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Public investment in the craft industry in South Africa: an exploration of the values of craft projects funded by the National Arts Council in Limpopo and Mpumalanga (2013-2014)

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Public Investment in the Craft Industry in South Africa: An exploration of the values of craft projects funded by the National Arts Council in Limpopo and Mpumalanga (2013-2014).

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in the field of Cultural Policy and Management.

Johannesburg, 2018.

DECLARATION

I, Palesa Mopeli, declare that this Research Report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts in the field of Cultural Policy and Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

_____

Signature of candidate

_____ day of _____ 20 _____ in _____

ABSTRACT

Literature and other studies (government reports and consultancy studies) have identified the craft industry as a driver of social opportunities and sustainable livelihoods in local communities, for creative and innovative skills and the preservation of unique cultures and the heritage of the country. This research is an evaluative study which seeks to provide a response to this by considering the extent to which the above is true. This is done in relation to a number of rural and township areas of the Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces where interviews with National Arts Council of South Africa's (NAC) beneficiary craft organisations were conducted. It seeks to investigate how the NAC craft funding of 2013 impacted on the value created by craft produced by beneficiaries of this funding.

Furthermore, this research aims to assist the NAC in answering the question: what impact has NAC funding had on these craft organisations, and on the South African craft industry? It considers possible recommendations to re-focus the NAC's craft funding policy in light of the findings of this research.

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This research was supported by the National Arts Council. Thanks to colleagues at the NAC, particularly Simangele Hlophe. This research would not have been possible without the assistance and resources that the NAC provided.

To the craft organisations who participated in this research, your assistance has been incredible. I hope that the results of this research will assist in the growth and development of your organisations.

To my precious family, thank you for putting up with me throughout this journey. It would have not been possible without your unwavering support. A special shout out to Marona Seekane.

To Avril Joffe, my supervisor, your guidance and insight has been invaluable.

Thank you.

And to myself, we're shining baby!

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INTRODUCTION

Research objectives

The arts and culture industry is influential and necessary for the country as it is not only an economic driver in generating revenue, but an asset to education for creative and innovative skills and preserves the unique culture and heritage of the country.

The aim of this research is to explore the extent to which the above is true. It will consider participation and engagement as possible alternative indicators for assessing value to economic deliverables in the craft sector. Furthermore, it will explore the extent to which people value craft as meaningful in their lives.

This research deals with the South African craft context by considering:

- The instrumental, social and economic values of craft.
- The instrumental value that crafters and their communities create by making and participating in craft.
- What defines grant funding.
- How NAC funding impacted the value created by craft.

The NAC recognises that while its craft funding goes some way towards achieving development and access to the craft market, its funding will not be able to provide for all the needs of these organisations on its own.

For this reason, the NAC is questioning the extent to which its funding impacts the lives of individual crafters, their communities and the industry as a whole. Added to this, this research explores possible types of support that the funding policy could offer, other than financial aid. This would be done to better support craft organisations. This improved support is aimed at ensuring further development in the quality of products, and growth of organisations in a manner that fosters sustainable trade beyond the funding period.

The fundamental intention of this research was to investigate the NAC's craft funding in largely rural provinces, and the impact of its grant funding in these marginalised craft communities. It sought to understand why these provinces make the least number of applications for funding to the NAC and why these organisations do not claim the full amount allocated to them.

Keywords

Craft as defined by the then NAC craft panel (2007:1) is a range of functional and decorative items produced by hand processes on a small scale. The hand crafting of these items provides craft its significance and value. Its small scale and individuality makes for an ideal eco-tourism product which tells the stories and cultures of local people.

Craft organisations are often small or micro enterprises. Small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) are defined by the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) as a "broad range of firms including formally registered, informal and non-VAT registered organisations" (SEDA, 2016:5). These could also be medium-sized enterprises that are family businesses that employ over 100 people, or they could be informal micro-enterprises comprising of a self-employed person.

This research refers to craft as an "industry" rather than a "sector". This is informed by Jaya Jaitly's writing on craft that states that: "Whatever makes the wheels of the economy turn, merits serious attention and not condescending patronage, over-romanticized projection, or apologetic 'discount' support" (Jaitly 2005:1-3). The craft industry is one of the industries that contributes to South Africa's economy. Jaitly continues by saying that the industry needs to consider itself as an "industry of the non-industrialized" where unlike other industries that are dominated by machines, the craft industry is dominated by the "human mind and hand" rather than small machines and tools. Here, the machine is the instrument of the maker (Jaitly, 2005:2).

Because of its contribution to the economy, the craft industry has been identified as a driver of social opportunities and sustainable livelihoods in local communities by the South African national government through a number of sector studies such as the Cultural Industries Growth Strategy (CIGS, 1998), the Craft Customised Sector Programme (CSP, 2004) and the Creative Industries in South Africa Sector Studies Research Report (2008). There is however no universal instrument by which to measure or quantify the value of arts and cultural activities (Frumkin & Kim, 2002). This research attempts to bridge this gap by using participation and engagement as indicators of social or instrumental value. It does this by evaluating the impact and benefits gained from experiencing cultural and artistic activities (Arts Council England, 2014:4-7).

Cultural participation and engagement as defined by the Council of Europe (2016) refers to cultural practises that involve consumption and community activities which reflect the quality of life, traditions and beliefs. This definition takes into consideration both active and passive behaviour. These cultural practises can be categorised into three categories which are either home-based culture, going-out and identity building which consists of ethnic culture and community practises (which are a particular focus in this research)**.**

This research uses the terms “participation and engagement” to mean taking part in producing and dealing with all aspects of the value chain of craft. It considers crafters, intermediary organisations and agencies dealing with craft. This research considers the impact effected by engagement in craft.

The NAC in relation to funding in the craft industry of South Africa

The NAC’s vision is to “promote, through the arts, the free expression of South Africa’s cultures”. Its mission is to “develop and promote excellence in the arts” and it does this in line with legislation such as the National Arts Council Act (No. 56 of 1997), the Cultural Institutions Act (No. 119 of 1998) and the Public Finance Management Act (No. 1 of 1999). The latter act is a crucial pillar to the existence of the NAC as it regulates the management of financials held and distributed by national and provincial government.

These acts maintain that all South African citizens are entitled to equal and fair treatment in the dissemination of information that may aid their expression or access to resources that may assist them. The work, and more so, one of the priorities of the NAC, is in contributing to redress in the arts. The task at hand, however, is greater than just “redress”; it is to empower and to see to the capacity building and enhancement of the industry and creatives.

Despite efforts to have all allocated grants paid to beneficiaries, the NAC still experiences challenges with beneficiaries not claiming the remaining balance of their grants because of, most commonly, issues of compliance by beneficiaries when submitting their final reports. These unpaid funds resulted in a ‘surplus’ of “incomplete” projects (incomplete because beneficiaries do not submit the necessary documents pertaining to compliance and reporting and therefore cannot claim the balance of their

grant). The NAC uses this ‘surplus’ for projects they deem of strategic value, what they call ‘Special or Flagship projects. At a quick glance, this surplus is ironic considering the fact that only 20% of the overall number of craft organisations that apply for funding actually receive it.

The year 2013/14, which is the primary focus of this research, marked 20 years of democracy in South Africa. In response to the priority of redress and transformation in the arts, the NAC attempted to address this by hosting annual road shows around the country aimed at raising awareness of the NAC and its funding criteria, in the hope that it would encourage potential applicants to apply for NAC funding (NAC, 2013/14:19). In this year, 147 crafters and craft projects were funded (NAC, 2013/14:24), with 17 of these projects located in Mpumalanga receiving R405 000, and 14 projects in Limpopo receiving R278 000 worth of funding (NAC, 2013/14:40-44).

Mrs Matlhodi Makwetla, the chairperson of the NAC in 2014/15 states in the Annual Report that the NAC was faced with the momentous challenge of decreased funding. This impacted negatively on the operational functions of the NAC, as it had to decrease the number of beneficiaries and could not assist with capacity building programmes in support of beneficiaries to ensure that the funds allocated to them were used to achieve the best possible outcomes. This was evident from the respondents; responses in this research. Added to the string of challenges, arts development officers could not reach beneficiaries located in the far rural communities of the country because of the financial constraints of the NAC. This affected the monitoring and evaluation processes of funded organisations, which also contributed to a large accumulated surplus of unclaimed funds (NAC, 2014/15:9-13).

Craft funding in context

Ideally, government funding should have assisted beneficiaries to achieve development milestones in their communities and sector. It should have assisted with developing the economy while achieving the fundamental objectives of government (Frumkin and Kim, 2002:8 and Kent Literacy, 2016). In light of this, I considered how the allocated funding juxtaposed to the values that craft organisations are achieving. Added to this, I considered the criteria by which funding was issued and how the context of craft in South Africa influences craft funding.

The arts benefit government, as stated by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) (2010:1), in that the sector is a policy asset and prosperity generator for government as alluded to by NASAA (2010:2-3). In turn, government benefits the arts through grant funding which can be considered as investments into the sector; this in turn benefits the economy and society generally. This funding also contributes to the value that society attributes to the arts; these values include job creation, skills development and social cohesion. In this sense, government funding carries deep significance of validating and accepting what is important and deemed “culture” (Holden, 2009:449).

CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There are two types of research methodologies, which are qualified as either qualitative or quantitative research methods (Creswell, 2014:43). This research used qualitative research methods for the purposes of data collection. While the applied methodology used interviews as the primary source of data collection, the types of interviews conducted were both individual and group interviews.

The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide "complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue", as stated by Creswell (2007:35):

> "Qualitative research is an intricate fabric composed of minute threads, many colours, different textures and various blends of material."

The above quotation perhaps sums up the humanistic aspect of this research. It considers the contradictory behaviours, beliefs, emotions and opinions of participants. Creswell advances this by highlighting how qualitative research is being used to understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems. My role as the researcher is to interpret the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2013:32-52).

Because of the fact that this research relied on face-to-face interviews (Mack et al. 2005:29), and required direct interaction with the respondents, the interviews took place at the site from which the respondents produce and operate. The interviews were recorded (with permission from the respondents) in a variety of ways, such as through field notes, audio and video recording. Priority was afforded to the respondents' feelings towards being recorded, which further influenced the medium in which each interview was recorded (Mack et al. 2005:33). Only in one case did the respondent state that he preferred the interview to be documented via voice rather than video recording – his request was granted.

The number of respondents representing the respective organisations participating in this research influenced the type of interviews. Where organisations only had one representative, individual interviews were conducted, and where organisations had more than one representative, group interviews were conducted. In Mpumalanga, four

of the six organisations had one representative, while two organisations had three and five representatives respectively. Limpopo, on the other hand, dominated the group interviews where a total of five organisations were represented on average by between two and six representatives (with the exception of one organisation being represented by ten representatives: four employees and six independent crafters). Only one organisation was represented by one representative. The table below shows the interview schedule of this research, the names, locations and the number of representatives present for the interview from each organisation participating in this research.

Province	Date of interview	Location of organisation	Organisation name	No. of Reps	Female	Male
Mpumalanga	Monday 24 April 2017	Kamaqhekeza	Tiluleni Bomake	3	3	0
	Tuesday 25 April 2017	Malelane	Siyalu Arts & Craft	1	1	0
	Wednesday 26 April 2017	Kanyamazane	Future Perfect	1	0	1
	Wednesday 26 April 2017	Bushbuck Ridge	Malengs Trading	1	0	1
	Thursday 27 April 2017	Thulamahashe	Sella Construction and Pottery	1	1	0
	Friday 28 April 2017	Bushbuck Ridge	Letsopa Pottery and Art	5	4	1
Limpopo	Monday 19 June 2017	Giyani, Section D1	Nshalati Business Enterprise	4	4	0
	Tuesday 20 June 2017	Maphata Village	Pfuxanani Early Learning Centre	6	3	3
	Wednesday 21 June 2017	Giyani, Section A	Shalamukani Community Project	2	2	0
	Thursday 22 June 2017	Bambeni Village	Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation	3	3	0
	Friday 23 June 2017	Mtititi Plange, Malamulele	Mukhacani Mtititi Plange Old Age	1	1	0
	Saturday 24 June 2017	Makhado	Madi A Thavha Mountain Lodge	10	9	1

Figure 1 Table showing details of the interview schedule of this research.

Initially, this research sought to primarily use qualitative methods of individual interviews with each member of the selected beneficiary organisations, members of the community, relevant industry stakeholders and the NAC craft panel of 2013/14. However, this approach has been adjusted slightly from what my research proposal had envisioned, in that the interviews conducted with respondents took on a group interview approach instead of individual interviews and secondly, members of the community were not interviewed. In addition, only one representative of the NAC's craft panel was interviewed instead of the entire craft panel because of financial constraints as many of the panellists were from other provinces and requesting them to come to the NAC would have been a significant cost to the NAC.

Group interviews were conducted to allow respondents comfort, as they seemed to be more comfortable with group rather than individual interviews. Group interviews allowed for matters raised to be addressed by members of the group as a whole and sparked lengthy dialogue and provided insightful responses.

