mean “Returned Community”. Their leader was called Fosubra, who unfortunately died on their return to Nsuta. The next Chief who led them was Nana Sarpong.

The next group to settle at Asamang was the Konya family who were believed to be hunters of the Nsutahene. They were left behind in Aduman where the Nsuta, Dako and Oyoko people had settled for short a period before continuing their journey. This group later left Aduman to join their own people at Asamang with their leader who was the Chief Linguist of the Nsutahene. This group was named *Konya* which originated from the word *Kogya* in Twi which translates to mean “Left behind”.

The third group of settlers was the Brehoma family. The leader of this group was the Asantehene’s Linguist called Boakye Tenten. It is believed that this family had also walked a long distance without getting a peaceful place to settle. When they came to Asamang, the Asamang people believed that they were their brothers, mainly because they were also from the Oyoko clan. The Brehoma group was then told to come and have a rest at Asamang. Consequently, they were given the name *Brehoma* which originated from the Twi word *Behome* which translates into “come and have a rest”. The Aburaso family is also known to be Dako royals from Jachie. These people later came to Asamang where they were offered a place to settle which is currently called Aburaso.

The Asamang Community has five Primary Schools, five Junior High Schools (JHS) and one Senior High School (SHS). The researcher's visit to all these schools revealed that little art is studied in the schools. The subject is termed "Creative Arts" at the primary school level and according to the Basic School Creative Art Syllabus (2007), pupils are supposed to learn it at all the six stages. The researcher's preliminary investigation in the primary schools revealed that the teachers mostly do not teach Creative Arts effectively while some even ignore it altogether.

At the JHS, art is taught as part of Basic Design and Technology (BDT) which comprises Home Economics, Pre-Technical Skills and Visual Art. In the first year, students are required to study all three aspects of BDT and then choose one option in the second year. Investigations conducted in the Community revealed that none of the students in all the five JHS study Visual Arts as their major option. The researcher also found that even in the first year where students are expected to study all three aspects of BDT before they choose their preferred option in the second year, the Visual Arts option is ignored in all the five schools. In other words, the teachers intentionally ignore the visual arts knowing very well their students will not offer it for the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

At the SHS level, the researcher found that Visual Arts had been introduced for the past seven years but very few students were pursuing it. According to both the tutors and some students, the Visual Arts department had been grappling with lots of challenges such as lack of studios and equipment such as looms, light-box, easels, and some basic tools as guillotine, gorges, hammers and squeegees which hamper effective teaching and learning and also cause the students to ignore the subject.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Visual Arts education is significant in the life of people and societies in general. It plays a major role in the total development of children in terms of the mental, physical, psychological and social faculties as they grow up to become adults. Students are trained to acquire skills and knowledge in the arts to become professionals and scholars who are able to function effectively in the societies in which they find themselves. In most societies, it is interesting to note that almost all artificial objects and landmarks seen around are either designed or produced by artists. In Ghana most of our arts are integrated in our past and present culture, hence its introduction into the school curriculum as a subject of study in the basic schools and as a major course specialization in the second cycle and tertiary institutions. However many problems negatively affect the teaching and learning of art in the schools

Schools in the Asamang Community do not teach art mainly because they do not have trained art teachers. Being a teacher resident in the community, the researcher found it essential to research the factors that hinder art education in the community's schools. The envisaged solution was to use the study as a means of rekindling interest in Visual Arts execution of mural paintings that would beautify the schools and also sensitize the school children, their teachers and the community as a whole on the need for and significance of Visual Arts education in the community.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify and describe why there is low patronage of Visual Arts in Schools in the Asamang Community.

2. To guide selected SHS Visual Arts students to design and paint murals in four schools in Asamang Community.
3. To assess how the murals could educate the Asamang community on the essence of Visual Arts Education.

1.5 Research Questions

1. Why is the level of Visual Arts education low in schools in the Asamang Community?
2. Can SHS Visual Arts students be guided to paint murals to sensitize the Asamang community?
3. How can murals be used to promote the study of Visual Arts Education in the Asamang community?

1.6 Delimitation

The study was limited to the study of Art in the Primary, Junior and Senior High Schools in the Asamang Community in Ashanti Region and the execution of mural on the walls of the Konadu Yiadom Senior High School; Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Junior High; Roman Catholic and Presbyterian Primary Schools in Asamang. The theme of the murals was limited to “Prospects in Visual Arts education”.

1.7 Limitations

1. The murals were to be done in five schools in the Asamang community but due to time and financial constraints, only four schools were covered.
2. Only two of the envisaged murals could be completed in the community due to limited resources and time constraints on the part of students selected for the project.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Loom: - A device for weaving cloth. It may be operated by hand or electricity.

Light box: - A large wooden box with a glass top fixed with florescent and yellow or red bulbs. It is used for tracing designs, developing photographic plates and screens and for colour separation.

Easel: - A wooden frame for holding a drawing board, pad or canvas in position while sketching.

Guillotine or Card Cutter: - A device for cutting paper into desired sizes.

Squeegee: - A rubber edge tool with a wooden handle which is used to pull the dyes across the screen thereby forcing them onto the fabric.

Trompe-l'oeil': - A French term for "fool" or "trick the eye".

Marouflage: - A technique for affixing a painted canvas to a wall to be used as a mural, using an adhesive that hardens as it dries such as plaster or cement.

1.9 Abbreviations

BDT – Basic Design and Technology

BECE - Basic Education Certificate Examination

CRDD – Curriculum Research and Development Division

GES – Ghana Education Service

JHS – Junior High School

MOE – Ministry of Education

PCL – Parma Conservation Limited

PTA – Parent Teacher Association

SDA – Seventh Day Adventist

SHS – Senior High School

1.10 Importance of the study

As permanent exhibition of job prospects in the field of Visual Arts, the murals could educate Visual Arts students and prospective Visual Arts students and citizens in the Asamang community on the essence of Visual Arts education and provide a social platform for viewers to question and discuss the content.

It can empower teachers, students and parents of Visual Arts students to become aware of the need to give much attention to the teaching and learning of Visual Arts in schools.

The murals can serve as an educational resource and reference material for people in the community and its surrounding areas and at the same time, beautify the schools where they have been executed. They can also serve as resource materials for researchers and the general public.

1.11 Organization of the rest of the text

Chapter two deals with the theoretical and empirical review of literature on Visual Arts education its importance, Visual Arts education in Ghana and mural painting and its importance.

Chapter three focuses on Methodology adopted for mural execution, the Research design, Population Sampling, Data collection instruments, and Data analysis plan. Chapter four consists of assembling the data, Analysing the data and Interpreting the data. The final chapter deals with summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Overview

This section highlights the various literature people have written on Visual Arts and art education in general as well as murals. The following are the sub-topics reviewed:-

- Visual Arts education
- Importance of Visual Arts education
- Visual Arts education in Ghana
- The Teaching of Creative Arts
- Murals
- History of murals
- Significance of murals
- Types of murals
- Mural paintings in Ghana

2.2 Visual Arts Education

Visual arts are a class of art forms that include painting, sculpture, photography, and other disciplines that focus on the creation of artworks which are primarily visual in nature (Oliver, 2007). The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2005) defines Visual Arts as the use of paintings, drawing, sculpture, and other art forms to represent things or expression of ideas. In other words, people's ideas, feelings and emotions are expressed through the production of artefacts in Visual Arts. Also, the Encyclopedia of Irish and World Art (2011) observes that this

branch of art includes all the fine arts as well as new media and contemporary forms of expression such as assemblage, collage, installation and performance art.

Fine Arts is defined in the Encarta Dictionary (2004) as “any art form, for example, painting, sculpture, architecture, drawing, or engraving, that is considered to have purely aesthetic value”. Cluff (2011) argues that though this definition is used in relation to the arts in the regular world, with regards to teaching, fine arts is defined as a subject beneficial, not essential, to the learning process that is often phased out because of lack of time, little learning potential, and no money. Fine art is simply seen as painting and drawing, not a subject studied by an academic scholar. In his argument, Cluff says that the teaching of fine arts is mostly limited to only drawing and painting, therefore, the general perception is that it is just a hobby but not an academic subject or course studied in schools. Jacobs (1999, p.2) as cited in Cluff (2011) explains that the “Arts in elementary schools have often been separated from the core curriculum and instead, offered as enrichment activities that are considered beneficial but not essential”.

The term Visual Arts Education means to teach or train a person in the knowledge and skills of Visual Art so that he or she will be able to practice it and to function effectively in his or her society through the knowledge and skills acquired (Amenuke, Dogbe, Asare, Ayiku, and Baffoe, 1991). Amenuke et al. write that Visual Arts education encourages personal development and creates the awareness of one’s cultural heritage as well as the role of art in the society. This assertion points to the fact that our personal development and cultural heritage can be manifested through the arts. Bleiker (1999) believes that art has much to teach about the world and ourselves; it is believed to be a cornerstone of early childhood curriculum. Just as art develops a person socially, physically and mentally, it also creates the awareness that art is part of human

being since our social lives as well as our cultural activities are all art. Visual art teaches us a lot about the physical things we see around and provides the opportunity through art education to also produce our own artefacts.

