

# AFRICAN ARTISTRY'S ROLE MODELLING AND TALENT DISCOVERY AS A STRATEGY IN ADDRESSING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' VIEWS

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## ABSTRACT

*The problem this study examined was high youth unemployment rates among the black South Africa and how Lesego Rampolokeng oeuvre can be used as a platform to promote youth economic participation, through role modelling and talent discover. South Africa is faced with the challenge of youth bulging that is not accompanied by creation of permanent jobs and youth assimilation into the country's job market. The primary objective of the study was to examine the views of pre-service teachers on how African Artistry's role modelling and talent discovery can be used as a strategy to mitigate youth unemployment in South Africa. The research questions that drove this study are: What is the contribution of Lesego Rampolokeng and other artists on role modelling, talent discovery and black consciousness?*

*How can education sector and communities promote African Artistry?*

*Interpretivism paradigm and qualitative case study were used; and individual interviews were conducted with ten pre-service teachers. Thematic and narrative analyses were used to analyse qualitative data. The research findings identified that artistry has influence on role modelling and talent discovery. It was further revealed that the education sector and communities can promote African Artistry in different ways. This study recommends that a large scale study to examine the influence of African artistry on talent discovery and youth employment. Furthermore, the study recommends integration of African artistry within schooling and teacher education curricular and different arts festivals within communities.*

## INTRODUCTION

South Africa like other African states, is experiencing high levels of unemployment [International Labor Organization (ILO) 2016], and youth unemployment in particular. Unemployment is not a current issue in democratic South Africa; it is recurring and inherited from apartheid, South Africa. The South African government under the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) has not succeeded in addressing the scourge of unemployment. Rocketing unemployment has become a global phenomenon and has left the global communities in a state of destitution. Global workforce totaling 1.5 billion people secure poor job quality and vulnerable employment, (ILO, 2016). And youth unemployment in particular, is rocketing.

South Africa has recorded youth unemployment rate of 63% for ages 15–24 (Statistics South Africa, 2021). In the mist of local and international youth programs and policies, youth unemployment is rocketing. For example, the Youth café (2021) mandate is “to advance youth-

*led approaches toward achieving sustainable development, social equity, innovative solutions, community resilience, and transformative change*". The question is, 'what is the contribution to the Youth Cafe in addressing youth unemployment in SA.

This paper is aimed at finding solutions to youth unemployment, and focuses on African Artistry industry and promotion of local artists who preserves African Indigenous Knowledge. The aim is to find out on how African Artistry can be used as one of the strategies to address youth unemployment. Ukwa & Okolie (2002) have identified arts as a strategy for unemployment reduction. They argue that visual arts can be used as "*a strategic tool for youth unemployment reduction and economic development in Nigeria*" Ukwa & Okolie (2002: 11). Mashigo (2019) highlights that "*from the music composers, the film producers and the sketch artists to the nail technicians and hairdressers, the creative industry can economically emancipate the youth of Africa*". This current paper focuses on the contribution of local renowned artist, Lesego Rampolokeng and how his oeuvres can promote role modelling and talent discovery as strategies for addressing youth unemployment.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Art industry has potential to create jobs for many youth in South. And promotion of local African Artistry is one of the neglected spaces that can assimilate many South African youth members. "*African State Parties provide a small portion of their national budget into the industry, the SA government in particular devoted R4.5-billion of its National budget to the Department of Arts and culture for 2018/19, which contributes to the promotion of arts, culture and development and heritage preservation among others*" (Mashigo, 2019).

Furthermore, this fraternity has a very small allocation to assimilate more youth. Mashiso (2019) has put it crystal clear when stressing that there are few new jobs created in the creative industry.

This is the clear evidence that African youth are discouraged to pursue Arts disciplines due to the fact that there are no future prospects in the industry. Moreover, minimal exposure to role models of African Artist such as Lesego Rampolokeng - a renowned African Artist contributes to lack of interest among African children and youth. A lack of preservation and exposure of African Artists Oeuvre's in Art industry has robbed them of their interests in pursuing art as a career.

## RESEARCH PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

### Research Purpose

To examine the views of student teachers on the works of Lesego Rampolokeng, and its contribution towards students' role modelling and talent discovery as strategies towards South African youth unemployment. The study was driven by the research questions, namely:

- What is the contribution of Lesego Rampolokeng and other artists on role modelling, talent discovery and black consciousness?
- How can education sector and communities promote African Artistry?