While individual interviews may have allowed this research to elicit respondents' personal perspectives on the impact of NAC funding; the use of the group interview approach allowed for not only a holistic understanding of the organisation, but also considered all input by members of the organisations. Literacy is a challenge in rural and township areas because these communities rely on oral communication. This aspect may also be linked to the cultural beliefs of oral communication; the spoken word in these cases is unifying where respondents can share their experiences together (Ong, 2002:5). Oral communication is participatory, and it is what this research aimed to achieve in the hope of collecting richer and more textured data. These interviews granted me the opportunity to explore how respondents relate to one another (Mack et al. 2011:8).

Qualitative Research Methods: Group interviews for the communal soul

Some advantages of group interviews are that it makes use of group dynamics to produce new and additional data and provides the researcher insight into the relationships between respondents which can be useful in understanding the respondents. A disadvantage of this method is that, depending on the size of the group, some respondents may express themselves more while others not (Frey and Fontana, 1991:185). This research found this to be true in that certain respondents

would take the lead with initiating responses while others would just add to these. In most cases where group interviews were conducted, the founder of the organisation would initiate the discussion around the response or provide a response and have the other respondents support or challenge them to give a more inclusive response. This speaks to the nature of craft being cooperative and the collective nature of these organisations.

Group interviews are used by researchers investigating the perception and reality of an affected population (Frey and Fontana; 1991:175). In this research, the group interview was used to provide a source and method of data collection in engaging respondents who have or continue to share the same social context and can participate simultaneously in the interview. Frey and Fontana emphasise that group interviews are not a means of replacing individual interviews, but may assist in providing data related to group interaction and awareness of the group's reality. Frey and Fontana add to this by writing that there is no particular technique or method used to collect data but that it may be beneficial to use a method of fieldwork which comprises multiple ways of collecting data (Frey and Fontana, 1991:175).

In accordance with this theory, field settings may naturally lead to the formation of formal and spontaneous groups, as is the case with this research. Respondents naturally formed a group amongst themselves during the interview (Frey and Fontana, 1991:178-179). Moreover, group interviews may be used as the primary source of data collection and exploratory purposes as they assist with gaining opinion or attitudes of respondents; which is exactly what this research was interested in.

These interviews were guided by a structured set of interview questions. Once the questions were introduced, respondents discussed amongst themselves and provided a response based on and inclusive of the views expressed by all respondents. In the case of one-on-one interviews, the respondent would provide the responses to the questions (Frey and Fontana, 1991:178-179). I listened intently to these discussions and took field notes using either a video or voice recorder depending on what respondents felt more comfortable with.

As a visual artist from an urban setting, a different cultural and linguistic background, in performing my role as the researcher in this context, I would be categorised as an "outsider researcher" as I did not belong to the predominantly black, middle-aged and

elderly, female crafters. As a black female creative, I could however relate to the crafters as they too are creatives who have found value in participating in the arts. This I believe, as Kanuha (in Buckle and Dwyer, 2009:57) indicates, may have contributed to my enhanced and in depth understanding of the respondents. Being able to identify myself with the respondents in this manner allowed a certain level of acceptance by the respondents and provided common ground on which the research could take place (Buckle and Dwyer, 2009:58).

Secondary sources to support primary data

The enquiry into grant funding and the relationship between government and the craft sector proceeded by conducting interviews with provincial and local government departments and agencies of government that are stakeholders in the craft sector. This included interviews with the Limpopo Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (SAC) and the Limpopo Economic Development Agency in Giyani (LEDA).

Secondary and primary resources used in this research, for the purposes of gaining insight into the current context of the craft sector, were studies and reports written by government portfolios such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), the Craft and Design Institute (CDI), Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), and local and national government.

The enquiry used policies, strategies and research consisting of an analysis of annual NAC funding policy, reports and existing research in the craft sector. These reports are primary documents that the NAC has compiled as per its funding policy and legislative mandate. Documentary research methods refer to analysis of documents concerning the research problem. The reports and policy written by the NAC are considered documentary research. These are, as stated by Mogalakwe (2006:2), 'written texts produced by individuals or groups during their practices'; these can be used as either primary or secondary forms of data, which for the purposes of this research will be considered as secondary data.

To this end, a portion of this research considers the nature of grant funding: Whether it created a mutually beneficial partnership between the craft sector and government, if and how beneficiaries have expanded and improved their craft, whether the grant assisted in developing the community and if this has added to the value of craft in the community (Frumkin and Kim, 2002:1-9).

Selection of organisations

This research forms part of a national study embarked on by three researchers (one of whom had to postpone her research), each considering different provinces of South Africa and different questions relating to the impact of public funding in the craft industry. The selected provinces, namely Mpumalanga and Limpopo, are the focus of this research, and were of particular interest to me. This was motivated by my desire

to contribute to a better understanding of these marginalised communities and improve the support they receive through funding.

Palys (2008:697-8) writes about purposive sampling and states that this type of sampling is done with the objectives of the research in mind which in this case was to understand the experiences of crafters and the impact their participation has caused. He adds that this type of sampling is synonymous with qualitative research. Organisations participating in this research were beneficiaries of the NAC craft grant funding in the year 2013/14. These organisations were selected from the NAC's Annual Funding Report with the area of focus being the Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces.

Given that the NAC requested that this research be conducted, one of these methods of sampling involved recommendations from the NAC's craft development officer as to which organisations should be included in the study. This sample included organisations located in various parts of the Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces and how much funding was allocated to each.

Furthermore, some of the organisations were selected keeping the allocated funding in mind, to have a fair representation of organisations falling under the different funding brackets (ranging from R10 000 to R50 000). This was done so as to ascertain the impact that this funding had on these organisations in these predominantly rural and township areas. The selection was also mindful of choosing organisations that have different offerings such as those that offer child and elderly care services, those operating for profit as well as those operating to address challenges such as unemployment using craft as the vehicle by which to achieve relief from these challenges. All these aspects formed part of the selection process which Palys (2008) considers as purposive sampling.

As a result of all these considerations, six organisations were selected from each province. This was also deemed to be a manageable number and allowed this research to gain comprehensive insight into each organisation.

Processing the data

Interview questions passed through several processes from preparation to analysis. Most of the interviews were video recorded, while others were recorded via audio.

Once data was collected, this footage was viewed together with the field notes and observations made during the interview to get a true sense of the respondents' comments and input. Regarding the interview questions, the responses offered by respondents were categorised per the options suggested in the interview questions. These responses were then tallied to ascertain the number of respondents who selected each of the options. In so doing, this process allowed for some direct quotations to be taken from the responses provided by respondents, and these were used as supporting evidence to the responses and findings observed and concluded upon.

Although qualitative research methods are non-numerical, responses can still be quantified (Mack et al. 2005:4). It allows for the opportunity to observe, record and interpret the participants' responses and enabled me to probe beyond the initial responses (Qualitative Research Consultants Association, 2016).

> "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices... turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos underpinned by particular philosophical assumptions and that researchers should maintain consistency between the philosophical starting point and the methods they adopt… At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." (Denzin and Lincoln in Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:2-3)

A series of representations, as noted in the above quote, is seen for the purposes of this research in the form of observations documented in field notes, photographs and videos taken during the interviews to get a sense of the impact that participating in craft has had on them and their communities.

In conclusion, the use of the above-mentioned methods, including individual and group interviews, has provided insight into the individual and collective experiences of craft, and has assisted to gain insight into the value of craft in the respective communities.

These findings on the individual and collective experiences are found in the section titled ‘Benefits to participating and engaging in craft’.

Lastly, as per the research conducted by the *Arts Council England,* this paper borrows the idea that craft is a "strategic national resource" (Arts Council England, 2014:9-11). It also leans on the suggestion that a new language be created to express the values of cultural production together with the significance of this production in our lives. Holden’s view (2004:9-12) emphasises that we need a language that is premised on reflecting, recognising and capturing the complete range of values expressed. Holden continues by highlighting how the development of this language would make clear the values implied in the funding process, view the legitimacy for funding as being of public value and establish “grass roots value creation” (Holden, 2004:9-10). Holden critically proposes that cultural value be used as an overarching principle for cultural funding. To this end, the NAC’s craft funding policy could consider this as part of its mandate.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the lack of existing theoretical literature focusing on the South African and African context, this research relies heavily on global North and South African policy literature. This type of literature provides guidance to South African government decision-makers in order to achieve its targeted outcomes. Global North African theoretical literature is used to frame the discussions. Policy documents have been instrumental in providing the arguments for the provision of financial and non-financial support as well as positioning the arts and culture industry.

> "The concept of the arts itself is indefinable, and any attempt to measure it cannot begin to represent its essential quality." (O'Brien, 2002:5)

The above quote is taken in relation to the measuring of culture and suggests that culture and the contribution of its products, the arts in particular, have for a long time been measured in relation to economic goals. This echoes O'Brien's (2010:3-4) sentiments of the sector failing to do justice to the value of the sector in a cohesive and meaningful way (2010:11-14). Arts Council England's research titled *The Value of Arts and Culture to People and Society: An Evidence Review* (2014) offers an additional aspect of significance of the sector, which is the fact that participation in the arts can contribute to community cohesion, increase unity and strengthen communities. As a result, these issues need to be considered qualitatively to fully understand the value of the industry and the significance of cultural products and services.

The measure of impact and benefits of the industry remains in the economic sphere in the South African government's strategies and initiatives, conveyed through indicators such as the number of jobs created, and the income and profit generated. This research uses and contributes to existing international literature focused on identifying the gaps between economic and non-economic measures of the industry. It focuses on the non-economic measure of the benefits and values of NAC funded craft projects and organisations by drawing out themes related to the benefits or participation in craft. This thinking is influenced by the research conducted by the Arts Council England (2010 and in 2013). This research considers the fact that people who engage with the arts improve individual health and well-being (2014:7). Added to this,

the study shows that people who participate in the arts are more likely to be active and influential in their communities (2014:08).

This research has a particular focus on craft. The term *craft* has diverse definitions and connotations. The use of the term 'craft' here refers to craft which will be considered from the perspective of the crafter, the process of production and the craft product. Craft requires skills in disciplines that include weaving, basketry, blacksmithing, book art, ceramics, furniture, glass, jewellery, lettering, metalwork, mosaic, paper, printmaking, puppetry, stone carving, textiles and wood (Brown, 2016:5).

For the purposes of this research, craft refers to items made using different materials both synthetic and natural. Craft is a "broad range of utilitarian and decorative items" which are hand-made as a means of increasing their value and are not produced in bulk (ACTAG[1] quoted in DACST[2], 1998:8). This research considers craft as a cultural product, not only as aesthetically pleasing products but products that exist in their own ecology of symbolic value and meaning. In other words, craft "means little without its association to the individual maker and the organisations that give it life and value" (Lichti-Harriman, 2014). Added to this, the significance of craft products, meaning and personal value is incorporated in the making of the product.

The arts exist in the economic realm because the production of cultural objects, processions and productions enter the market and are assigned a price, placing them in the transactional or exchange market (Throsby, 2001:19-22). The use of this thinking has assisted in understanding the relationship between the economy and cultural realm with regards to the impact and value of craft in local communities. Understanding this has revealed that while craft benefits participating individuals, this research shows that it seldom has a direct and sustainable impact on a large part of the local community. This is because of the fact that many of the craft organisations participating in this research are small survivalist enterprises that do not generate enough finances to pay crafters and see to the sustainability of the organisation. These organisations are further disadvantaged because of their rural locations which are far from active markets.

[1] The Arts and Culture Task Group
[2] The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology

Pöllänen (2012) writes that the significance of craft as an occupation can be described by the following three themes: 1) the meaning and value of crafts; 2) the feelings experienced during craft activity; and 3) the holisticity and intentionality of craft-making. This view is elaborated by Niedderer and Townsend who not only argue for the significance of craft, but that craft possesses unique qualities such as functionality and an "ability to express human values that transcend temporal, spatial and social boundaries". Despite this, craft is still perceived as inferior to art (2014:3). Britton, in Niedderer and Townsend, states that the "value of the crafts exist in their refusal to be completely one thing or another" (2014:3).

Niedderer and Townsend express the view that craft has been analysed from multiple perspectives including "aesthetic, expression, function, technology, quality, domesticity, museology, skill and several more" to be clearly defined. Niedderer suggests that differences between emotion and experience are not clearly distinguished; correctly stating that experience is a verb relating to sensory perception and observation while emotion relates to feeling and affection. It follows that experience is the "actual observation of events, considered as a source of knowledge, while emotion is the personal and individual responses to an experience" (2014:3-4). This thinking will be used in this research to consider crafters' lived experiences gained from participating in craft which will provide an indication of the extent of impact that craft has had on their lives.

Added to the significance of craft, the act of participating in and the making of craft products is also important. The result of this significance is the layering of "making, identity building, social capital, political intent, emotional context which is also influenced by their context". Lichti-Harriman (2004) goes on to say that although the production of craft is an individual and personal exercise, the concept of these personal acts of production in a shared practice is what connects craft to its community of crafters. It is perhaps because of this aspect that craft has maintained its moral virtues of sympathy, self-control, fairness, and duty.