Adu-Agyem, Enti & Peligah (2009) also say that education modifies behaviour and art expresses self. Behaviour can therefore be modified through the use of art where this is understood as expression of a child's intellectual, artistic and social life. The authors believe that art must be given a central place in all schools' curricula from basic to tertiary levels. Both Bleiker (1999) and Adu-Agyem et al (2009) believe art has much to teach about ourselves and the development of the child in art education. In pre-schools for instance, children learn words through visual images which enable them to identify objects according to their names. Visual Art education teaches children the needed skills in drawing and painting to enable them make their own images or artefacts.

Art education today tries to link art works with social, cultural and political issues (Dawtren, Jackson, Masterson, & Meecham, 1996), therefore children in schools need education in the arts to understand how art operates in them. Kouvou (2000) explains that young children use art activities for spontaneous learning processes and it integrates them with non-art experiences. In examining art activities as a context for which children incorporate new learning task from other fields of knowledge, Kouvou specifies drawing, painting and making of collages as art activities that play a significant cognitive developmental role in early schooling when children are confronted with a wealth of new learning experiences, especially in the fields of language and arithmetic. The arts highlight how phenomena relate to each other.

Smith (1995) believes that art can be taught as a school subject with distinct goals, content and methods and explains that this has been the transformation of an essentially psychological concept of art education. Holistically, thinking and idea synthesis which art offers are significant to the future world as Bamford (2006) sees the arts as fundamental to education and a means to equip students with social and intellectual survival skills for the unforeseeable future. What it means is that everybody needs education to transform his or her life, implying that art education can provide the child with momentous life experiences and should therefore be encouraged.

Nature is full of contours with its irregular curves and criss-cross patterns (Bleiker, 1999). It is Visual Art education that exposes these to us as we learn about the world of man-made objects. Our environments are full of art works. This is why Gilbert (1998) says everybody lives with art because art is inextricably connected to human existence as evidenced in the physical things surrounding us.

Ulbricht (2001) argues that art teachers often ignore teaching about careers in art for reasons such as some teachers being too busy while others think that career education is not appropriate for the age of the students, yet others believe it is beyond the scope of art education. The reasons cited are unfortunate since giving students insight into careers in art will enable them to appreciate much about art education in schools. Ulbricht appreciates the fact that most art teachers believe that art education is compulsory for everyone and so school education for talented, career-oriented students is consistent with the goals and objectives of art education. Art career education has been a desired instructional outcome of art education periodically. Although not stated as a goal of art education, many elementary and secondary art education teachers continue to prepare students as potential artists.

Based on Andrews' (2005) participation in a student-driven art course known as 'art and ideas', he thinks the following five goals of art education should be achieved in class.

1. To study the art of other cultures
2. To connect art to other curricula areas
3. To attract the non-traditional art students
4. To promote a student-driven curriculum and
5. To employ several assessment methods in teaching art.

According to Andrews, these goals are intended to encourage students to broaden their horizon in the arts and culture of other people and also ensure people recognize the contribution of art in the society at large. It is important therefore that art teachers understand the need for students, especially art students, to study their arts and the arts of other cultures to enable them enjoy and appreciate the art of other cultures.

Art is more or less identified in all subjects and its connectivity is quite easy. In most cases, non-traditional art students do not understand art as a taught course from which one can acquire knowledge and skills. According to Andrews (2005), it requires a creative and innovative art teacher to initiate a move that will attract non-traditional art students to appreciate art as a course and thereby become major players in the art curriculum. In support of this view, Cluff (2011) calls on teachers to incorporate all genres of fine arts, which include theater, visual art, dance, and music into their lesson plans because the arts give the students motivational tools to unlock a deeper understanding of their education. This means that teaching the arts is the most powerful tool that teachers can use in their classrooms to enable the students to achieve their highest level of learning.

Art Education is about creating, making meaningful works and sharing experiences in art activities that help in promoting peace, encouraging tolerance and expressing passion for art. Gadsden (2008) writes that within the past 20 years, the arts have gained increasing prominence in educational discourses as well as public awareness. Gadsden cites Carey (2005), Eisner (2002), Flood, Heath & Lapp (2005) as saying that at the same time that traditional genres of art (music, visual art and performance) are being taught as part of schools' curricula, the study of the arts is supporting learning and teaching through technology and multimedia. Gadsden (2008) believes that this new trend is bridging the gap between local and global cultures and the world across age, time and space.

2.3. Importance of Visual Art Education

Art in the primary school is meant to foster creativity in pupils to enable them solve problems of national dimension with relative ease. Oliver (2007) asserts that Visual Arts are important in schools because they tend to develop the intelligence, as well as the overall personality of students. This assertion emphasises the fact that visual arts develop the mental, physical, psychological and social needs of art students. According to Oliver (2007), studies have shown that students who are exposed to Visual Arts tend to display above average intelligence when it comes to mathematics and science. Likewise, students who are greatly exposed to Visual Arts have been observed to exhibit refined manners and develop a much-matured outlook on life. It is believed that students perform better in class when visual arts are incorporated in their curriculum. Moreover, Visual Arts provide meaningful self-expression for all students.

In order to meet the desired educational standards, Oliver (2007) believes students must be able to learn vocabularies as well as some concepts that are associated with diverse type of works in

the visual art, and also exhibit their competence at various levels in visual, oral, and written form. As early as kindergarten, children must be taught how to make choices that enhance the communication of their creative ideas. Students who are in the middle grades must be able to apply the knowledge as well as the skills in the visual arts to their ever-expanding personal world. Oliver believes when students at this level consider Visual Art works within their historical concepts, it creates in them a deeper appreciation of their own values, and likewise appreciation of the values of others and somehow, they discover the connection of visual arts to the universal needs of people in terms of their values and beliefs.

At the higher levels, Oliver (2007) expects students to create more complex and insightful works of visual arts that reflect the maturation of their creative as well as their problem-solving skills. Because visual arts classes make use of varied tools, techniques, and processes, students are expected to understand the relationship of different types of media, styles, forms, techniques as well as some of the processes involved in the creation of their own form of visual art. Students should therefore be taught how to recognize the intrinsic value of visual arts and what makes it important in the lives of all educated persons.

Jacobs (1999) asserts that the arts can open the minds of students in ways mere reading and writing will never be able to accomplish. The point of teaching the arts, is thus not to teach about the arts, but to teach through the arts. Teaching through the arts according to Jacobs, helps students to experience concepts rather than simply discussing or reading them. This approach as Jacobs explains, is consistent with educational theories that highlight the importance of reaching multiple learning styles or intelligences.

What is missing in classrooms is the lack of teacher's knowledge of the benefits of maintaining an art-based curriculum. Berghoff (2003, p. 12) explains that "Teachers have very little understanding of the arts as disciplines of study. They think of the arts instruction as a teacher-oriented project used to entertain or teach other disciplines". Because Cluff (2011) believes the teaching of fine arts expands the boundaries of learning for the students and encourages creative thinking and a deeper understanding of the core subjects, which include language arts, maths, science, and social studies, the author asserts that the most powerful tool that teachers can present in their classrooms is the teaching of arts, because this enables the students to achieve their highest level of learning.

According to Cluff, Visual Arts are also used in therapy procedures for aiding child development. Cluff indicates that Visual arts assist in educating disabled children, especially those who are blind and have hearing problems. Aside these, community mural projects are also used to provide education for mentally ill individuals.

2.4. Visual Arts Education in Ghana

Visual Arts education was introduced into the Gold Coast (now Ghana) school curriculum as "Hand and Eye" in 1908 (Edusei, 1991). Art was referred to on the time-table of schools and training colleges as "Hand and Craft". Edusei recounts that Ghana's modern development in art began at the Achimota School in 1927 with the introduction of the history of West African Art as a course of study with Craft hobbies as after-school activity. Art was then integrated in the schools and colleges curricula and studied at all the educational levels until the 1987 education reforms took the subject off and made it a specialised discipline studied by choice.

2.4.1 The Teaching of Creative Arts

According to the Curriculum Research and Development Division (CRDD) of Ghana Education Service (2007), the introduction of Creative Arts in the primary school curriculum was intended to transmit, promote and preserve the culture of the nation. Effective teaching of Creative Arts is ensured when the teacher formulates worthwhile objectives, selects appropriate content, uses relevant teaching-learning resources and designs appropriate teaching and learning activities to address specific problems and also, makes appropriate provision for evaluation in the teaching and learning process (Delacruz, 1997). This is an indication that teaching requires planning and organization. The teacher needs to prepare adequately to carry out classroom assignment effectively.