## RESEARH DESIGN

This study was premised within the inter-pretivism paradigm that informed the use of qualitative case study (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Qualitative case study design is used because it *“provides tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within their contexts”* (Jack & Baxter, 2010). Sampling and methods: Purposive sampling was used to select the research participants who were doing Bachelor of Education, Level 3, at Durban University of Technology. Ten pre-service teachers were interviewed on one-to-one basis, to examine the works of Lesego Rampolokeng as one of Africal artist, and its contribution towards students' role modelling and talent discovery. Thematic and narrative analyses methods were used. In order to protect the research participants' identity, the preservice teachers were given pseudonyms, PST1, PST2 up to PST10.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Artistry has Influence on Role Modeling and Talent Discovery

The preservice teachers' views show that Lesego Rampolokeng and other artists have huge contribution towards role modelling and talent recovery. This finding emanates from the research question *“what is the contribution of Lesego Rampolokeng and other artists on role modelling, talent discovery and black consciousness?”* Narratives explain that:

**PST 1:** *“People who are successful artists are role models to those who inspire to become the future artist.”*

**PTS 9:** *“Rampolokeng grew up in the township and children can identify themselves with him”*

This study is in line with Matshabane (2016) who found that role modelling has influence *“in informing the decisions made by young people on how they choose their future careers, and on how role models influence their overall career and life plans”*. Moreover, Coetsee (2019) found that *“the limited opportunities and exposure to positive role models in their community”* is a challenge to youth career choice.

### Views of Pre-service Teachers Show that Education Sector and Communities Can Promotion of an African Artistry

It was found that education sector and communities can promote African Artistry in different ways. Narratives stress.

**PST 4:** Subjects must be promoted in schools. They need to do road show. They must be invited by the School during talent discovery days. Schools should have career days where they invite them.

**PST 6:** There ought to be opportunities for impromptu speeches and drama to tap into the talent of the youths in primary and secondary schools.

**PST 7:** Arts be integrated in the school curriculum. Education Ministry should ensure that Designed Arts Curriculum is implemented without further delay.

**PST 8:** Arts Centers and libraries should promote African Artistry, and be made available and active in rural and urban communities.

**PST 9:** Basic and higher education need to infuse art in schools and use services of artists from communities in different ways to promote art in school. Artistry should be promoted in schools and communities at the same rate at which sport is.

Different strategies were outlined. Road shows, school career days, debates, drama, outsourcing specialist teacher. Furthermore, there is a need for curricular integration with Arts and be promoted at the rate of sports promotion in schools. In support, Department of Arts and Culture, White Paper (1996) has put in clear terms that it the right of every learner “*to access equitable, appropriate life-long education and training in the arts, culture and heritage to develop individual talents and skills through the transformation of arts education within formal school system*”. A school practice of integrating Arts in the traditional school curriculum is not new to Kindergarden class of Teacher Carol Hunt,” and it has become “*a new and increasingly popular way of bringing the arts into the classroom*” (Balingit, 2016).

### **Lesego Rampolokeng is Inspiration and Role Model to African Youth and his Artistry has Influence on Youth’s Talent Discovery**

The student's views show that Lesego Rampolokeng is aspiration and role model to African youth, and his artistry has influence on youth talent discovery. Lesego’s artistry creates a space for reimaged and redefined arts in South African schools and communities. This finding emanates from the research question, ‘do you agree that a renowned artist such as Ramolokeng's onvre is promoting self-discovery, talent discovery and black consciousness among the African youth? Motivate’.

**PST 1:** Rampolokeng success can be inspiration to African youth about artistry. This can be a driving force among students and learners in discovering their own talents.

**PST 3:** His poetry and recitation of his poems that promotes Black Consciousness can be used in schools to highlight the circumstances of the oppressed, and suggest ways to address the situation.

**PST 10:** Yes I agree. For students to reach their talents, they need artist such Rampolokeng to unleash their potential and help them in self -discovery journey. Rampolokeng poetry promotes Black Consciousness, which is needed among Africans that can help build their citizenry.

## **DISCUSSION**

The primary objective of the paper was to examine the views of student teachers on the works of Lesego Rampolokeng, and its contribution towards students’ role modelling and talent discovery as strategies towards South African youth unemployment. African Artistry and Lesego Rampolokeng in particular have influence on role modelling and talent discovery. Coetsee (2019) is of the same idea, of promoting local artist to serve as role model to the country’s youth and children. Promotion of African artistry in education sector and communities was emphasized. This finding needed the South African to reflect on the DAC White paper promulgated in 1996 that has prescribed learners’ right to art education; and for integration of arts in the school curriculum. For the past 24 years, South African education fraternity did not adequately implement White paper’s prescriptions. When South Africa is failing to integrate arts in the school programme, other countries are successful on this. Balingit (2016) reflected on teaching methodology of Teacher Carol Hunt, that uses have integrated arts in the teaching of

mathematics. It was further found that African artist, Lesego Rampolokeng serves as an inspiration and role model to African youth and that his artistry has influence on youth's talent discovery.

## CONCLUSION

This paper focused on the views of student teachers on the works of Lesego Rampolokeng, and its contribution towards students' role modelling and talent discovery as strategies towards South African youth unemployment. The pre-service teachers' views shows that Lesego Rampolokeng is an Artistic icon who can be used in education sector and communities to address youth unemployment by creating spaces for new job opportunities in Arts industry. This paper therefore, recommends that arts should be integrated in the school programme; and be promoted in African communities. The study further proposes that an increase in exposure of African art works in the South African school curriculum and communities.

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