> "Craft is the aesthetic theory and the practice that embodies such components of human sociality." (Lichti-Harriman, 2004)

The concept of "human sociality" refers to the process of social interaction which results in the formation of cooperation and in essence, societies (Collins English

Dictionary, 2018). Concepts such as “human sociality” and “cultural value” were used as they relate to the collective aspect of the production of craft. The use of these concepts provided an understanding of the cooperative nature of craft production and the collective unity that crafters have formed as a community.

Funding the arts

In South Africa, government grant funding for the arts is generous. This funding is largely achieved using the arm's length public policy principle. Hetherington (2017:485) explains that this principle is applied in order for government to support the arts without concentration of power, conflict of interests and political interference. Government has made use of this principle in order to maintain its responsibility of allowing the arts to represent the universal interests of citizens. In this manner, government should always prefer inaction to interfere or direction (Hetherington, 2017:491). Madden furthers this definition by stating that the principle is a combination of institutional structures (arm’s length council, ministry, endowment), instruments (subsidy, incentives, legislation) and decision makers (government staff, artists, community) (Madden, 2009:7).

Since the era of democracy, the South African government has focused its initiatives, particularly funding, on redress and redistribution. Evidence of this is found in government policy, strategic plans and goals. This focus has resulted in equity and access being the key objectives of funding. A consequence of this is that excellence, quality, innovation and financial stability have been central to the motive for funding. With this in mind, the NAC grant funding has had no independence; rather it has established an accurate representation of the relation between government and the people of South Africa, in particular artists and crafters. This relationship is one-sided with government focused on the disbursement of grants (Merick, 2018).

In the United States of America, for example, the industry has been funded largely by the private sector through the phenomenon of “philanthropy” (charitable donations by wealthy individuals and foundations (Cobbs, 2002:125-127). This philanthropic funding, as Nina Cobb (2002) writes, has since become “venture philanthropy”, undertaken by ‘venture capitalists’, and has impacted the industry in such a way that grants made to the industry are being called “investments”. Venture capitalists have a “comprehensive investment approach” aimed at achieving targeted objectives that

turn start-up organisations into successful enterprises from which they earn turnover (Cobb, 2002:128-130). There is little philanthropic funding of the arts in South Africa.

Reflecting on the two models of funding for the industry, government's funding of the South African arts and culture industry is provided using the arm's length policy. The consequences of this approach result in government funding not being focused on the development and sustainability of organisations. Due to this, South African organisations, are heavily dependent of government funding for their sustainability which contributes to the lack of profit generated by these organisations. The idea of grants being transformed into comprehensive investments is of interest to this research. With this thinking, NAC funding for example would go beyond achieving the immediate/short-term goals of providing once-off cash injection into craft organisations; but would rather consider the funding a long term investment through which the development and sustainability of these organisations would be more likely.

While the South African government has established initiatives targeted at improving areas such as education, "there is little evidence that any prioritisation of social or economic objectives has had any substantial impact on the decisions that have been made about mainstream arts funding" (Knell and Taylor, 2011:12). This, Knell and Taylor attribute, to the lack of robust debate about the role of different instrumental logistics and how, these might deepen our understanding of the ways in which the arts create value.

To substantiate this stance, Knell and Taylor state that due to competing priorities in the socio-economic landscape of society, 'publicly funded art has the responsibility to provide a clear account of its value to the society that funds it' (Knell and Taylor, 2011:8). They add that the debate about arts funding has been focused on the intrinsic and instrumental value of the arts, where both values of the arts are engaged. However, this debate, as Knell and Taylor write, has not been robust enough to lead to the recognition of the importance of equality of both values in order to fully appreciate the value of the arts. This balance could lead to government funding paying more attention to the potential it holds of becoming an investment in the industry.

Participation and benefits

John Holden (2006:14-19) states that the arts have different values: instrumental, institutional and intrinsic. These values are interdependent and inform the holistic process and the “cycle of value”. This “cycle of value”, taken from Holden (2015), states that culture functions like an ‘ecology’, that it is productive yet complex. The parts of this cycle are mutually dependent. In Holden’s view, and as this research anticipated, the use of a new language of describing and understanding culture and new indicators of impact, as this research suggests, are necessary for improved understanding of culture and its products.

This view of an ‘ecology’ and exchange of parts is, for the purposes of this research, useful in that it provides a different scope around thinking about the economy, the arts and cultural production since it reveals the factors at play in the creation of value in cultural production. This view coincides with Raymond Williams’ (1976:3) thoughts on culture as being in constant flux, continuously created and lived. Holden’s thoughts of the “cycle of value” can be seen as developments of Williams’ thoughts on the constant evolution of culture, in that culture and the cycle of value are constantly being lived and reformed by those that participate and consume culture.

The creation of this “new language”, which too is in constant flux, could possibly lie in the use of participation and engagement as such indices. Existing literature such as Brown and Carnwath (2014:8-26) extends and supports the use of these alternative indices as initially written by Rao and Walton (2004). Their theory states that participation and engagement are indeed possible indicators that can be used in the measurement of the instrumental value. This research uses these concepts (participation and engagement) by applying them to the case of craft. In so doing, this research positions itself by making the following consideration: by participating in craft, crafters use craft as a tool to achieve their objectives of economic and social development; the realisation of these economic and social objectives attests to the instrumental value of craft as this research argues. This too applies to respondents who are part of intermediary organisations who engage in craft.

This understanding of participation and engagement is used in this research as indicators in the measurement of the instrumental value of craft. This value is further elaborated on in the findings of this research which show that through participation and engagement in craft, crafters are able to deliver services that provide social well-

being opportunities for the development of community members. This research used the concept of participation when investigating the experiences of crafters, while engagement was used with regards to respondents who were not crafters, i.e. intermediary organisations.

O'Brien (2010) furthers Lichti-Harriman and Holden's theory by acknowledging the fact that value is "multifaceted" in nature. This is further developed by O'Brien and Oakley (2015) who highlight the importance of addressing who is consuming culture, as this may give insight into its value. Those who participate and engage in craft attribute value to it (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015:6). This participation and engagement is influenced by social differences such as education levels and social status (2015:5). This consumption furthermore underpins individual and community identity and creates an exchange between those who consume culture and how culture is assigned value (2015:7).

This research uses literature by O'Brien and Oakley who write that genres of arts and craft have their value bound with social inequality (2015:4-11). This supports the research compiled by SEDA (2016) which reveals that the majority of craft organisations in South Africa exist in the informal sector, in some of the poorest villages in the country, and are survivalist organisations.

Hutter and Frey's view (2010) is similar to that of Holden's, who states that cultural value is a process of exchange with others in the consumption and assignment of value (2010:1), that it is socially constructed and is "collective judgement procedures"; added to this, cultural value in this instance determines economic value (2010:3).

Further understanding of the concept of "cultural value" is taken from Olckers, Kannemeyer and Stevenson (2015:2) who posit, using Throsby's theory (2001), that an artist does not only produce work that is economically of value, but that the work becomes a cultural good. This cultural good, such as craft, is interpreted and evaluated by the public on the ideas that it represents and therefore engages in exchange; craft therefore gives rise to both economic and cultural value. Cultural value, as they write, reflects significance or worth of the work judged based on aesthetic and cultural criteria; cultural value here is defined as being embodied within the object itself (Throsby in Kannemeyer et al.: 2015:2). In these writings on the definition of cultural value, the authors hold that intrinsic value is central. This substantiates the argument

that craft, as cultural production, embodies different values. In conjunction to intrinsic value, instrumental value relates to the “ancillary effects of culture”, where craft is used to achieve a social or economic objective. This kind of value is often considered in ‘output’, ‘outcome’ and ‘impact’ studies that document the economic and social significance of investing in arts and craft (Holden, 2004:17-21).

On the issue of context, particularly the South African context, this research was informed by issues highlighted by O’Brien and Oakley (2015) who write on cultural value and inequality from two perspectives, namely how culture is consumed and how it is produced. Inequality, they state, is prevalent in the categories of race, gender and class. This was useful in the consideration of the geographic context of Limpopo and Mpumalanga where the study was conducted. These provinces are, to an extent, still considered rural and fall largely into the bracket of “previously disadvantaged” regions in which inequality is prevalent.

Development of rural communities: LED model as a key role player

This section reflects on the role of culture and cultural products in community-based development, while considering cultural processes as social and economic transformation enablers that affect collective action (Rao and Walton, 2004:21-28). Analysis of the findings made by this research shows that of the selected organisations participating in this research, four out of 12 are community-based organisations. To this end, using the LED model, these organisations could contribute to socio-economic transformation of their local economies.

Considering the global economic uncertainty and the fact that crafters in rural areas are still faced with few income-generating opportunities, crafters are now required to establish new solutions to support their local competitiveness and to create inclusive development (Rogerson, 2009:11). These solutions form part of development planning which looks to improve accessibility of resources in rural villages and townships. To achieve this, the Local Economic Development (LED) model has been identified as a crucial aspect of this planning. The challenge faced by local communities is that they need to use local resources in a manner that ensures that they grow their economies and yield returns from international markets.

Characteristics of LED include the promotion of development initiatives as inspired or suggested by local communities, decentralization and cooperation among different

tiers of government, public and private institutions, and the approach to development is focused on the unique local offering of each region or community. Traditional development policies take on a top-down approach in decision-making regarding initiatives, are managed by a central administration, and take on a sectorial instead of a community approach. This approach fails to consider unique communities and resources that are specific to each location, and their potential to deliver unique outputs, in products and services.

The LED model itself identifies a number of needs in successful implementation of LED. Rogerson identifies the need for government to provide clarity on the role of LED and provide guidance to small and poorer municipalities; the need for greater integration and closer cooperation between stakeholders and government; the importance of establishing LED networks of sustainable knowledge platforms; the need to address the capacity challenge with regard to training staff; and, lastly, financial challenges of LED, particularly for under-resourced municipalities (Rogerson, 2009:71).

Having noted these challenges, Rogerson recommends, which this research has found to be necessary, that the planning and implementation of LED should be done according to each municipality, its available resources and competitiveness. Other recommendations are that guidelines should be established regarding the conceptualisation and implementation of LEDs, and that these guidelines should be aligned to the provincial growth and development strategies. Rogerson also insists that government should provide a clear distinction between “a competitive and welfare focus for LED” (2009:71-72). This would provide a clear meaning of LED and guide its activities.

Successful case studies of the LED model applied in rural and township regions in South Africa can be considered in the Mogalakwena Local Municipality LED Strategy. (focused on the Mogalakwena region in Limpopo, responding to the challenge of unemployment and poverty in the region (Urban-Econ Development Economists, 2006:1)) and the Ba-Phalaborwa Local Economic Development Strategy (aimed at developing “integrated and sustainable communities for Ba-Phalaborwa Local Municipality”) (2014-2019:7).

The Mogalakwena Local Municipality LED Strategy (2006:9) is guided by the promotion of local businesses, creating favourable local factors such as the quality of products and services, strengthening local markets and ownership while targeting the development of previously disadvantaged communities through flexible, strong national and international partnerships.

As research and policy documents state, craft SMMEs hold the potential to combat challenges prohibiting the development of rural communities. These challenges include lack of employment, quality services, increasing poverty rates and environmental degradation. The Limpopo Employment, Growth and Development Plan (2009-2014:42) by provincial government has implemented the SMME and Cooperative Development Programme aimed at promoting the development and transformation of the province's economy. This is in conjunction with the five priority areas – with rural development being one of these (Limpopo Provincial Government, 2009-2014:34).

From the Mogalakwena LED, the relationship between theoretical and policy literature is evident. The planning and implementation of LED is informed and guided by existing research in the local region. This research identifies the strengths and available resources of the region while the LED policy sets out to protect and harness the socio-economic development for the region.

Drawing on the two sets of literature, it is clear that the South African craft industry is in need of both policy direction and theoretical framing to guide and inform the developments that can and should take place in the industry. This also draws attention to the need for policy and official documents to speak to theoretical knowledge acquired through research and case studies in the industry.

Tebele (2016) writes that not only are "good policies… needed in any democracy", but correct implementation of these policies is essential. He further writes that public administration ought to address the imbalances of the past in order to achieve full representation of the people of South Africa. The Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE Research in Tebele, 2016:1-2) posit that successful public policy is influenced by a practical assessment of the government capacity and assessment which entails consideration of the consequences of policy initiatives. Tebele continues by highlighting the phases of public policy which include: problem identification,

agenda setting, policy-making/formulation, policy implementation and evaluation of the policy. This paper is of the thinking that theory should be used as a baseline in all phases of the policy-making process, and that each phase should be guided and informed by research pertaining to the phase.

The relationship between policy and theoretical literature is of importance to the development of policy as policymakers make use of existing research to shape the understanding of the nature of the challenges at hand (National Research Council of the National Academies, 2008:149-150). This is called evidence-based policy.