According to Ornestein (1995), planning for effective teaching should generally feature the following:-

1. Inclusion of clear objectives which must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound because objectives dictate exactly what pupils will learn and how they will be learned.
2. The integration of new subject matter with materials that was learnt earlier linking the new with the old.
3. Considering the growing and changing needs and styles of pupils.
4. Since teaching is a very challenging experience, such activities that generate high interest and stimulate the desire to learn should be selected and pursued carefully.
5. The planning should include the provision of appropriate evaluative and assessment procedures for feedback.

6. Provision should also be made for re-enforcement of ideas and appropriate behaviours.

This could be achieved through different forms of presentation and learning activities provided in the planning.

2.5. Murals

The term mural, according to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2007), refers to a painting that is painted on a wall, either inside or outside a building. Ampofo (2003) explains that murals are large pictures made on walls either directly or indirectly by first executing it on wooden panels and fixing them on walls permanently. Parma Conservation Limited (PCL 2003) also describes murals as large-scale paintings which are applied directly to walls, ceilings, or other large flat surfaces such as wood, paper, and canvas to be attached to a wall. This suggests that different supports can be used for the execution of such large paintings.

According to PCL (2003), murals are probably the oldest human art form as cave paintings at numerous human settlements suggest, and can be found all over the world, decorating homes, institutions, and public spaces. PCL also classifies mural painting as a branch of fine art which expresses ideas just to communicate, educate, entertain and decorate by means of a wide variety of artistic styles, all of which incorporate a large sense of scale, and the ability to portray a complex scene which is readable up close or far away. Chaves III (2010) also states that a mural is a work of art painted directly on any large, permanent surface such as a wall or ceiling often in public places to inspire and educate people. The characteristic of a mural being of a large size is made evident by all these sources cited.

2.6. History of Murals

Jonsson (2012) describes the history of murals and mural painting as rich and varied, from the prehistoric cave paintings at Lascaux in France (plate 1), to the celebratory and ceremonial murals of ancient Egypt, Rome, Mesopotamia, Greece and India. According to Johnson, art historians assert that mural painting dates back at least 30,000 years to cave paintings. Other historians credit the Minoans and the Etruscans. Some of these impressive works have been preserved, thankfully, by the very caves which they inhabit.

Kotwal (2005) writes that throughout the world there have been murals on walls as long as there have been people to scratch them, paint them, etch them, carve them and make them. In some cases, these mystical and magical works have been preserved by the rocky shelters they inhabit, allowing later generations to enjoy and learn from them. These ancient murals often depicted activities in which the people of the time engaged, from religious ceremonies to scenes of hunting and gathering of substances.

Chavez III (2010) adds that murals are as old as civilization itself, emphasizing that many of Mexico's pre-Colombian civilizations, such as the Maya and Teotihuacan, decorated their public buildings and homes with colourful murals that depict daily life, religious beliefs and historic events.

Kotwal (2005) believes that a wonderful dichotomy continues to evolve in the world of murals: new ones are continually being commissioned and created while old ones are constantly being rediscovered and restored (such as Maya wall paintings of San Bartolo and El Petén in Guatemala that date to about 100AD and only discovered in March 2001). Examples of modern wall paintings include *Trains* by Greg and Jeff Acker (Plate 2) and Van Gogh's *Café Terrace at Night*, (2003) in Plate 3.



Plate 1: Cave painting of a bull and a horse in Lascaux Grotto, France.

Source: Hans Hinz, Basel (Lascaux, 2009)



Plate 2: Trains (1989)

Source: www.shortnorth.com.



Plate 3: Van Gogh's *Café Terrace at Night* (2003).

Source: www.shortnorth.com

In modern times, the term “mural” has become more well-known as a result of the works of the Mexican "muralists" art movement of Diego Rivera, David Siqueiros and José Orozco (Howard and Opoku-Asare, 2012). Of the many different styles and techniques of mural painting, the best-known is fresco, which uses water-soluble paints with a damp lime wash. The colours lighten as they dry. The marouflage method where painted canvas is affixed on a wall surface as mural has also been used for millennia.

Murals today are painted in a variety of ways, using oil or water-based media. The styles can vary from abstract to ‘trompe-l'oeil’ (French term for "fool" or "trick the eye"). Initiated by mural artists like Graham Rust and Rainer Maria Latzke in the 1980s, trompe-l'oeil painting has experienced a renaissance in private and public buildings in Europe (Latzke, 1999). Today, the beauty of a wall mural has become much more widely available with a technique whereby a

painting or photographic image is transferred to poster paper or canvas which is then pasted to a wall surface to give the effect of either a hand-painted mural or realistic scene.

2.7. Significance of Murals

Murals are very important since they bring art into the public sphere. White (2011) asserts that murals mostly provide a wide audience for artists who otherwise might not set foot in an art gallery. Cities and towns benefit by the beauty of works of art as they showcase very catchy and interesting pictures. They can also be a powerful tool for achieving a political goal (see Plate 4) or a relatively effective tool of social emancipation as in the case of the Mexican Muralists Movement.

When murals are executed in areas where people live and work, they can provide a dramatic impact whether consciously or subconsciously on the attitudes of passersby. It is believed that the presence of large, public murals can add aesthetic improvement to the daily lives of residents.

It is also argued that governments, especially totalitarian regimes, sponsor public art, particularly murals, and use them as a tool of mass-control and propaganda. Despite the propagandist character of such works, some of them still have artistic values (White, 2011).



Plate 4: An Irish republican mural

Source: www.shortnorth.com

2.8 Social and Educational Significance of Murals

The significant role murals play in the social and educational life of people in societies is very enormous. Asante and Opoku-Asare (2011) have observed that the use of traditional motifs and symbols make a vital contribution to local cultural identity. They believe murals play an important educational role, bringing artistic skills, values, and practices into the public eye.

Murals also provide a forum for self-expression and gives validation to the experiences, history and cultural heritage of societies especially where the majority of the population may have historically been marginalized (Marschall, 2002). Colman (2006) confirms that mural art is valuable for many reasons: it engages the makers in a collaborative, cooperative activity, it gives them a space for personal expression, and results in a tangible, finished product they can be proud of. It provides opportunities for artists to internalize and visually interpret their understanding of the human condition and communicate it through their art. To Colman, murals have functioned as an important means of communication for members of socially, ethnically and racially divided communities in times of conflict. Murals have also proved to be an effective tool in establishing a dialogue and hence solving the cleavage in the long run.

2.9. Types and Techniques of Murals

Mural types are classified according to the techniques, tools and materials that are employed in the work (Howard, 2006). The kind of material (medium) and techniques used are what determine the type of the mural executed. The classification of types of mural and their execution techniques are as follows:-

Painting Murals	Fresco, encaustic, tempera, marouflage, oil painting.	Ceramic
Murals	Ceramic tiles that are glazed or painted.	
Textile Murals	Tapestry, printing, appliqué, embroidery, batik, tie-dye.	Mosaic
Murals	Composition of varied media of materials.	Sculpture Murals
	Relief carving and modelling in cement and wood.	Metal Art Murals
	Etching, piecing, engraving and embossing.	Photographic Murals
	Composition of photographs.	

Wikipedia (2011) also classifies mural techniques into three categories: Historical, Material and Modern Mural, which are explained as follows:

i. Historical Mural Techniques

historical mural technique include fresco, buon fresco, secco painting and mezzo-fresco painting from the Italian word “affresco” which derives from the adjective fresco ("fresh"), is a method where the paint is applied on plaster on walls or ceilings. The Buon fresco technique consists of painting in pigment mixed with water on a thin layer of wet, fresh, lime mortar or plaster. The pigment is absorbed by the wet plaster and after a number of hours, the plaster dries and reacts with the air. It is this chemical reaction which fixes the pigment particles in the plaster. After this the painting stays for a long time up to centuries in fresh and brilliant colours.

The "Secco" painting technique is done on dry plaster (secco means "dry" in Italian). The pigments thus require a binding medium, such as egg (tempera), glue or oil to attach the pigment to the wall. "Mezzo-fresco" is painted on nearly-dry plaster which is firm enough not to take a thumb-print so that the pigment only penetrates slightly into the plaster. By the end of the sixteenth century this had largely displaced the buon fresco method, and was used by painters such as Gianbattista Tiepolo and Michelangelo. This technique had, in reduced form, the advantages of a secco work.

ii. Material Techniques

Mural techniques named after materials consist of Encaustic colour technique where colour is grounded in molten beewax or resin binder and applied in a hot state. Tempera Painting, where the pigments are bound in an albuminous medium such as egg yolk or egg white diluted in water,

and Oil Painting, where the artwork is done on canvas and completed in the artist's studio and later attached to the wall or ceiling.

iii. Modern Mural Techniques

- Scaling technique is where the area to be painted is gridded to match the design and then transferred accurately step by step.
- Projector Technique is used where the design is projected onto the wall and traced with pencil or any medium before painting begins. The mural can also be painted directly without any prior sketching as a spontaneous technique.
- Frescography Technique is a digital manufacturing method where already existing murals are photographed and then reproduced in near-to-original quality and applied to surfaces. The disadvantages of pre-fabricated murals and decals are that they are often mass produced and lack the allure and exclusivity of an original artwork. They are often not fitted to the individual wall sizes of the client and their personal ideas or wishes cannot be added to the mural as it progresses.
- A 'Wallscape' is a large advertisement on or attached to the outside walls of a building. Wallscape can be painted directly on vinyl and securely attached to the wall in the manner of a billboard. Although not strictly classed as murals, large scale printed media are often referred to as such.