The use of these two types of literature is useful to this research in terms of situating the craft industry of South Africa. It further provides insight into how and why the sector cannot rely solely on policy, and emphasises the need for practical knowledge, acquired through research to inform the formation of policy.

Evidence-based policy allows policymakers achieve better outcomes, using available evidence from research and evaluation. This evidence may be sourced through evaluation and academic research and systematic reviews of evidence (Strydom et al. 2010:3-6).

With the era of democracy, under the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC), policy-making was representative of the transformative and consultative tone of the time. Added to this, there is deliberate emphasis on acknowledgement of cultural diversity, while building national unity through reconciliation and redress (Deacon, 2009:1). Research focus in the arts, however, has largely been on the gap between policy and implementation (Deacon, 2009).

CHAPTER 3: BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT IMPACTING THE CRAFT INDUSTRY

As a means to advance the craft sector, national and provincial government and all relevant stakeholders have proven to be key in the process towards realising the growth, development and profitability of the craft industry. While this has not yet been realised, the motion towards consolidated information and research of the craft industry could assist stakeholders in achieving development and the full impact that the craft industry could achieve. Some of the initiatives and policies of government that have informed the current status of the sector are noted in the timeline below[3].

1996: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) states that all citizens have the right to freedom of expression. It goes on to highlight that local government is to be tasked with the promotion of social and economic development of communities and that municipalities should play a pivotal role in ensuring this. This, for example, can be considered through the provision of basic infrastructure such as roads in rural and township areas. Having this infrastructure will assist these marginalised areas to become more socially and economically accessible by both locals and tourists (provided that they have the infrastructure and resources necessary to showcase and attract a market for their craft products).

1996: Following the lead of the Constitution, the **White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage** aimed to focus on the promotion of the Arts, Culture and Heritage as significant and valuable areas of social human endeavour in themselves. The White Paper committed government to making an impact on economic growth, development and tourism through targeting the development of the cultural industries.

The White Paper of 1996 was premised on transformation and the redress of past imbalances. As times change, so should policies, so that South Africa has since shifted more focus towards the development agenda which seeks to ensure principles such as social-cohesion, economic development, and position the sector as one that is crucial to the challenges facing the country such as high unemployment, poverty and inequality (The Archival Platform, 2013).

[3] This timeline is the result of collaborative work between me and a fellow researcher.

1997: National Arts Council Act (Act No. 56 of 1997) saw the establishment of the NAC as recommended by the 1996 White Paper. With this, government sought to improve and promote the fair distribution of funds in the sector. Between 1999 and 2003, the NAC drove an initiative which was designed to use what was to be referred to as the "provincial arts fairs" as platforms for training and marketing of emerging craft enterprises and crafters. This draws attention to the importance of the functions of funding distribution and market access for craft.

1998: CIGS is a strategy initiative recommended by the 1996 White Paper, concentrated on developing strategies for the growth and development of cultural industries. It has been instrumental in deepening the understanding of the craft sector as it highlights the craft sector as a source of income generation for the most economically disadvantaged, namely black rural women. Drawing attention to the fact that craft is dominated by black rural women, CIGS identified craft as an entry point into the economy for those considered economically disadvantaged, through the development of skills base, the labour pool and SMME development. The strategy also provides a comprehensive definition of craft as it distinguishes between the various types of craft such as traditional craft, craft art, and functional wares (DACST, 1998).

2003: Following the road paved by the CIGS, **A Practical Market Access Guide for the Western Cape Crafters: Home Textiles & Soft Furnishings in the USA & UK Markets** was published. This guide (by Kaiser Associates Economic Development Practice for the CCDI (now the CDI)) focuses on encouraging a market-led planning process to assist craft producers in the Western Cape to understand the opportunities in the furnishings and home textiles export market. This report emphasises the need to understand the type of consumer the producer is targeting to develop a suitable product, and the need to have the targeted trends lead the product development phase, as this is crucial to ensure the adaptability of products and the sustainability of the enterprise. This thinking, similar to the CIGS, is one of the strategies that enterprises can use to ensure their growth and development and in turn the growth and development of the sector and economy.

2004: The South African Craft Sector Report (Elk, 2004) is an overview of the craft sector and is similar to the Western Cape Crafters guide, but adds to it by stating that

the use of design input, together with the application of traditional skills and material to contemporary products, births new possibilities and new markets, may open existing markets. This overview asserts that intermediary organisations are crucial in that they assist with pricing, distribution and marketing of products on behalf of crafters (2004:17-18). In this document, it was put to national government that it should, by the end of 2004, have ensured and put in place the necessary funding and support mechanisms that will establish and assist key stakeholders and institutions with the implementation of key programmes.

2005: The Department of Trade and Industry (**DTI**) embarked on an initiative called the Customised Sector Programme (CSP) on craft and film in 2005. The CSP is an important addition to the knowledge base about these specific creative industries. This programme represents critical milestones in the development of the creative industries.

Notably, it draws attention to strategies aimed at providing support for the growth and development of craft manufacturing enterprises. This strategy is instrumental to provincial government and its strategies. The CSP brings to light the lack of "coordination, information dissemination and a common vision with provinces". It further identifies the "lack of a reliable national sector profile data and up-to-date market intelligence and weak skills base on the manufacturing enterprise side", in the hope that provincial governments will address these constraints and challenges at provincial level through the establishment of provincial strategies that address these issues (Craft CSP, 2005:7) which would strengthen local economies.

The conclusions of the Craft CSP state that the creative industries and their sub-sectors exist on different levels and that each has potential for "significant growth", stating that this will lead the industry to have a greater impact on the economy and social life of South Africa (2005:68). To achieve this, the report highlights improved coordination, implementation and management of the relevant strategies as being crucial. It further concludes that craft is viewed as a "luxury item", stating that craft speaks directly to the economic health of a country. China's craft industry is the primary competitor to South Africa's because of the vast industrial sector and large labour force (2005:13).

2005: The Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy (**LGDS**) was drawn up with all sectors and is aimed at achieving "sustainable and integrated development that seeks to promote economic growth and development, improve the quality of life of its citizens, raise the institutional efficiency of government, attain regional integration and enhance innovation" (2005:iii). In this strategy, government tasked itself with facilitating economic growth, advance broad-based black economic empowerment objectives while addressing the reduction of poverty through job creation and extended public works programmes and the promotion of local economic development.

While poverty in the province is still high, Limpopo's provincial government has identified the need for a balance between economic and social development. In 2014, during his State of the Province Address, Premier Stanley Mathabatha stated that the Limpopo government was in the process of aligning its growth and development strategy with the National Development Plan to achieve optimal results towards development in the province. The LGDS states that Limpopo has three major sectors contributing to economic development of the province which are mining, agriculture and tourism; craft is not mentioned in terms of its contribution to the tourism sector.

The province has taken an active stand towards the "harmonising and alignment of the National Spatial Development Framework (NSDF), the Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy (LGDS) and the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (2005:43). In so doing, it addresses the allocation of government resources and uses them to meet social needs and promote economic growth.

2006: Mogalakwena Local Municipality: Local Economic Development Strategy. The strategy highlights that because of tourism's increasing importance as an income and employment generator, the tourism sector holds great potential for development in the Waterberg Municipality with regards to sustainable local initiatives that address challenges of unemployment, poverty and growing the local economy. In addition to the existing game reserves and archaeological and historic sites, this LED strategy suggests that the area needs to have an increase in viable arts and craft organisations to realise the potential of the tourism industry.

2007: Mpumalanga Tourism Growth Strategy. The objective of the growth strategy is to achieve sustainable initiatives that generate additional economic activity that will

benefit the local communities of Mpumalanga. This objective is thought of as being achievable by increasing tourism revenue in the province.

The Mpumalanga tourism sector key components are environmental and cultural resources (cultural heritage), the strategy fails to substantiate the need and significance of craft. This is ironic in that national strategies (for example the CIGS, Craft CSP) state the importance of this sector as being both economic and socially significant in aiding government to achieve its objectives.

2009: Review of the Special Company Funding Programme: A Report for the NAC of South Africa. This review of the NAC's Special Company Funding Programme speaks to the four issues that NAC funding highlights, and provides a programme overview. The review briefly speaks to funding traditional art forms and says that this funding is made possible by the use of the surplus finance from company funding allocations. These funds are then re-allocated to projects and organisations located in the targeted priority provinces being Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Northern Cape, North West, Free State, and the Eastern Cape. These projects are identified by the provincial representatives on the NAC Board. The criteria for these projects is that they must be of "national and artistic significance and impact on project beneficiaries" (Gaylard, 2009:5).

The implications of this report places, for one, the organisational development at the centre of the discussion, stating that without careful consideration, the NAC could be contributing and amplifying the issue of dependence of marginalised organisations – which applies to craft organisations too. Added to this, the report proposes the development of a regional arts programme that aims to grow organisational resources and prioritise provinces. This could be particularly useful for the Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces (Gaylard, 2009:3).

2010: Research Report on Company Funding Impact Assessment commissioned by the NAC provides a study of all provinces and focuses on the impact that the funding impact (per discipline) has had on funded projects and organisations and notes the challenges, such as dependency of each province and discipline. The study details the positive impact of the funding received by organisations from the NAC, in some cases noting that it has provided the means by which these organisations could

become arts agencies while others stated that the funding assisted them in implementing their intended projects.

The report does not divulge any particular information regarding craft funding. It does not state any initiatives that support the development of craft enterprises in particular; but it aids this research by revealing this as one of the factors that the NAC should look into investigating. The focus here is very narrow: focusing on the project directly and disregarding the missed opportunity of evaluating the impact and reach of these projects in terms of, for example, the sustainability of these projects and the enterprise.

2011: The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 "recognises arts and culture as open powerful spaces for debate about where a society finds itself and where it is going." The NDP notes the importance of promoting the creative and cultural industries as they can "contribute substantially to small business development, job creation, and urban development and renewal". Regarding the craft sector, the NDP states that it contributed R3.3 billion to GDP in 2010 and employs more than 273 000 people.

2012 to 2016: NAC Strategic Plan outlines the goals of the NAC to contribute to redress and transformation in the arts, establish an effective funding model to distribute funds to all creative practitioners and institutions, operate at an optimal level to achieve the NAC mandate, and improve youth and audience participation and appreciation (2012:20). Furthermore, the mandate of the NAC is to "provide and encourage the provision of opportunities for persons to practice the arts, promote the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the arts" (2012:5). In addition, the NAC has tasked itself with being in the forefront of promoting the benefits of the arts and venturing into partnerships that create possibilities of exposing new resources for the arts that will increase craft funded projects.

2014/15: NAC Annual Report is a reflective report detailing activities of the NAC throughout the year, strategic objectives, legislative mandates and detailed information on the art disciplines and projects funded by the NAC. The report states that 91 craft projects were funded in that year, and that two of these projects are highlighted as having achieved success in their product innovation, job opportunity creation and tourism focused approach. The NAC highlights the lack of compliance and limited funding as some of the challenges that the council faced in the 2014/15 financial year.

2016: A Framework for the Monitoring & Evaluation of Publicly Funded Arts, Culture and Heritage by the South African Cultural Observatory. This framework on monitoring and evaluation emphasises the importance of these processes as tools for funding bodies and arts practitioners in terms of "demonstrating the value of the arts to communities and funders, accounting for the use of public funds, and designing policy interventions" (2016:1). These processes assist with matters concerning accountability which is especially important when dealing with public funds, policy interventions, and building human capital in community settings. The study does not speak to craft specifically but to all disciplines in the cultural industries (2016:1-17).

My research does not use methods used by this framework, which were surveys.

2017: Regional Development: The Cultural & Creative Industries in South Africa. This study, by the South African Cultural Observatory, focused on the creative industries and the environmental factors necessary to foster the establishment of the cultural industries. The study uses the Sarah Baartman District in the Eastern Cape as a case study. This framework tackles issues that this research considers: regional development and growth, measuring the value of the arts, culture and heritage, creative clusters and cultural policy and the impact of cultural industries in small towns (2017:8-17). The study suggests that the production and sale of craft, like other artistic outputs, has aided the establishment of active industries in rural and township areas. This is made possible by increasing tourism and results in the growth of local economies.

2018: Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage. The fourth draft of the Revised White Paper (not yet adopted) addresses the need to have policy revised to incorporate the new developments that take place in society and in the sector. At its foundation, this paper uses the constitutional right to art, culture and heritage and looks to set the tone for the promotion and advancement of this right through the 'right to freedom of expression', adding the right to access information to these fundamental rights.

The Revised White Paper discusses some of the major challenges facing the industry, and notes these as the lack of production space, funding and highly priced materials, challenges in access to the international and national markets, a lack of "promotion"

of the industry by government, few training opportunities, and high commissions taken by organisations operating between crafters and the market (2017:18).

The Revised White Paper rightfully states that policy interventions should tackle the issues of support of professional income and sustainability while working towards transformation in the industry (2017:18). My research responds to these challenges by identifying the intermediary organisations and their services as being important in offering crafters support and a chance at sustainable growth.