The discussion shows that execution of mural involves several techniques that include contemporary mural which consist of either a painting on canvas, which is attached to a wall or a painting that is done directly on the wall surface itself.

2.10. Murals in Ghana

In Ghana, traditional murals can be traced to the Navrongo district of the Upper East Region where wall paintings named locally as “Bambolse” (which means to decorate), embellish the walls of houses (Anaba, 1995). According to Anaba, Christianity has encouraged mural art in Ghana since the first church employed indigenous wall decoration in Navrongo in June 1900. Atta-Kwame (2003) explains that the “Bambolse” are the most outstanding art works with remarkable vitality as great stretches of walls are decorated with brightly coloured paintings dominated by abstract or geometric patterns of rectilinear symmetrical forms, which are very striking and bold. Atta-Kwame reports that the painters of these murals are women who have acquired the skills of painting either at an early age of about 10 years or sometime after marriage. Tools used are made locally from simple objects found in the environment. The basic ones include straw brushes, calabash, clay, pots or dishes and assorted flat granite stones which can be handled easily. The types of media used by these traditional painters are basically derived from earth pigments and plant materials which are prepared through simple processes.

Ampofo (2010) cites the murals on the mud walls of the Navrongo Cathedral as a good example of traditional wall paintings. This is because the wall paintings relate to cultural, religious and social status. Ampofo cites Sirigu, Sandema, Chiana, Larabanga and Navrongo as some of the towns in the Upper East Region of Ghana which have a tradition of indigenous mural painting. In making the murals, Asante and Opoku-Asare (2011), indicates that the Sirigu women commonly employ the principle of division of labour to execute the paintings on walls. Special mention is made of walls near entrances as those done as a cooperative effort by wives in a

compound, supervised by the senior wife of the compound head with other wives participating in various ways, depending on their skills.

Contemporary, murals or wall paintings have become popular and employ different techniques and styles. They are found in different parts of different architectural buildings and serve different purposes in relation to where the wall painting is executed. Buildings such as schools, churches, mosques, palaces, hotels, guest houses, restaurants, hospitals, drinking bars and shrines are typical examples of places where murals are executed in Ghana. Examples of murals found locally include semi-abstract flat painting which depicts scenes and activities that go on in a library (Plate 5), in the Faculty of Art Library in KNUST; semi-abstract painting depicting people dancing (Plate 6); semi-abstract painting depicting traditional Ghanaian musical instruments Ghana (Plate 7) which is located inside Republic Hall in KNUST; and realistic mural painting of a fetish priest located in front of a shrine at Asamang Plate 8.



Plate 5: semi-abstract flate painting mural located in Faculty of Art Library, KNUST

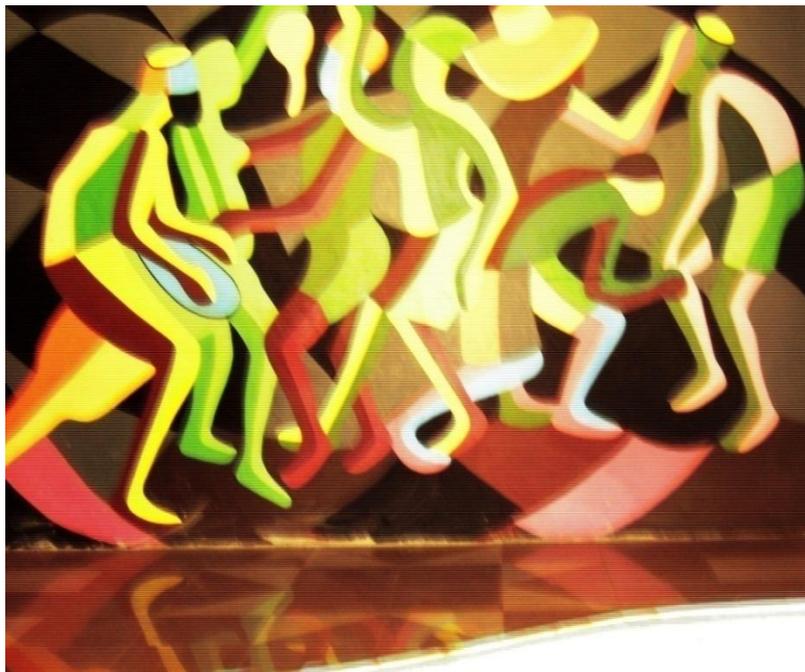


Plate 6: Semi-abstract mural near the Porter's Lodge of Republic Hall, KNUST



Plate 7: Semi-abstract mural in Republic Hall, KNUST



Plate 8: Realistic painting mural at a shrine in Asamang

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 . Overview

This chapter explains the research design adopted for the study, it comprises the descriptive research method, population of the study, sampling and data collection instruments and also type of data.

3.2. Research Design

The qualitative research design was adopted for the study. According to Malterud (2001), qualitative research methods involve the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or observation. It is used in the exploration of meanings of social phenomena as experienced by individuals, in their natural context. Hancock (1998) also asserts that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. In other words, it is meant to help understand the world and why things happen the way they do. Action and Descriptive research methods under qualitative research approach were adopted for the project.

3.3. Action Research

Somekh (2008) explains action research as a research methodology uniquely suited to researching and supporting change. It integrates social research with exploratory action to promote development. Action research engages the researcher, especially teachers, in the

forefront of their working environments to gather information about the operation of their schools with regard to how they teach and how well their students learn.

In this study, the researcher used the action research methodology to gain insight into why participation in Visual Arts education is low in the Asamang community and how the students, teachers, head teachers and education officials explain the phenomenon. The researcher also organized some Visual Arts students in the school where he is a teacher to design and execute a mural painting project as a means to sensitize students, teachers and the community on the significance of the Visual Arts to the student pupils at the primary, JHS and SHS levels.

3.4. Descriptive Research

This involves either identifying the characteristics of an observed event or exploring possible correlations among two or more phenomena. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) state that descriptive research examines the situation as it is and does not involve changing or modifying the situation under investigation nor its intended cause and effect relationship. In this study, the various materials, tools and the step-by-step processes that were involved in executing the mural project in the Asamang community were described in much detail to help readers understand how the project evolved.

Population for the Study

Kumekpor (2002) defines population in research as the total number of all units of the phenomenon to be investigated that exists in an area of investigation. A heterogeneous population was studied because it involved varied groups of people: heads of schools, teachers, education officers, students, parents and residents of Asamang community who were either interviewed or given a questionnaire to answer. The total population targeted was 130 but the

accessible population from whom primary data was collected numbered 102, made up of five heads of schools, four Basic Design and Technology (BDT) teachers, one SHS tutor, one education officer, 17 primary teachers, seven SHS students, 60 JHS pupils and seven ordinary citizens in the Asamang community.

3.6. Sampling Technique

The purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were adopted for the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select five heads of schools, one education officer, four BDT teachers of the four JHS, one Visual Arts tutor from the SHS and seven SHS Visual Arts students for the study. Purposive sampling, according to Ross (2002), involves selecting members from a population to comprise a sample because they possess specific attributes of interest that address the purpose of a particular research problem under investigation. The purposive sampling technique was therefore adopted to select teachers and students in the field of Visual Arts, including those students who participated in the mural painting project. The Stratified Random sampling was also used to select 17 teachers from the primary schools, 60 pupils from the JHS and seven ordinary citizens from the community. The stratified sampling was used because, according to Morgan (2008), it is a process that first divides the overall population into separate subgroups and then creates a sample by drawing subsamples from each of those subgroups.

3.7. Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments adopted were interview and questionnaire administration. Brinkmann (2008) explains interview as a conversational practice where knowledge is produced through the interaction between an interviewer and interviewee or a group of interviewees. The

researcher used interview to elicit information on the teaching and learning of art from the heads of the five schools, BDT and Visual Arts tutors and seven Visual Arts students in the Asamang schools as well as ordinary citizens who passed by the mural paintings during and after they had been executed. Data sources from the people focused on how they perceived the paintings

Questionnaire administration was also used to collect additional data. This is a form of enquiry document which contains a systematically compiled and well organized series of questions intended to draw information which will provide insight into the nature of the problem under study (Seidu, 2006). Two sets of questionnaire were used for the study. One was administered to the 17 primary teachers and the other set also administered to the 60 JHS pupils to solicit their views on the teaching and learning of Visual Arts in the Asamang community. This consisted of 15 students from each school who were randomly picked from the three JHS classes (1, 2 & 3). A retrieval rate of 100% was finally recorded

3.8. Validation of Instruments

The questionnaire and interview guide were prepared by the researcher to help him collect the right kind of data and to also make the necessary input correlations during the data analysis and execution of the project. This was approved by both researcher and the supervisor.

3.9. General Procedure for the Project

The mural project was executed on wall surfaces on exterior two different school premises so they will be seen by everyone who passes that way. The selected walls were initially replastered with mortar to obtain rough textured surfaces. After drying, acrylic emulsion paint was

used to prime the walls for the commencement of the project. The researcher developed the initial ideas of the murals from pictures found in magazines and photographs that were taken of selected murals in the Kumasi Metropolis. Out of these ideas, different sketches were made and two of them were selected for the final project. Before execution, the walls were scaled and then the selected sketches were transferred onto the walls. Acrylic paint was afterwards used for the rendition.

3.10 Reason for Selecting Materials Used

Factors that were considered during the selection of materials for the projects included the weather and appropriateness of the type of paint needed for the job. The predominant factor was the weather because the works were to be executed on exterior of walls that would be affected by both rain and shine, which means their longevity was at stake. Acrylic paint was chosen for the mural painting because of the following reasons:

- It is economical since water is used as its vehicle.
- It can be used to achieve different painterly effects.
- It allows for the necessary corrections to be made since they dry fast.
- It is water-soluble and has none of the health hazards associated with oil paints.

3.11 Materials and Tools Used for the Project

- 2B and 6B Pencils: - used for drawing initial sketches on paper.
- Drawing papers (Cardboard): - used as support for initial sketches.
- Small-size sable brushes: - used for painting details of the project (Plate 9).

- Small-size bristle brushes: - used for painting the outlines of the figures in the project.
- Big-size bristle brushes: - used for painting large portions in the project (Plate 10).
- Tape measure: - used for measuring the wall surfaces of the projects.
- Coloured chalk: - used for drawing the final compositions on the wall surfaces.
- White glue: - used for mixing up with water and emulsion paint for priming the wall surfaces for the projects (Plate 11).
- Acrylic paint: - used for painting all the projects (Pate 13).
- Water: - used for diluting paints and washing of brushes and palettes (Plate 14).
- Palettes: - used for collecting and mixing paints whilst painting.



Plate 9: Small size brushes



Plate 10: Large size brushes

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Plate 11: White Glue



Plate 12: Acrylic emulsion paint



Plate 13: Acrylic paint in containers



3.12 Designing and Execution of the Projects

The researcher brainstormed the initial plan of the projects with some of his students and came out with one common theme for the two projects. It was however, agreed that the scenes be made with different compositions in them. It was decided that the murals should be based on the need to project the Visual Arts to an appreciable standard in the Asamang community. The researcher then asked the Visual Arts students of the Konadu Yiadom SHS to individually create compositions based on the theme “Prospects in Visual Arts Education” as part of the project. After discussing the students’ compositions assignment, the samples shown in Plates 15 and 16 were selected for the murals. These were developed further into the two final compositions for the main project. The selection of sites where the mural projects would be was based on the objective of making the projects visible to the people in the community so that they would

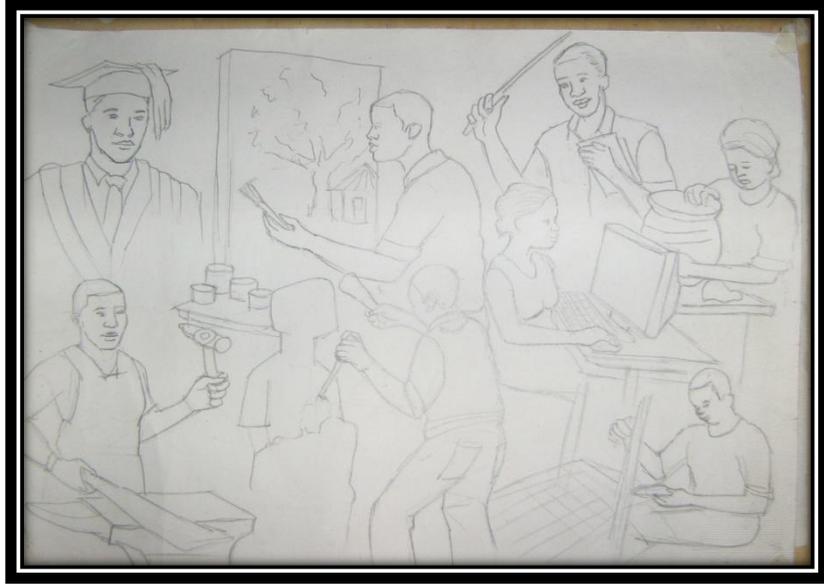


Plate 16: Design of Careers in Visual Arts mural

Source: Fieldwork

3.13 Planning the Practical Projects

Both murals were executed in landscape format with a measurement of 180cm by 294cm (6ft x 9.7ft) for mural one and 183cm by 400cm for mural two. Both were rendered in a flat painting technique with relatively cool and a few warm colours. The green background of mural one was intentionally used to give the public viewers more room for longer viewing. Blue (a cool colour) was used for the background whilst orange, yellow and pink which are warm colours, were to highlight three compositions on the upper part of the mural. These colours were selected with the intention of attracting more public attention so that its intended purpose of educating people on Visual Arts could be achieved. Preliminary sketches for both projects were made in pencil on paper whilst the main projects were drawn with chalk on the wall. Plates 15 to 23 show

the sketches of scenes depicted in Mural Project One. Plates 24 to 30 illustrate Mural Project Two.

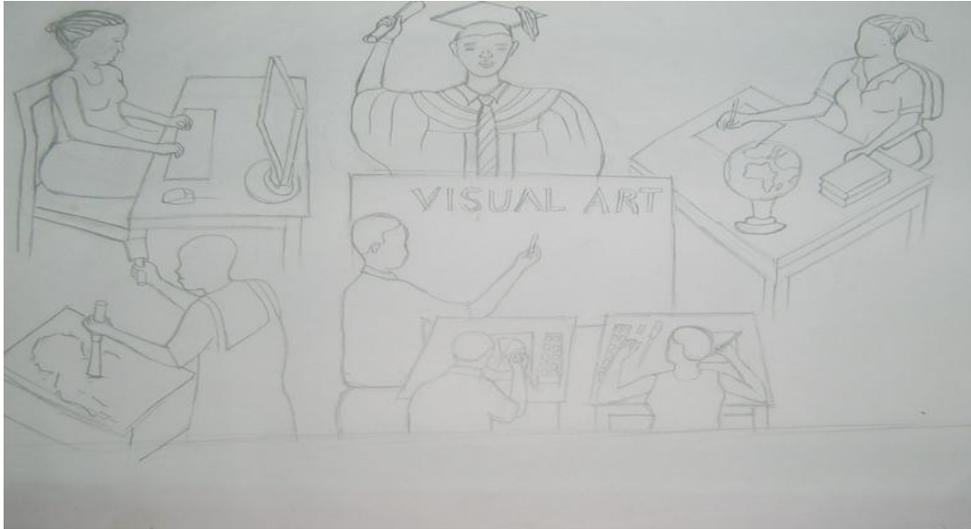


Plate 17: Final Design of Mural Project One

Source: Fieldwork

3.14 Execution of the Project

The researcher guided selected students to paint the murals. They started by first priming the surfaces with a primer which was mixed from white emulsion paint and white glue. After it had dried, grid lines were drawn on the walls. Later each student was assigned a task to transfer the scaled images on the sketch paper onto the wall.

Upon completion, students were again assigned specific task by painting the images on the surfaces. Some painted the actual images while others painted the background. During the execution, students mixed paint alongside in order to obtain some specific colours which were not in the palette.

The researcher encouraged students as they painted and constantly reminded them to maintain their composure and be more careful when painting.

The students used large brushes to paint all larger spaces in flat painting technique.

The finishing was done with the use of small type brushes to bring out the outlines and details of all the images in the work.



Plate 18: Initial scaling and painting of final sketch for Mural Project One

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 19: Students painting the sketch of Mural Project One

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 20: Students working on Mural Project One

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 21: Project execution attracts public attention

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 22: Students putting finishing touches on Mural Project One

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 23: Finished sample of Mural Project One

Source: Fieldwork

Mural Project Two



Plate 24: Initial scaling and painting of final sketch for Mural Project Two

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 25: Students painting Project Two

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 26: Students given portions to paint for team work

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 27: Students putting finishing touches to Mural Project Two

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 28: Close-up view of students executing Mural Project Two

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 29: Close-up of student performing assigned task

Source: Fieldwork



Plate 30: Finished sample of Project Two

Source: Fieldwork

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the research findings, analysis and discussion of the results of the study. It covers the following sub-headings: Background analysis of data and the Research question answered and the discussion of findings.