This Revised White Paper notes that craft is challenged by its high presence in rural areas, a lack of production space, limited domestic markets, and scarce training opportunities. This Revised White Paper is still in its discussion phase.

Cultural Industries: Craft Report (updated by the Craft and Design Institute) provides practical characteristics of the cultural industries and the reality of the South African industry by detailed thematic challenges causing the slow growth of the industry, and positions the then CCDI (Cape Craft and Design Institute) as a strategic institution that provides support for the industry and has been instrumental in its development primarily at provincial level – the CCDI has since become the national CDI.

In light of the policies and initiatives noted above, this report identifies the CIGS and the CSP as two of the most crucial guides that have and continue to set the tone for the development and advancement of the craft sector of South Africa. Craft was identified as possessing potential for economic growth by the CIGS. The South African Craft Industry Report (the CDI, 2004) explained why the craft sector is considered important by the government, which coincides with the sentiments of the CIGS, as seen in the following quotation:

> “Craft provides employment for vulnerable segments of society; craft is an entry point into the economy for rural South Africans; most craft business is small business and the development of SMMEs is vital for the economy; craft is a source of innovation for the entire economy and design and innovation in the manufacturing industries is vital for long-term economic growth and overcoming barriers to international trade; craft is linked to and can impact on the development in other industries such as tourism, formal manufacturing and

> retail sectors; the development of the country's skills base and labour pool is a national priority; there are growing export and local markets for craft products." (Cultural Strategy Group, 1998)

The CIGS identifies and emphasises the value of the craft sector as being instrumental in the socio-economic development of communities, particularly marginalised communities in South Africa.

In addition, CIGS and the Craft CSP note that the value of the South African craft industry is premised on its potential to contribute to key government priorities such as black economic empowerment, the empowerment of women, rural and urban development, small business development and export promotion.

The sector has seen many developments in the national policy sphere, but it continues to require more consolidated and co-ordinated initiatives at provincial level. These developments should start with provincial government acknowledging the impact that the craft industry has on the local economy. Furthermore, these initiatives would need regular monitoring, review and evaluation that is on par with the changes in the industry.

Lastly, local development is a key focus in these policy documents. Local development therefore needs to take available resources and strengths of the region into consideration and a strategy should be developed which draws on them. The reality is that South Africa has sound policies on paper, which are aimed at achieving goals such as development and sustainability of the industry. However, creative communities are constantly let down by poor implementation of these policies which results in craft organisations not receiving the support necessary to assist them to become profitable and sustainable organisations.

CHAPTER 4: IN CONTEXT: PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW AND ORGANISATION PROFILES

Mpumalanga Province

Mpumalanga is considered to be one of the most geographically diverse places in South Africa; lying on the east of South Africa, north of KwaZulu-Natal and bordering Swaziland and Mozambique. Mpumalanga is a major tourist attraction, and in 2013 alone 63.7% of travel to the province was for leisure purposes (Annual Mpumalanga Tourism Statistics Report, 2013) and (Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, 2013).

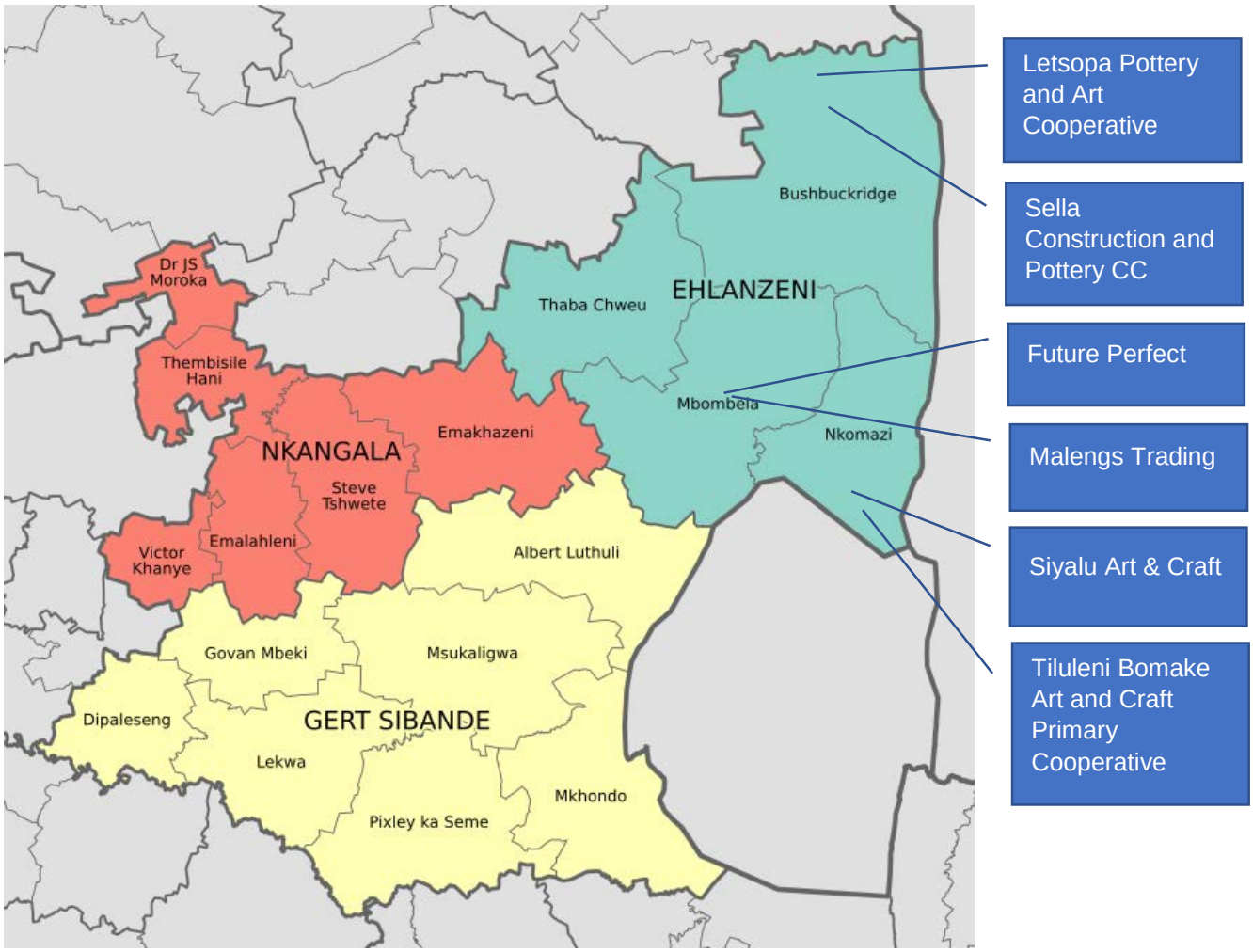
Since 2011, the growth and development of the province has been attributed to the province having a strong commercial agricultural sector and owes its growth and development to the province's economy which is led by the mining and forestry sectors.

The rural and township areas portray a different reality; more than half of the province's population lives in former homeland regions. These regions were demarcated for specific ethnic groups governed by the Bantu Authorities Act 68 of 1951 by the apartheid government. Stats SA (2003:8) indicated that the province had 58.7% of rural dwellers in the province. These regions are plagued by little development where infrastructure, employment and income are concerned.

> "The Constitution and the Municipal Structures Act are silent on the concept of urban and rural when describing Category B municipalities. However, the White Paper of Local Government correctly points out that, in some cases, the separation of rural areas from cities and towns has imposed artificial political and administrative boundaries between areas that are otherwise functionally integrated. It also creates inequity for rural residents who contribute to the towns' economy but don't benefit from its resources." (Statistics South Africa, 2001:2)

Unpaved roads, lack of clean running water and electricity are some of the challenges facing residents of the rural and township areas in Mpumalanga, imposed by some of the boundaries imposed by the distinct gap between urban and rural areas. These rural and township areas are not only home to residents but are the environment that their organisations operate from. Of the six organisations participating in this research,

four are run from the founders' homes. It is also worth noting that the two companies that operate in the urban area of Nelspruit are not craft producing companies but intermediary companies that work with crafters to provide support such as training, product development and market access support.



Map of Mpumalanga showing its municipalities and districts; and the location of the participating organisations

A glazed clay pot and vase made by Letsopa Pottery and Art







Letsopa Pottery and Art Cooperative

Located in Rooiboklaagte, in Acornhoek, Letsopa Pottery and Art was once active in pottery making, but since 2011 has become dormant and no longer plays a significant role in the pottery scene in the region- due to the increasing costs of operating. This is attributed to the cooperative's struggle for funding, production space and operational differences among members.

The cooperative forfeited the full amount of craft funding of R25 000 allocated to it because they did not claim the funding. Also, the cooperative did not produce a tax clearance certificate as required by the NAC. Their file has the grant letter dated June 2013, but there is no record of a reminder letter following it. The cooperative was allocated the grant towards the purchase of material.

Tiluleni Bomake Art and Craft Primary Cooperative





Beaded traditional accessories produced by women from Tiluleni Bomake Co-operative



This primary cooperative, operating in the township of Kamaqhekeza, falls under the Malelane municipality; however, the township is located about 30km outside Malelane, towards the Swaziland border. It was registered in 2010 by 15 women, trading in traditional dance. The women then took an interest in beadwork and are now self-taught beaders whose primary income has become the sales made on the traditional regalia that they make.

While craft production was their main source of income, the women would also participate in cultural celebrations as traditional dance performers, but as time progressed they were no longer invited to these events, leaving craft as their only income. The women maintain that passion and poverty has taught them the art of patience, to keep producing even though they are not selling. They expressed the view of how the difficult reality was that they face running an organisation that is not yielding sufficient profit. The organisation was allocated R10 000 but only received R8 000 of the grant which was used to purchase material and sewing machines with the balance

of R2 000 being forfeited because the cooperative was not able to produce a tax clearance certificate to ensure that they were fully compliant with the NAC's compliance criteria.

The local municipality has been instrumental in issuing them with a production space at the township's stadium which was at the time of this research undergoing renovations. Part of these renovations include the installation of electricity and water. This is especially important to the cooperative as it addresses one of their challenges which is a production space. Once complete, this will give them the opportunity to have a permanent facility from which to produce and professionally operate. This may see them back to producing and growing in the local market, provided that initiatives such as training and product development are secured.

The cooperative is slowly disintegrating as members are turning to alternative means of income because of the absence of significant and regular revenue to support their families.

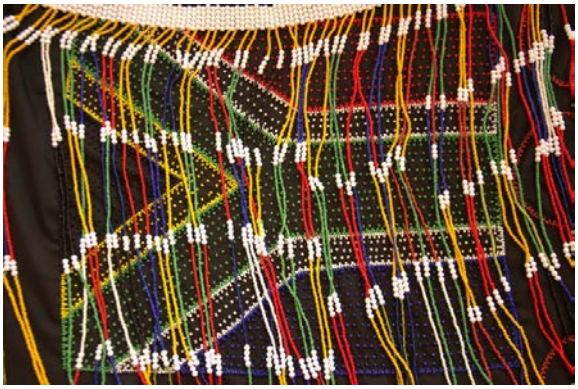
Siyalu Art & Craft CC

Founded by Betty Mathaba, Siyalu Art & Craft is a repeat beneficiary of the NAC craft funding; on each occasion receiving R10 000 to contribute towards the purchase of material. In 2013, the precision in proposal writing and good standing with the NAC saw the cooperative being allocated an increase in funding as compared to previous years. Siyalu Art & Craft was granted R25 000 but only received R20 000 (used to purchase material to meet an order they had received at the time) and forfeited R5 000 because the NAC did not receive their project report, pictures of the products produced and a valid tax clearance certificate, which Mathaba claims to have sent to the NAC. She emphasized that enquiries into the balance were unsuccessful as she could not reach the NAC's craft arts development officer.

The establishment of the organisation was inspired by the love of hand made products, paired with the harsh reality of the struggle of survival; from making and selling grass in vases to weaving and beading intricate designs in accessories and home wear. With no formal training in craft, Mathaba is a self-taught ceramicist, weaver and wood carver. Her exceptional technique resulted in her being approached by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology to teach pottery. As Mathaba's skills developed so

did the craft made under Siyalu Arts & Craft. Mathaba personally trained all 14 women that work with her.

The organisation is highly active in production and in international markets. Its craft has afforded crafters the opportunity of travelling both nationally and internationally to exhibit their products. Siyalu Arts & Craft is challenged by a lack of production space and management of funds which is in part because of members being paid significant amounts gained from sales. In addition, orders and projects are not regular enough for the organisation to strike a balance between operational funds payment to members, because once members have been paid the organisation is left without funds to operate.



Beaded skirt, doll and clay vase produced by Siyalu Art and Craft.





Malengs Trading

Malengs Trading, founded by Mandlenkosi Hlophe, has positioned itself as an agency in the Mpumalanga craft scene aiming to “enhance craft and design as one of the economic sectors in the province”. The company recognises craft as being a crucial contributor towards household income in the province. For this reason, it works with independent crafters and companies needing support from across Mpumalanga.