4.2 Presentation of main findings

Objective 1: To identify reasons for low patronage of Visual Art education in schools in the Asamang community. To achieve this objective, the researcher (being a teacher in the community SHS) adopted action and descriptive research approaches for the study and used the purposive and stratified sampling techniques to select five heads of schools, one Visual Arts

tutor, four BDT teachers, 17 primary teachers, one education officer, seven Visual Arts students, 60 JHS pupils and seven ordinary citizens.

The first set of questionnaire (appendix E) was administered to 17 teachers (10 males and 7 females) in the primary schools to answer. The teachers were randomly selected from four schools with four each coming from three schools and five from the fourth school. The retrieval rate of the questionnaire was 100%.

4.2.1 Ages of Respondents

The study revealed that 11 of the 17 (64.7%) teachers were between 20 and 30 years, two of them were between 31 and 40 years, and one was between 41 and 50 years. The remaining three were between 51 and 60 years. The data show that relatively large population of young teachers in the Asamang Community, are within the age bracket of 20 and 30 years.

Of 17 teachers, one has a first degree which is the highest educational qualification. As shown in Table 1, 13 of the teachers (76.5%) hold the Diploma in Education Certificates while the remaining three teachers hold the teachers' Certificate 'A' 3-year Post-Sec which was the basic qualification for teaching in primary schools until the 3-year Diploma in Education programme was introduced in 2007.

Table 1 Educational qualification of Teachers

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 st Degree	1	5.9
Dip. In Edu.	13	76.5
Cert A-3yr	3	17.6
Total	17	100

The questionnaire revealed that only one teacher specialized in Visual Arts. All the other 16 respondents specialized in other non-Visual Arts courses. This is an indication that these teachers are not in position to teach Creative Arts mainly because they did not specialize in Visual Arts. It is not surprising that the subject is not taught in primary schools in the Community.

4.2.2 Low patronage in Visual Arts Education in Asamang

To find out reasons for low patronage in Visual Arts in the Asamang Community, the questionnaire that was answered by teachers revealed that although teachers in primary schools are expected to teach Creative Arts, only four of the 17 (representing 23.5%) teachers in the Asamang Community admitted that they teach the subject. The remaining 13 (representing 76.5%) said they do not teach the subject. This suggests that Visual Arts (designated Creative Arts at the primary school level) is given less attention than the other subjects on the primary school curriculum.

The questionnaire responds however, showed that the schools' timetable had instructional periods for art on the timetable but only six (representing 35.3%) of the 17 respondents reported this. Six of the teachers (35.3%) said there was no period for the subject in their school. Surprisingly, five respondents (representing 29.4%) gave no answer to the question. This response implies that very few teachers in the schools know that time is allocated to Creative Arts on their school timetables. Why some teachers know this while others do not know of subjects their pupils are supposed to learn is surprising.

On how they use the art periods, four respondents (representing 23.5%) said they use the art periods profitably for teaching the subject while 13 respondents reported they use the periods to

teach other subjects, which contravenes the requirements of the basic schools' Creative Arts curriculum. The situation seems to reflect Agyeman-Boafo's (2010) study in Kumasi which found that some teachers do not teach the subject but use the Creative Arts periods for Maths, English and other subjects although the pupils enjoy the subject more than the others.

In assessing the pupils' participation in Art lessons, only four respondents indicated a "Very High" participatory level. The remaining 13 did not provide an answer in that respect. The four respondents believed that their pupils pay more attention during the teaching of Creative Arts, indicating that the children like the arts because it arouses their interest and participation level and as Cluff (2011) says, enables them to achieve their highest level of learning.

On whether the teachers use Teaching and Learning Materials in teaching (TLMs), 11 teachers answered in the positive; two answered in the negative while four of them did not provide answers. The use of TLM in teaching Visual Arts is very important. Art is mostly taught through practice and teachers must therefore need illustrations and samples of art works to enable the children to learn to appreciate art in the physical things that surround them (Gilbert, 1998).

On the supply of art materials for Visual Arts lessons, 12 out of the 17 respondents (representing 70.6%) reported that art materials used by the pupils for their works are supplied by the pupils themselves. However, five out of the 17 respondents did not answer the question. This suggests that the government does not supply the materials necessary for the teaching and learning of art to the basic schools, which also implies perhaps that teachers know how to improvise resources required for teaching Creative Arts.

Table 2 shows how the teachers responded to the question "is the teaching of art difficult?" As seen from the data, 11 of the 17 respondents said the teaching of art is difficult while four

believed it is not difficult. Majority of the teachers find the teaching of Creative Arts difficult because they lack the skills and knowledge required for teaching the subject. To avoid any embarrassment on their part, they just ignore it just as Agyeman-Boafo's (2010) study in Kumasi indicate clearly.

Table 2: Difficulty in Teaching Art

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	11	64.7
No	4	23.5
Neutral	2	11.8
Total	17	100

On the other hand, 16 of the 17 respondents agreed that art is an interesting subject. However, one respondent believed it is not. The reason could be that Art works generally looks very interesting and appreciative and everybody likes to watch or look at an art piece even if the person cannot produce one. Perhaps if the teachers are taught to acquire skills in art making, they could teach the aspect they find easy so their pupils could enjoy the Creative Arts.

4.2.3 Questionnaire Responses from Students

Responses to the questionnaire that was administered to 60 JHS pupils of the four schools studied showed that class size was different in each school (see Table 3) with more (46.7%) JHS

1 student being represented in the study while JHS 3 provided the exact number of respondents required.

Table 3: Number of students representing in the three JHS classes

Classes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
JHS 1	28	46.7
JHS 2	17	28.3
JHS 3	15	25.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 4 indicates that 26 respondents (representing 43.3%) of the 60 students were males while 34 respondents (representing 56.7%) were females. This shows the schools have more females than male students.

Table 4: Gender distribution of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	26	43.3
Female	34	56.7
Total	60	100

The responses of the students showed that 95% of them knew the three major courses studied under Basic Design and Technology (BDT) as Home Economics, Pre-Technical Skills and Visual Arts. Only three did not know this. When asked what they knew about Visual Arts, 51 (representing 85%) said it is a subject studied in school while six students said it is learnt only from a “street artist” and three said it is a hobby done at home. These responses suggest that majority of the students only knew Visual Arts to be a subject studied in school whilst nine students (representing 15%) did not know this.

Again, when asked whether they have art teachers in their schools, 42 students (representing 70%) said they had no art teacher while 10 students (representing 16.7%) said they had Art teachers, with the explanation that they did not have a permanent teacher. The remaining eight (representing 13.3%) said they had a permanent art teacher. The finding suggests that there is little teaching of art in the JHS, in the Asamang Community just as the preliminary investigation revealed in Chapter One.

The students were again asked whether they learn art in their classes. While 18 students (representing 30%) said they sometimes learn art, six students (representing 10%) said they learn art all the time. But, as many as 36 students (representing 60%) said they do not do any art at all. This suggests that majority of the JHS students in the Asamang community lack basic knowledge in art because the teachers do not teach the subject.

The question was also asked whether students had Visual Arts subject allocated on their class timetables. While 22 students (representing 36.7%) said ‘Yes’, 38 students (representing 63%)

said 'No'. This indicates that majority of the JHS classes do not have Visual Arts subject allocated on their timetable and therefore are not taught art at all.

The Visual Arts students were also asked whether art materials are provided them during their art lessons. Which had nine students (representing 15%) confirming this while 51 students (representing 85%) said this does not happen. This suggests that majority of the students who do Visual Arts are not given art materials for their practical lessons.

The findings also revealed that 56 of the JHS students (representing 93.3%) would appreciate it if their school offered Visual Arts as part of BDT in their final year BECE but four students (representing 6.7%) disagreed with this. The majority accepting this means that some of the students would like to select Visual Arts as their major subject.

On the question of whether the students would study Visual Arts at the SHS, the study revealed that out of the 60 students, 25 (42%) would like to do this, while 11(18%) said No, with the remaining 24 (40%) students undecided on the matter. This means that a sizable number of students would like to do Visual Arts in the SHS. More of these students are likely to offer Visual Arts if Creative Arts is taught in the primary schools.

4.3 Findings from Interviews with JHS Headmasters and BDT Teachers

Interviews with the JHS teachers and headmasters on the state of Visual Arts education in the community revealed that:

- Junior High Schools in the community do not offer Visual Arts as part of BDT.
- The courses they offer in BDT are Pre-Technical Skills and Home Economics.

- Visual Arts periods are mostly allocated for other BDT courses.
- There are no qualified teachers to teach visual arts.
- There are no visual arts materials apart from the BDT textbooks.
- There are no workshops or studios for practical visual arts.