Malengs Trading emphasises the importance of establishing a strong relationship between craft and entrepreneurship. To this end, it offers support programmes that focus on providing crafters with business acumen (financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills and time management), product development (price and production quality) and market access through annual exhibitions both locally and nationally.

The NAC allocated an amount of R50 000 in funding, to enabled Malengs Trading to coordinate *Arts in Mpumalanga* (AIM), a programme which seeks to increase crafters’

market share and to test and assess the quality of their products. The balance of R2 000 was forfeited as they did not submit the necessary documents required by the NAC.

Funding Malengs Trading resulted in individuals and companies being afforded the opportunity to receive training through support programmes such as financial literacy, time management, pricing and quality standard setting. Malengs Trading also helps with the purchase of material. The company has been instrumental in ensuring that crafters have the experience of attending and exhibiting at major craft exhibitions and trade shows at the National Arts Festival (Grahamstown), Innibos Festival (Mpumalanga) and The Rand Easter Show (Johannesburg).

Malengs Trading operates with the mantra that ‘craft, like other businesses, is providing a solution to some of life’s problems’.

Future Perfect

Starting out, Future Perfect provided transport to elderly women potters so that they could take their clay pots to various markets. In time, the company was registered to have a closer relationship between the local crafters, available markets and Mr Malibe, the founder of Future Perfect, an intermediary craft organisation. Marketing plays a major part of Future Perfect’s core functions. The company supplies craft markets and curio shops in Hazyview and used to supply the Kruger National Park curio shop as well.

Some of the products that Future Perfect has to offer include wire sculptures, wooden utensils, crockery and clay pots.

Future Perfect pays attention to the quality of the craft products produced by crafters who work with them. Malibe has identified the quality of South African craft as lacking. To this end, the company has rolled-out training programmes facilitated by crafters from Zimbabwe and Malawi, who have, as Malibe says, have perfected quality finishes on craft products.

To sustain the markets, Malibe believes that tourists need to be guaranteed safety, as they form a large part of the market that Future Perfect’s crafters supply. In response to this, Malibe has discovered that with the slow market in South Africa, approaching and accessing international markets seems to be a viable option.

Future Perfect forfeited the total grant of R10 000 allocated as they did not claim the grant by signing the NAC funding agreement. This is apparently because Future Perfect did not receive any communication from the NAC stating that they had received the grant. Further investigation proved that this was indeed correct as it did not supply the NAC with any of the necessary documents including the NAC funding agreement, tax clearance certificate, revised budget and action plan for the project in order for payment to be processed.

Sella Construction and Pottery CC

Operating from its pottery studio with hand-made stools, tables and home-made pit kiln, Sella Construction and Pottery is located in the township of Thulamahashe and is run by Sella Mashaba. Mashaba has single-handedly been running the company for some years now as the company lost the seven members that it once had. Mashaba attended a three-year pottery course in Phalaborwa before she started trading clay pots in 1973.

From her involvement in craft, pottery in particular, Mashaba has been able to support her children and grandchildren through their school careers. Her life journey paints a picture of a long and fruitful journey that she, together with her craft, have had. She tells of some the challenges and disappointments endured through her journey as a crafter, including her struggle of collecting clay from the river.

Mashaba has taught the local school children during school holidays and has dedicated some afternoons to assist them with creative practical homework projects. Added to this she has taught some of her techniques to local nurses, teachers and the vice principal of the local high school. However, the local community has shown her little support with regards to buying her products and as a result, she is barely surviving financially. She states that the residents place orders for clay pots occasionally for their homes, but these orders are rarely large and are often scarce to come by.

Of the R28 000 allocated by the NAC, R3 000 was forfeited because of outstanding documents such as a valid tax clearance certificate, project report and pictures of their latest products. This grant made it possible for Mashaba to build a home-made oven to fire her own products.



Images showing the home-made oven and clay pots fired in this kiln. Some pots are damaged from the unregulated heat.

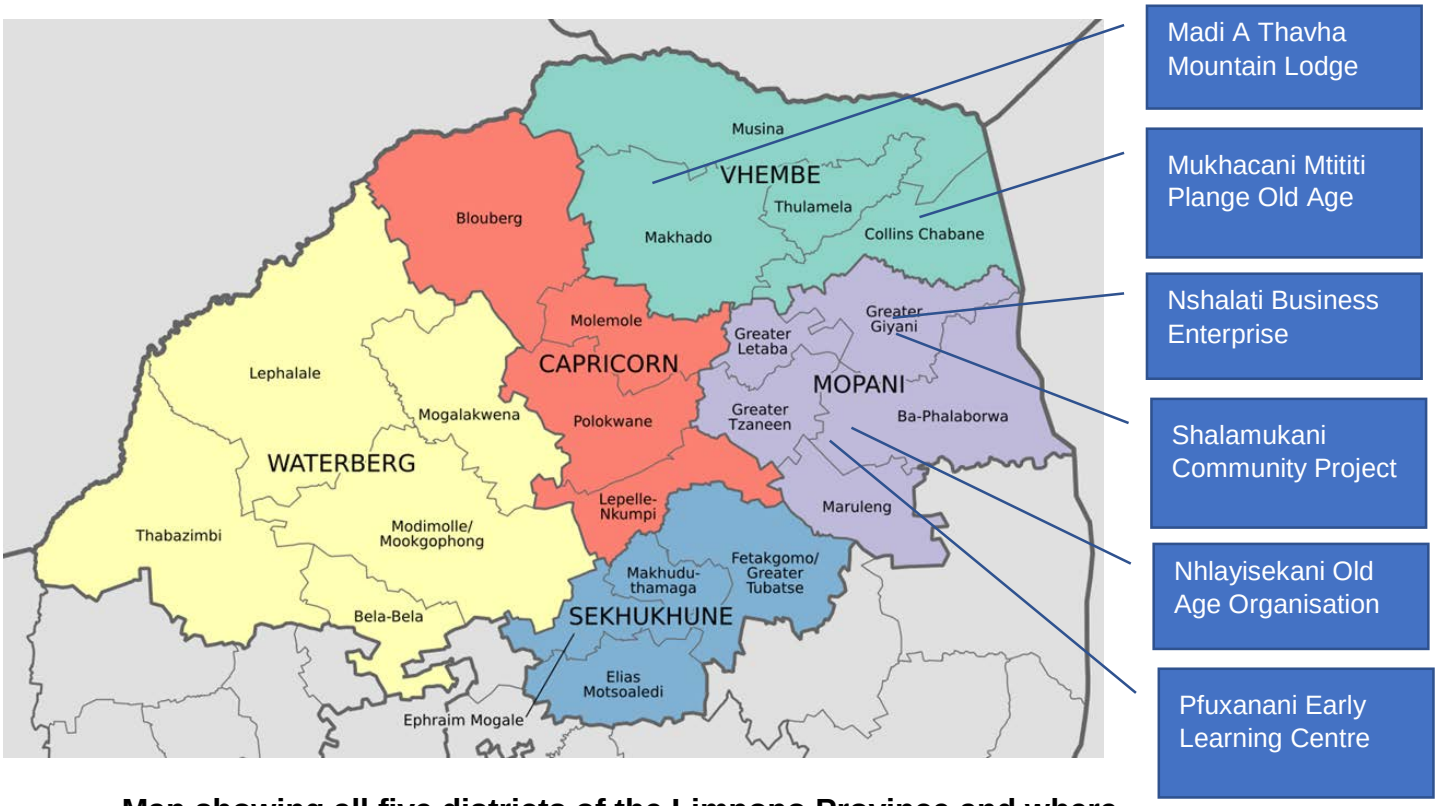




Reflecting on the NAC craft funding allocation: Mpumalanga

In the year under review, the NAC allocated R148 000 to the above six organisations. From this amount allocated, only R101 000 was paid out to the beneficiary organisations. This means that from this pool of six organisations alone, R47 000 was not paid out to beneficiaries.

Limpopo Province



Map showing all five districts of the Limpopo Province and where the organisation respondents are located

Then Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that:

> "Strengthening governance and curbing corruption while addressing skills shortages, especially among the youth, are two of the number of key steps that Limpopo must implement to realise the province's economic potential." Limpopo Economic Summit (Mail & Guardian, 2016)

His sentiments are echoed by The Real Economy Bulletin (2016) which states that from 2003 the high mining activities were instrumental in Limpopo's economic development, this with platinum mining at an all-time high. To add to this, the province saw an increase in national construction projects which further contributed to the positioning of the province as one of the leading provinces. This however changed from 2011 as the province's economic development activity has lessened and has now reached below the national rate. The report goes on to say that "the province has by far the largest share of residents in former 'homeland' areas in the country, which poses challenges because they continue to face a lack of employment opportunities,

poor incomes, weak infrastructure and low educational levels" (The Real Economy Bulletin, 2016). In turn, these devastating factors have led to a high out-migration both to Limpopo's urban areas, which are now among the fastest growing in the country, and to other provinces.

Giyani comprises of townships and more than 50 villages. It is the home of four of the craft organisations participating in this research. It has a clinic and health centre in Section A, which is fairly new and well maintained. As a whole, Giyani has the characteristics of a small town in a predominantly rural area. It is not well maintained, with unpaved roads and missing street lights that thread through and link all the townships and villages. All areas have an abundance of both primary and high schools.

The area has moderate incidents of crime; the community is faced perhaps more severely with high levels of unemployment and poverty. There is currently no craft market place.

Limpopo government's support to craft organisations

The Mopani District Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation was consulted to ascertain how much support the Department is able to provide craft enterprises in the region. The Department's Cultural Officer, Mr Mathebula, stated that because there are no funds at district level, the district is limited in terms of how much support it can give to crafters. He emphasised that each district has a database of crafters and craft enterprises in the respective region which is used to communicate information regarding funding opportunities, workshop and training opportunities offered by other agencies such as the NYDA (National Youth Development Agency) and the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry) that crafters may want to make use of. In this sense, he says, the department can only provide assistance administratively, helping crafters with completing funding application forms and communicating information regarding funding or other opportunities with crafters.

In addition to the above, the department also gives its database of crafters the opportunity to exhibit at department related functions and events. LEDA (Limpopo Economic Development Agency) corroborated, saying that the agency is perhaps the most active, second to provincial government, with regards to providing information of local exhibitions to crafters.

Similar to the District Department, LEDA has its own database of crafters in the region and works with this database. Ms Sibisi said that while each provincial district has its own department offices and agencies, both government and its agencies have good relationships. She gave the example that when planning to host an event, the department concerned will issue a notification to LEDA and the local municipalities who will then share the information with crafters and their enterprises. LEDA was established in terms of the Limpopo Development Corporation Act, Act No. 5 of 1994. It operates in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and is the result of the amalgamation of Trade and Investment Limpopo, Limpopo Business Support Agency, Limpopo Agribusiness Development Corporation, and Limpopo Economic Development Enterprise agencies.

The agency's cornerstone is enterprise development and finance which comprises of financial, business, training and development support with a strong focus on cooperative support (LEDA, 2017).

Madi A Thavha

Madi A Thavha is an intermediary organisation run by Marcelle Bosch. Its focus is on enterprise development for rural artists and crafters. The organisation works with crafters from different villages in the Makhado District. Crafters receive training which includes product development, quality standards and market access opportunities at the Madi A Thavha Lodge.

The lodge is themed according to the different tribes found in Limpopo. Some of the designs and material that can be seen in the décor of the lodge are the brightly coloured striped cloth of the Venda tribe, and the intricate beadwork of the Balobedo tribe.

For the purposes of this research, Madi A Thavha is considered as one of the most successful intermediary companies as it appears to have established a structure or formula that works well in the creative industries. This formula has sustainable development at its core in that the project has a strong focus on training local crafters on quality standards and marketable products that appeal to a wide range of national and international buyers such as hotels, homeowners and businesses. The project has also established a gallery archiving and showing traditional methods of production

as well as products in the spirit of keeping the history of the local cultures alive and documented.

The growth of this project has benefited many crafters in the Makhado region, specifically unemployed locals who work at the Lodge and orphaned school children who have been built a school that has been a huge pillar of support educationally and socially. Initiatives running alongside the school include agricultural activities and sewing and beading skills training.









Pictures showing the Madi A Thavha craft shop, beadwork detail of cushion covers and a woven basket and traditional Tsonga dolls

Madi A Thavha was invited to apply as one of the flagship projects of the NAC, which would be funded from the surplus funds mentioned earlier. The intermediary was identified as one which had the potential to make a considerable contribution to the Limpopo craft scene. Madi A Thavha was awarded a three-year-long (2016 to 2018) funding support to the value of R300 000. This funding was awarded to enable the organisation to run a product design programme (in partnership with the Design Time Institute of Cape Town), a product development and production support programme

(focused on research on trends and a new product range) and lastly, to develop Madi A Thavha as a product support business for craft production.

Madi A Thavha was previously granted R41 500 in craft funding by the NAC.