Based on the above, two headmasters have taken measures to ensure that visual arts are offered in their respective schools. The measures include the following:

- The schools have met with their PTA in connection with the introduction of visual arts in their schools.
- They have also contacted some of their old students to come to the aid of their schools, in terms of teaching and learning materials.
- They have discussed with their Circuit Supervisor at the District Education Office to help by posting some qualified art teachers to handle visual arts in their schools.
- The schools are making provisions for materials, equipment and resources for the building of visual arts workshops.
- Students on Teaching Practice in the schools who can teach visual arts are assigned to teach the JHS One students.
- They would introduce visual arts to satisfy individual students who are interested in Visual Arts in their schools, their creative potential and also help to develop and promote the culture of the Asamang community.

4.4 Data from the Senior High School

When the researcher sought to know why few students were offering Visual Arts as compared to the (Science, General Arts and Home Economics) programmes in the only Senior High School in

Asamang, the headmistress, teachers and students who participated in the painting of the murals revealed that the school began offering Visual Arts in the 2004/2005 academic year with the first batch of students completing in 2007. According to those interviewed, the number of students who have chosen the programme since its introduction has always been very low as compared to the other programmes offered in the school. Available statistics indicated that only 76 Visual Arts students had passed out of the school between 2007 and 2011 as compared to 723 in General Arts, 311 in Business and 254 in Home Economics. The implication is that students in the school prefer the alternative programmes more than Visual Arts which receives low student numbers.

Tables 5-8 indicate the trend of student intake in Konadu Yiadom SHS at Asamang, which that the highest number of students in the Visual Arts department who graduated from the school was 21 in 2008/ 2009 academic year. This makes Visual Arts the least preferred programme.

Contrary to this situation, General Arts, which seems to be the most preferred programme, the lowest number of graduates in the three years (2006-2009) was 120 (see Table 5). There is also Home Economics, the second option of the Vocational Skills programme to Visual Arts, graduated 55 students in 2009 (see Table 8) as its lowest number. This shows that Visual Arts is not appealing to the students.

Table 5: Students who completed in 2006/2007 academic year

Courses	Total Number of students	Percentage (%)
Visual Arts	19	6.0
General Arts	120	42.8

Business Studies	76	27.0
Home Economics	68	24.2
Total	283	100

Table 6: Students who completed in 2007/2008 academic year

Courses	Total Number of students	Percentage (%)
Visual Arts	19	6.5
General Arts	172	53.5
Business Studies	66	20.5
Home Economics	63	19.5
Total	320	100

Table 7: Students who completed in 2008/2009 academic year

Courses	Total Number of students	Percentage (%)
Visual Arts	21	6.0
General Arts	184	52.7
Business Studies	76	21.8
Home Economics	68	19.5
Total	349	100

Table 8: Students who completed in 2010/2011 academic year

Courses	Total Number of students	Percentage (%)
Visual Arts	17	4.1
General Arts	247	58
Business Studies	93	22.6
Home Economics	55	13.3
Total	412	100

Further questions also revealed that most of the Visual Arts students in the school were, either originally not placed on the programmes but they changed their minds to offer Visual Arts at the start of their studies or they joined the programme midstream from different schools. This situation was also said to be the same with the current SHS 4 and SHS 3 students. The head of department also lamented that several letters written to request for Visual Arts students but it took a long time before this was granted in the 2010/2011 academic year when students were finally admitted to the school to offer Visual Arts. He expressed worry about the fact that the current student population is still too small as compared to the other programmes.

The following were some of the challenges the teachers and students in the department identified:

- No Visual Art block/studio is specially built for the department.
- No storeroom for keeping art materials and tools.
- Lack of some important basic equipment and tools like developing box, loom and guillotine.

- Lack of classrooms for alternating subjects for lessons.
- The temporal classrooms are sometimes shared with science and business departments.
- The students enrolled in the department are always those who obtained lower grades in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), making the standard always low as compared to the other courses.

The respondents believe these challenges contribute to the low students' population in the department.

4.5. Students' Comments and Experiences of the Painting Projects

Two mural painting projects were executed by students selected from the SHS. Seven students took part in the project works. These students shared their experiences as they executed the projects.

- The painting did not demand much effort since flat painting technique was used.
- Carefulness and special attention was given to detailed works.
- Working in groups helped them to achieve much in a short time as they shared ideas, gave a helping hand and collaborated with each other.
- They gained experience and courage in painting the murals
- They got job offers from some public viewers even as they were working on the projects.

4.6. Challenges Encountered During Execution of the Projects

- It was difficult, getting a stand for the execution of the top parts of the Project One. Mounting a stand became difficult for this project until a rice seller offered her table for us to stand on.

- Painting the two projects took a long time to complete because the students who were selected to do the paintings had to close from school before working on their respective assigned murals.
- There were also shortages of paints as the project went on. Some of the most used colours got finished and efforts to get some did not yield any fruit in the locality. The only option therefore was to mix paints to get something closer to the required colours.
- Project One was done far from students' location so they always had to carry their materials and walk a distance of one kilometre to the project site.
- Since it was the students' first time of executing such big projects, lots of mistakes were made in the sketching and painting which were later corrected. The students later gained the confidence and experience in wall painting during the later parts of the project execution.

4.7 Comments of the public viewers on the projects

The researcher interviewed five literates and five illiterate citizens to find out what they think about the murals, the contents, the messages they carry, their beauty and also what they offer the local environment and the community at large. The following is a summary of the comments the people who were interviewed made upon viewing the murals:

- "I can see a teacher teaching some students art work in school. The others are doing their own works such as writing, carving and typing on a computer."
- "I see a graduate and people doing different art works: painting, drawing, printing, weaving and modelling."
- "The paintings on the school walls is an indication that art is studied in the schools"

- “Although the projects are nice, the first painting was not completed because the human beings in the picture do not have eyes, nose and mouth.”
- “These art works will improve teaching and learning of art in the schools because the teachers and students can use them as source of educational references.”
- “The works will encourage other people to do more of such works in the community and this will improve art education in the community.”
- “The works are beautiful and lift up the image of the community because they are the only big art projects done so far in the community.”
- “Some heads of schools have started giving special attention to Visual Arts in their schools after being educated on the projects.”
- “Most JHS students have decided to choose Visual Arts after seeing the paintings and knowing what their prospects are.”

In addition to these statements, three JHS heads requested for murals of same type to be painted in their schools. Although some of the interviewees expressed concern about the inability to complete the project, most of them showed appreciation and admiration for the paintings. They even suggested that such works should be carried out in other schools so that it will encourage the students to love art. The students who participated in the painting project also gained self-esteem among their peers and were subsequently offered painting jobs even as they were doing the paintings. This shows how successful the project was.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents summary of the result of the research and also draws conclusion with regard to the overall findings. It is also intended to provide recommendations which when implemented would promote the teaching of visual arts in the community and also assist in further research.

The study became necessary as a result of students' refusal to offer visual arts in the SHS and also to ascertain why the Junior High Schools offer the other two BDT courses but not visual arts in their respective schools. There was also evidence that the teaching of creative art in the public basic schools was ineffective. The study on the "Promoting visual art education in the Asamang community through mural paintings" became necessary in the Asamang community so that it will erase the negative perceptions and encourage students to develop interest in visual arts in schools.

5.2 Summary

The study revealed that the majority of teachers in the primary schools do not teach Creative Arts despite the fact that the curriculum mandates its teaching many of the teachers believed that Art is not an academic subject therefore time should not be spent on it. It was realized that less attention is given to art since few or no periods are allocated for Art teaching in some school timetables although the syllabus stipulates that six instructional periods should be spent on art per week. The study also revealed that some teachers intentionally ignore the art periods and use

them for teaching other subjects. This problem can be attributed to the fact that most teachers lack the requisite skills needed for teaching the Creative Arts. None supply of teaching and learning materials to the public basic schools also contributes to the absence of practical classes in Creative Arts. The teachers are only provided with Teacher's Guide to leading those subjects without knowing how to use this to teach art.

At the JHS, none of the four schools in the Community offer Visual Arts mainly because they do not have qualified teachers to handle the subject. Another explanation for the neglect was that students do not offer the subject in their final BECE even though all JHS One students are mandated to study all aspects of BDT.

In the SHS, the study revealed that very few students offer Visual Art, mainly because the department lacks the needed basic equipment for practical works. The Ghana Education Service did not place Visual Arts students in the school until the 2010/2011 academic year even though they introduced the programme in 2004/2005. The fact that the Visual Arts students who were selected by the researcher to execute the mural projects in two of the schools were able to exhibit a high standard of painting skills indicate that if they are exposed to art from the primary school, many students will be encouraged to study Visual Arts. Another important point is the fact that the residents in the community were able to pass interesting comments on the murals even though that was the first time they were seeing art in the public domain. This shows that some education had been achieved among the people in the community on the importance of Visual Arts in the schools.

5.3 Conclusion

The study attest to the fact that although education in Visual Arts is very low at the primary, junior and senior high school levels of education in the Asamang community, it is possible to change this by tapping pupils' talents and interests in Art to produce murals that can both beautify the community and also gradually motivate the students to study art in the basic schools.

The lack of qualified and competent teachers to teach art plus the fact that the subject is not given the needed recognition in all the Junior High Schools is also an indication that art is being gradually pushed into the background. Another setback is the lack of basic art tools and equipment for effective teaching and learning of art in all schools in the Asamang community.

The painting projects have been very educative, all because most people interviewed after the execution expressed satisfaction and added that they will forever remind the community on the essence of Visual Art as a school subject.

The paintings are making more impact on the conscience of researcher's target group teachers and students to do something about art as they always see the paintings and use them as their reference sites since they are executed on their school premises.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to help address the problem of low level of visual arts education in all the schools in the Asamang community in particular.

- i. The Sekyere South District Education Officer must visit all primary schools in the district and encourage the teachers to do the least they could to teach Creative Art as it is compulsory for all six classes.

- ii. The Circuit Supervisor in the Asamang community should undertake a regular inspection to ensure that teachers in the primary schools do not abandon the subject.
- iii. The Sekyere South District Education Office must ensure all the Junior High Schools in the community are served with trained and qualified art teachers so that students who wish to offer Visual Arts can do so with passion.
- iv. The Ministry of Education and the Sekyere South District of Education must organise an in-service training programmes and invite resource persons in the art industry to sensitize all teachers and heads in the primary and JHS as well as the students in the JHS to do their best to teach the subject to their students.
- v. The Ministry of Education, Donor Agencies, Corporate Institutions and Philanthropist must be encourage to supply all primary and JHS schools in Ghana with tools, materials and equipment to enable teachers teach art with ease.
- vi. The researcher will liaise with the District Education Office and all the stakeholders of education in the Asamang community to organize a sensitisation programme on the significance of the murals executed in the two schools and how they will help improve Visual Arts education in the community.
- vii. The researcher recommends that the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service should engage artists to embark on similar projects in schools and communities where such problems exist.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE (JHS HEADTEACHERS)

TOPIC: PROMOTING VISUAL ART EDUCATION IN THE ASAMANG COMMUNITY THROUGH MURAL PAINTINGS

SECTION A

1. Gender. M [] F []
2. Name of School
3. School's Population Male Female
4. Number of Teachers Male Female

To identify reasons why Visual Art Education is low in Asamang Schools.

5. Why have your school not been doing Visual Art in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).
6. The form one students of Junior High School are mandated to study Visual Art since it is stated in their syllabus.
Do your teachers teach them? YES [] NO []
If No why?
If Yes, then why is that none of your students choose it at the final year?
7. Is your School having teaching and learning material for Visual Art subject? Yes []
No []
If No, why?
If Yes, what are they
Who are the suppliers
8. Do the teachers who teach the Visual Art use them [TLM] in their teaching Yes []
No []
If No why?
9. How often do the teacher/teachers teach the subject in the school?
10. Have you observed the students do any Art work? Yes [] No []
If No why?

If Yes what work did they do?

11. Where did they do the work?
12. What is your opinion about the students Art work?
13. What can you say about the teachers who teach the subject?
14. What can you say about students towards the learning of Visual Art in the school?
15. What is your general opinion about the teaching and learning of Visual Art in your school?
16. What are some of the problems and difficulties identified in the teaching and learning of Visual Art in your school?
17. What measures are you putting in place to address these problems/ difficulties?
18. Would you like your students to choose Visual Art to the final year?

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRES (PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS)

1. Name of School
2. Gender M [] F []
3. Schools' Population M [] F []
4. Number of Teachers M [] F []
- 5.

To identify reasons why Visual Art education is low in Asamang Schools

6. Do you teach Visual Art (creative art) in your School? Yes [] No []
If Yes, which classes
7. How often do you see your teachers teach the Visual Art in your school?
8. Is your School having teaching and learning material for Visual Art subject? Yes []
No []
If No, why?
If Yes, what are they
9. Do the teachers who teach the Visual Art use them [TLM] in their teaching Yes []
No []
If No why?
10. How often do the teacher/teachers teach the subject in the school?
11. Have you observed the students do any Art work? Yes [] No []
If No why?
If "Yes" what work did they do?
12. Where did they do the work?
13. What is your opinion about the students Art work?
14. What will you say about the teachers who teach the subject?
15. What will you say about students towards the learning of Visual Art in the school?

16. What is your general opinion about the teaching and learning of Visual Art in your school?
17. What are some of the problems and difficulties identified in the teaching and learning of Visual Art in your school?
18. What measures are you putting in place to address these problems/ difficulties?
19. Would you like your students to choose Visual Art to the final year?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE (JHS HEADTEACHERS)

1. When did your school start offering Visual Art?
2. How many batches have completed since you offered the subject?
3. What are the Populations of each of the batches in comparison to that of other courses offered in the school?
4. What is the current population of Visual Art students in the school in terms of classes?
5. Is the Population of students increasing or decreasing?
State reasons for your answer?
6. How many Visual Art teachers does the school have?
7. What are their areas of specialization and their qualification?
8. Is the school having a Visual Art Studio? Yes [] No []
If No why
9. What measures are you taking to improve Visual Art Education in your school?
10. These ancient murals typically depict the activities of a particular civilization's people, encapsulating a moment in time, and range from scenes of hunting, gathering, and family life, to religious and funerary scenes.

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR JHS STUDENTS)

TOPIC: PROMOTING VISUAL ART EDUCATION IN THE ASAMANG COMMUNITY
THROUGH MURAL PRINTINGS

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. Name of school:
3. Class:
.....
4. What are three major course areas under basic design technology (BDT)?
 - a. Science, home economics and visual arts.
 - b. Pretech drawing, home economics and visual arts
 - c. Pretech drawing, home economics and mathematics.
5. What do you know about visual art?
 - a. It is a hobby done at home.
 - b. It is a subject study in school.
 - c. It is learnt only from a street artist as apprenticeship.
6. Do you have a teacher who teaches you art in school?
 - a. No, not at all.
 - b. Yes, but not a permanent teacher (on teaching practice)
 - c. Yes, a permanent teacher
7. Do you learn art in school?
 - a. Yes sometimes.
 - b. Yes all the time.
 - c. No, not at all.
8. Do you have art period on your timetable?
 - a. Yes, only once or twice in a week.
 - b. Yes, but we use it for other subject.
 - c. No, not at all.

9. Are you given art tools and materials when doing any art work?
 - a. Yes, every thing we need for the work.
 - b. Yes, not enough for us.
 - c. No, we buy them by ourselves.
 - d. No, not at all

10. Would you like your school to offer visual art in the final year as that of technical drawing and home economics?
 - a. Yes, because I can do art and easily pass in the B.E.C.E.
 - b. No, because it is difficult and would not be easy to pass in the B.E.C.E.
 - c. Yes, because some students can also choose art to the final year.

11. Would you choose Visual art course at the senior high school (S.H.S.)
 - a. Yes, because I like it.
 - b. No because I don't like it.
 - c. I don't know for now.

12. Have you ever seen any art work/works in this community?
 - a. Yes b. no c. at first but not now.

13. Where in this community did you see the art work/works?
 Answer:.....

14. What type or form of art work did you see?

a. Painting or drawing	c. graphic design
b. Sculpture	d. any other

15. How did you find the art work?
 - a. It was bad and not interesting at all.
 - b. It was nice, interesting and decorative in the area.
 - c. It was not necessary.
 - d. Any other

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR JHS TEACHERS

Please tick (√) where appropriate

1. Age 20-30 (), 31-40 (), 41-50 (), 51-60 ()
2. Gender Male () Female ()
3. Name of School Class
4. Class Size Male Female.....
5. Teacher's Qualification: People Teacher (), Tr's Certificate 'A', () Diploma ()
Degree ()
6. Course specialised in School
- A. To identify how Art is taught in the primary school in Asamang
 - i) Do you teach Art in your class? Yes (). No ()
 - ii) If no, state reasons.....
 - iii) If yes, how many periods are allocated for Art on your timetable per week? State
 - iv) Do you use the periods profitably for the Art lessons? Yea (), No (), Used for other subjects ()
 - v) If yes, how do you grade the children's participation level in the lesson? High ()
Average (), Low ().
 - vi) Do the pupils use art tools and materials during art lessons? Ys (), No (). If no, why?.....
 - vii) If yes, state the materials and tools used. (e.g. pencil, pen, erasers, drawing papers, colours, brushes rulers, etc.).....
 - viii) Who supplied the materials and tools? The School (), the pupils () the teacher, donor agency (), others.
 - ix) Do you find it difficult teaching Art? Yes (), No (). If yes state your reasons
.....
 - x) Is Art an interesting subject? Yes (), No ().