Mukhacani Mtititi Plange Old Age

Mukhacani Mtititi Plange Old Age did not receive the R10 000 allocated to it because the organisation could not produce a tax clearance certificate which is one of the documents that the NAC requires to process prospective payments.

Ms Mabasa shared that the organisation, which was run in the town of Malamulele, has become dormant as the site from which they worked has been sold by the councillor. A house has since been built on this site. She emphasises how disappointed she was not to have received the funding allocated to the project and said that the delay with getting their tax clearance certificate was out of their control and that they could not go about it any other way. She said that at the time, the amount awarded to the project would have made a significant difference, and it may have assisted it to maintain its momentum.

The organisation consisted of 31 active elderly persons, two of which were male and the remaining 29 female. They produced traditional Tsonga attire which was sewed and beaded by the crafters. Each crafter contributed towards the organisation and its projects.

This organisation was selected to participate in this research as I thought it could provide insight into some of the challenges faced by crafters in accessing the funding allocated to them. This would allow for this research to address these challenges in a manner that looks to improve the funding policy.

Nshalati Business Enterprise

Located in Section D1 of Giyani, this organisation comprises five adult women. Three of these women are elderly and are passionate about sewing and stressed the importance of “keeping up with fashion” to stay relevant. Nshalati Business Enterprise was inherited by Jennifer Mthombeni from her brother. The company was initially a construction company but since 2012 has become a company producing various types of craft.

The women work from their homes and meet frequently to share and see the work that they have independently produced. While this may be challenging, it has helped them to become confident in their production. They have taken refuge under the shadow of a tree just outside the local shopping centre in Giyani to exhibit and sell their products.

While their products are beautifully made with attention to detail, they lack innovative input as they do not have unique designs or technique. They produce traditional attire such as xibelani, traditional skirts, head wraps, beaded accessories and shirts for youths and adults. In addition to these, one of the elderly women has started making pillowcases and duvet covers from off-cuts of curtain material. This addition is interesting as it could allow the company to target a slightly new/different market of homeowners, BnBs and guesthouses.







Detail of a xibelani made by Nshalati Business Enterprise, mam'Patricia showing off a mixeka made by the organisation and Tsonga inspired shirts

Nshalati was allocated R20 000 and received the amount in full on submission of its report and supporting documents. This grant was allocated to the purchase of material (fabric and beads), and it also made provision for a transport allowance for the trips to purchase material. This, Mthombeni says, is because the company has applied for funding many times before but had not received it. Ntshalati's luck changed in 2013 when they were granted funding after learning from the feedback they received from their previous failed attempts.

Shalamukani Community Project

Shalamukani Community Project is located in Section A, Giyani not far from the home of the old Parliament. It received R20 000 but forfeited R2 000 of this grant. The grant was allocated to assist the start of a new project which required the purchasing of sewing machines and material to produce traditional attire such as the xibelani and beads to produce traditionally inspired beadwork.

The Project started with 10 women from various villages in and around Giyani on a volunteer basis for the first two years and contributed to the Project themselves. The organisation saw the need to support the unemployed members of the community who had no means of income and collectively decided to assist the poorest members of their communities. This, as Rao and Walton (2004:21-28) state, is an example of collective action in that the services provided by this organisation were aimed at assisting the members of the organisation and members of the community. The organisation provided poor families with food and school children who were not receiving social grants and couldn't apply for these because they did not have Identity Books.

Detail from a beaded xibelani skirt, a Tsonga doll and a beaded belt made by Shalamukani Community Project







The organisation has been slow in making sales and no longer receives government funding. This lack of funding has resulted in the organisation having to vacate its offices as none of the women came to do the work. Mrs Mabunda, her husband and sister continue to feed the needy from their pocket every Sunday and produce beaded neck pieces, bracelets and xibelani skirts to sell.

Mabunda states that R20 000 is not enough to see a full project through, nor is it sufficient to assist with the operational costs of the organisation. Considering the amount allocated to the project in comparison to the R128 719.50 applied for, it is evident that the allocated grant was grossly insufficient for the project.

Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation







The premises of Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation, beaded clay pots and detail from a xibelani made by the organisation

Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation was allocated R10 000 and forfeited R2 000 of this amount. The R8 000 paid to the organisation went towards the purchase of xibelani material and majomela and transport to purchase these items. Nhlayisekani had applied for R322 000 worth of funding and noted in their budget plan that some of these funds would be used for administration and implementation of the project which included a project management fee, and operational costs such as stationery, electricity and transport.

The organisation was established to care for the elderly members of the Bambeni community when they realised that the elderly were being left to fend for themselves

while their children went to the towns to find employment. The organisation committed itself to cleaning the homes of the elderly, bathing, feeding and safeguarding them and assisting them to access their pension money. The sale of the traditional accessories which the organisation makes generates income for the organisation to provide these services.

The programmes and activities that the organisation provided included helping the elderly to keep healthy and fit through exercise which was facilitated by nurses from the local clinic. This took place three times a month on the organisation's premises, and they were also taught literacy skills such as how to write their names, where they are from and how to read. These programmes and activities came to an end when the organisation could no longer feed the elderly because of the lack of funds.

The participants said that the organisation does not receive any assistance from the community in any way and they do not make donations to the organisation. The schools and churches in the community do not assist either.

In 2013, the organisation received funding from the NAC and the National Lotteries. In 2015 it was funded by the Department of Social Development.

Pfuxanani Early Learning Centre

Maphatha Village is home to the multifaceted Pfuxanani Early Learning Centre (ELC) which is one of two crèches in the area. This centre has a bakery, community sewing projects, brick making, poultry farming and an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) team tasked with the upkeep of the village and graveyard site. Pfuxanani offers a variety of services and products based on the needs of the community of Maphatha. The village is faced with a high unemployment rate and families are in dire need of food, resources and services which the organisation has sought to address in its existence.

Pfuxanani has more than 80 toddlers and operates in a single classroom which is not furnished with the usual educational posters that a crèche would have on its walls. However, it provides food and a safe educational space to its pupils and staff. The classroom has mattresses covering most of the floor space, and those that are lucky are on a mattress while those who aren't, are half on the mattress and half on the

ground. This class is managed by two teachers who are seated on the floor with their sleeping pupils.

Anna Nkuna established this centre on 11 March 1996 as a crèche addressing child welfare issues to assist the community. In 2010, the EPWP was incorporated which provided financial relief to those contracted. The organisation has hosted and coordinated a number of events in the community such as beauty pageants, drama performances and sports events. These were made possible by local government who initiated soccer matches for the elderly women's soccer teams from surrounding communities.

The organisation also runs an after-school programme but has not received any assistance from the Department of Education, who referred the organisation to the Department of Social Development who provided the organisation with a R15 subsidy for each child in the organisation's care. The organisation has a total of 115 toddlers from zero to five-years-old (R15 x 115 = R1 725). The R15 subsidy is meant to cover food, trips, admin, personnel and resources.

The project has received other funding, but these once-off grants/donations have had little impact on the sustainability of the project. The NAC granted the organisation R20 000, but it forfeited R2 000 because it failed to submit a progress and expenditure report accompanied by receipts related to the project. The amount of R18 000 paid to Pfuxanani was used to purchase an industrial machine, traditional fabric, transportation to purchase material and grass to weave grass mats. The amount allocated by the NAC compared to the amount of R464 000 requested by the organisation was a fraction of the costs that it had anticipated.

In addition to the NAC craft funding, the project received R163 035 from the National Lottery in partnership with other organisations in the year under review (2013).







Detail from a Tsonga inspired skirt, Pfuxunani ELC members displaying their hand-made traditional grass mats and the main road leading to Maphata Village

Reflecting on the NAC craft funding allocation: Limpopo

This research discovered that of the R80 000 of allocated craft funding, the amount paid to craft organisations was R66 000 while the outstanding amount of R14 000 was forfeited by these organisations. As stated in the previous section covering craft organisations from Mpumalanga, allocated funds are forfeited because of a number of reasons, such as the organisation's failure to acknowledge the grant by not submitting signed contracts, by not submitting the relevant document necessary to process payment of the various tranches of the grant, i.e. a valid tax clearance certificate, report on the funded project and pictures of the project or products that resulted from the project.

The selection of participating organisations from Limpopo varied in terms of the area of focus. Most of them were established and based their existence on addressing and contributing towards aiding their local communities. The organisations in Limpopo seem to possess a stronger sense of responsibility towards their communities than those in Mpumalanga. They are more orientated to providing services that assist the community with some of the challenges they face. For example, Pfuxanani, Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation and Shalamukani Community Project in Limpopo

were established to address issues of well-being, safety and education in their respective communities, whereas the selection of organisations from Mpumalanga were primarily focused on producing craft products which in turn generated income.

The selection of the organisations for this research was done with the intention of investigating exactly how far-reaching the impact of funded craft projects go; as well as attempting to understand what participating in craft means and how it benefits crafters. It is evident that, through craft as the primary source of business and trade, various communities have been aided with job opportunities, services and products that have assisted them in preserving the traditional fashion and cultural expression of each community respectively.

CHAPTER 5: BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATING AND ENGAGING IN CRAFT

To establish possible measures of the value of crafters' participation and engagement in craft, this research drew on the experience gained by crafters as a tool to better understand the impact that engagement in craft effects, as suggested by Brown and Carnwath (2014:7-17). According to Brown and Carnwath, experienced impacts can be used after the event, and because of the evaluative nature of this research, it considers the cumulative impacts of participating and engagement in craft. What is evident is that participation in craft has both social and economic benefits, but it also exposes crafters to a number of challenges.

Interrogation of the literature, together with the expressed experiences of crafters, provided insight into the delayed impacts of experiences from participating in craft. These impacts include providing crafters means of expression, providing respect for crafters in their communities, developing and expanding their knowledge and skills, and generating an income for their households.

Most of the respondents said that participating in craft provided them with a means of generating an income which is typically used to sustain crafters' families and the community which they form a part of. Nonetheless, as the literature states, further impact may include health and subjective well-being benefits, social belonging and increased skills development (Arts Council England, 2014:7-8).

Three Social Benefits To Participating In Craft

Craft enables therapeutic benefits

Pöllänen writes that the significance of craft as an occupation can be described by the following three themes: 1) the meaning and value of crafts, 2) the feelings experienced during craft activity, and 3) the holisticity and intentionality of craft-making. From the respondents' responses, this research found that all the above themes are recurrent regarding the creation, production, distribution and exhibition process of producing and participating in craft. Craft-making for crafters gives them a chance to reflect on their lives and has provided them a platform to release some of their stresses while at the same time working on improving their lives holistically.

Pöllänen argues that "The self-help therapeutic process of craft can be traced to the raw materials; the artefacts; a sense of achievement; the possibilities for personal

growth; the development of physical and cognitive skills; the control of one's own body, thoughts and feelings and the social and cultural dimensions related to craft." Respondents' responses encourage the view that even though the material used to produce craft itself has no real affiliation to cultural artefacts as it is mass produced and made of synthetic material such as plastic, the action of producing craft, of challenging the knowledge and skills or crafters, contributes to their sense of achievement. This is in line with Pöllänen's findings which together with this research support the picture painted by respondents of the "significance of craft as an agony- and stress-reducing and mind-calming activity." (Pöllänen, 2012)

Craft as a sought-after skill

Others highlighted the value of participating in craft as a means of acquiring and developing new technical skills. Eight organisations in both provinces added that their participation in craft has been instrumental in allowing them the opportunity to learn new techniques and skills, substantiating this by saying that 'in making craft we have learnt to create our own things, we are not concerned with what other people are doing because if a client comes to us with a design, we can make it'. In this sense, producing craft itself has provided crafters the rare opportunity to make products that are tailor-made for their needs and desires as a means of expressing their identity. For example, traditional attire that is fashioned to the style of the client.

Women operating under Letsopa Pottery and Art had this to say:

> "Because we are actively doing something beautiful that not everybody can do, we are respected for this. We are also respected because we have proven to ourselves and to the community that we have been able to learn the skills of moulding in a short amount of time. We were taught by mam'Mashego's sister who trained us in mam'Mashego's yard how to mould. The next day we were taught how to do the finishes and whoever had not gotten the hang of it we stayed behind and showed them until we all became good at it. And people like our work, they buy, they buy a lot of our products, teachers buy, they use them for decoration, as vases. That's what we make, and people buy them a lot."

As a result, their community has identified them to make art for the local school which has had a great impact on their status in the community. In addition to the aspect of respect, Siyalu Arts & Craft added that they have been identified as possessing the

potential to impart skills to students as far as the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. This speaks to the scarce opportunities that exist in the industry which ended in Siyalu Arts & Craft not being a part of this opportunity as another organisation was selected.

Craft as a means of preserving cultural identity

Future Perfect, Letsopa Pottery and Art, Pfuxanani and Nshalati Business Enterprise said that the essential value and significance of the type of craft they produce is the fact that it has strong ties to their cultural identities. Furthermore, that in wearing these traditionally-inspired items they are expressing and showcasing their cultural identity. Nshalati Business Enterprise described this by saying that craft “keeps people creative and preserves culture; we no longer buy cultural items but can make our own now” (Nshalati Business Enterprise).

The cultural value of these products continues to speak to symbolic traditional significance of these products. These products still inform the identity of these communities as they are still used in traditional ceremonies and cultural motifs. However, these products do not play such a dominant role in the lifestyles of these communities.

Making their own products meant that the organisation had creative freedom with regards to what material they would use to produce items, how it is made and how it could be used. This gave the organisation and the local community a deep sense of pride in the product.

Tiluleni Bomake has had a long affiliation with cultural expressions through traditional dance. These women were inspired by the desire to learn new skills in an attempt to preserve their culture. The co-operative became interested in craft as a means of diversifying its services by adding craft products because of the decrease in the number of times they were invited to perform traditional dance.

Economic benefits

In light of the shortage of employment and the impoverished state of the townships and rural villages, crafters realised the possibility of turning their interest in craft production into a primary source of income. Crafters have used all opportunities presented to them to access markets and obtain material to sustain their practice to

ensure that their participation in craft became a successful career. They viewed this as being especially vital for their survival and that of their households.

> "There were many of us, the people I worked with needed to live. I would think to myself 'these poor people have absolutely nothing'. I'd rather make the sacrifice of paying them so that they can go and pay for their children's school fees. What would remain is what we continued to continue with our production." (mam'Mathaba of Siyalu Arts & Craft)

The Stats SA Poverty Report (2017:25) draws attention to the economic trend between 2011 and 2015 where the country saw some of the toughest economic challenges influenced by international and domestic factors. These included low economic growth, constantly high unemployment levels and highly priced commodities such as food and energy.

This period has seen the financial health of South African households decline under the weight of these economic pressures and, in turn, pulled more households and individuals into poverty (Stats SA, 2017: 25).

As can be seen in the quote above, the country, and more specifically households were faced with the challenging need to survive. People travel across the country in the hopes of finding employment. One such organisation saw this and was established to lessen the impact of this on the elderly members of its community. Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation said that they were especially interested in

> "assisting the elderly make extra income and seeing them being helped and no longer struggling."

Many organisations mentioned the economic benefit of working in the craft sector. Five in Mpumalanga said that the experience of being a South African crafter is rewarding in that it has provided them with the platform and means to achieve personal aspirations of being in charge of how they work. This is perhaps best said by one of the Ndlovu sisters (three refugee sisters working with Madi A Thavha Mountain Lodge):

> "When I was still young, maybe at the age of 12, I was cutting my dresses and designing them again. Even now, I'm enjoying it. When I look at the material, I can even see if I do this I can get this." (Ndlovu sisters, 2017)

The fusion between fashion and traditional design allows the Ndlovu sisters an opportunity to explore their passion for design while being in complete charge of the outfits they produce.

Five other organisations in Limpopo supported this. According to the Ndlovu sisters, “a large market for traditional products exists and these are generally expensive items which means more profit for crafters.”

Respondents said that in retrospect, participation in craft has allowed them a sense of pride in achieving financial freedom with regards to sustaining their households.

> “For me, it means not waiting for government for employment, to spoon feed me. It means I can go and start creating employment for myself as an entrepreneur… the market doesn’t care about anyone. People are looking at their needs, at their wants. If you are able to meet that they will come to you, if you have a poor or shoddy service or inferior product, I don’t think that you would get that respect.” Malengs Trading (2017)

Subsequently, through these instances, the instrumental value of craft affecting some degree of financial relief becomes apparent. The revenue generated for each household was extremely important in affording crafters the opportunity to sustain themselves, their families and a few members of their communities towards working for something that not only created confidence for each of them but assisted in providing for their families.

Malengs Trading agrees to the benefits gained from participating in craft but cautions by highlighting that there are challenges too. It emphasises that the sales and production of craft “makes life easier for crafters, however, it also has made it stressful because of challenges” faced at operational level and with regards to market access and enterprise development. This research suggests that to address these challenges, closer attention needs to be paid to the eco-system of the craft industry provincially.

Is craft inclusive of all?

Six of the participating organisations in both provinces maintained that craft is predominantly produced by women, particularly elderly women. As Nhlayisekani commented, “Craft is made by elderly women. Some men and youth are interested, but the youth is not really interested in craft, they would rather be on social media,

making music or buying branded clothes. They dream about finding work in town." The lack of interest in craft is telling of the fact that craft among the youth and perhaps among certain communities is no longer recognised as a professional career and that the benefits gained and experienced from participating in the production of craft are still not recognised.

Elsewhere, Pfuxanani said that craft in their village is produced by the youth, asserting that the organisation is run by youth. This is interesting as the majority of the organisations say that craft is not at all popular among the youth. This may perhaps be because of the fact that most of the initiatives that take place in Maphata Village are initiated by the youth; the youth in this case are a lot more active in the community than the elderly residents. Added to this is the fact the youth there are unemployed, and to combat this they initiate local projects to generate income while contributing to the well-being of their community.

Pfuxanani's stance is that this "adds more value to craft itself as it means that the youth are spared from alcohol and drug abuse and take up helpful community orientated activities. It also means that they do not roam the streets and can identify and rise to work opportunities. The youth in the community generally work hard because they need to help their families survive."

Three organisations indicated that craft is produced by adult men and women, while the remaining organisations differed saying that craft in their region is produced by both men and women, young and old. To qualify this, they said that:

> "Women and men differ in the techniques they use to produce different types of craft. For example, in pottery women produce using natural techniques while men use the wheel to produce." (Letsopa Pottery and Art)

> "We worked with one male crafter; he worked with the heavier items. He did weaving and carved wooden spoons." (Siyalu Arts & Craft)

The cases in point here are those of Siyalu Arts & Craft, Sella Construction and Pottery and Letsopa Pottery and Art. In the case of Sella Pottery, Mashaba relays the tale of her having to collect clay from the river bed nearby, which she says is not easy to work with and requires time and sieving through to remove pebbles, weeds and other matter that prevents the clay from being malleable and smooth. Once moulded, her clay pots

are fired in a home-made brick and iron oven which is a substitute for an electrical kiln. Next door is a company of predominately male ceramicists who mould using industrial clay and fire their products in an electrical kiln. Similar to Sella Pottery, the women of Letsopa Pottery and Art fire their products on an open flame on the ground. This often results in a significant amount of their products being damaged and destroyed as they cannot regulate the fire, nor can they monitor the process as they would if they were using a kiln.

From the respondents' responses, women mainly deal with beadwork and textile techniques of production as well as ceramic products, while men are said to be more into wood carving and wire sculpting. Added to this, from the discussions with crafters, male crafters are said to have more access to kilns and industrial clay, while female crafters do not have access to kilns as they fire their products, which are made from clay collected from the riverbed, on an open flame or construct home-ovens.

This is substantiated by SAAPAM (2015:605) which shows that female entrepreneurs and crafters are, regardless of the many initiatives of government to address issues of inequality in the industry, still challenged in this regard. These challenges include access to resources and support.

The current eco-system in the Mpumalanga and Limpopo province provides substantial challenges threatening the existence of craft organisations

> "A rural area is typically characterised by large activities of farming and forestry, made up of small, low order settlements and having a cohesive identity that is linked to an extensive landscape." (Schalkwyk, 2015)

Both Mpumalanga and Limpopo are largely made up of rural areas and as seen in the section preceding this, craft organisations located in these areas are threatened by challenges in the craft industry and associated with their location. These local economies rely mostly on agriculture as a primary form of income, which has its challenges particularly considering the scourge of drought that has hit South Africa in recent months (the 2017/18 period). This may lead to crops failing residents and further placing them in dire financial struggles as they try to find alternative ways of survival. In both provinces, infrastructure such as roads, are poorly maintained and in some areas, do not exist.

Because of the location and lack of access to contemporary styles and developments, crafters in rural regions have no concept of products made by other organisations or what markets exist for certain types of craft. This causes the organisation to have minimal to no growth and often no sustainability with regards to the development of organisations.

Illiteracy and lack of financial investment

Challenges of illiteracy and the lack of investment opportunities are prohibiting the development of crafters and their organisations. This is perhaps most evident with regards to access to information regarding funding and training opportunities. It is further heightened by the fact that platforms such as the internet is not easily accessible and access to it comes at a significant cost.

Individual organisations had not taken part in any product development initiatives; only crafters that are affiliated to intermediary organisations had the advantage of these initiatives. Added to this, organisations had not conducted market research to respond to the market with relevant products. This might be the space in which government and stakeholders dominate.

Crafters' engagement in all processes related to their craft production is limited because of literacy, location and access to resources. By this, I mean that crafters are not always aware of all aspects necessary to ensuring success in the industry; such as market research, conducting their craft professionally and continuously trying to find alternative ways of producing such, as seen in the case of Tiluleni Bomake.

Craft market infiltrated by foreign traders

A further challenge facing the craft industry is that local markets have been infiltrated by foreign traders selling not only traditional material used to produce traditional items, but also ready-made traditional items as evidenced by the comments of Mathaba below. This affects the quality of the products and the price which leads to the market price of traditional products, produced by South African crafters, being low therefore leading to organisations to lower their prices to compete with foreign traders which would mean that these organisations would be operating at a loss.

Evidence of this can be drawn from respondents who state that:

> “In the work that we are in, the Indians hurt us; the Indians and Chinese hurt us a lot. I want to say that… I want to be clear on that. You will find that we have gone to exhibitions and we have our works on display, they will come and buy one and when they come back, the next time you meet them again, you’ll be shocked because the products that they have on display will be exactly the same as yours, as the one that they bought the last time. I dislike Indians and Chinese, I really dislike them, they make me angry. And when we do travel I hope and try for them not to buy any of my products. You know the neckpiece that’s made of material and rope, we made that, we made it out of cotton material because we did not have enough money to make if out of beads – but it looks like it is beaded, we sewed different colours of material onto rope. That was our design, but now when you look, it is everywhere in these Indian shops.” (Mathaba, 2017)

There is a general decline in the demand or need for beaded and traditional attire craft. This is causing more and more organisations to stop trading as they have not ventured into diversifying their products to stay in the market.

South African craft organisations have been challenged by the infiltration of these foreign traders which results in them having an extremely short life-span. This is attributed to issues of little to no capital, little to no advancement in products and a lack of support being offered to these projects, by possible stakeholders, limiting them in the extent to which they bring about sustained social and economic transformation. These organisations have been instrumental in effecting collective action in their respective communities – however minor or short lived.

Consumers of South African craft

Pairing Williams’ theory of culture being in constant flux and DAWN (2010) who writes that modern clothes are “convenient, comfortable and give us the option of flexibility in the sense that we can change our dressing style daily”, this research posits that changes in lifestyles and culture have led to changes in the consumption of craft and cultural attire. The latter has recently become most relevant during cultural celebrations i.e. Heritage Day, traditional weddings and celebrations. South African craft is mostly consumed by international buyers who visit the country as tourists or who buy from South Africans who export craft.

Considering respondents' responses, consumers of craft are mostly tourists. This is substantiated by the fact that the majority of crafters produce work that would go on sale at the Kruger National Park, in Thabazimbi or abroad.

Madi A Thavha has, for this reason, identified and taken advantage of this by establishing strong relationships with tourists and local businesses.

> "If you really want to find the market correct, you have to fly outside, you can use the internet but not everyone has the resources to do. The market is slow, the guys from outside are the ones that really buy… we are raw cultural people, we know our cultures very well and if you know your culture if a donkey has been crafted and you stay with donkeys and cows – obviously you're not going to buy it. But when a guy comes from outside he will buy that donkey because he doesn't know it, he doesn't live with it and he will take it back as a souvenir." (Future Perfect 2017)

The quote above is supported by Siyalu Arts & Craft who now supplies the international market more than the South African market. The only disadvantage to some of the international markets is that the currency is sometimes lower than that of South Africa. Mathaba shares how Siyalu Arts & Craft entered the market:

> "Let me tell you where I used to sell those mats, I'd tie them together and put them in a bus to Joburg and I would sell them there. When I came back I would share that money with the women I worked with but leave some so we could buy more string – and I'd make a profit because you know we don't buy grass. We carried on like this because there was a lot of work to do." (Siyalu Arts & Craft, 2017)

Other organisations have found that their immediate communities support them occasionally but other communities within the borders of South Africa are considerably more supportive of their work. Letsopa Pottery and Art shares how they are always guaranteed to find buyers when they travel to the rest of South Africa.

> "We travel, transport is expensive and so is electricity, but we travel a lot. We take our products to Thabazimbi, to Jozi, Pretoria and Nelspruit. We don't have a large buy-in from the local community but when we go to other places to sell

> we come back having sold most of our products and this helps us a lot." Letsopa Pottery and Art (2017)

The local market is not always kind to these organisations as Mathaba continues:

> "If you tie your mats together and take them around and say that you are selling mats or go and display them somewhere on the side of the road, they will even gather dust and not be bought." (Siyalu Arts & Craft, 2017)

The above is further echoed by Future Perfect and Letsopa Pottery and Art and organisations such as Nshalati Business Enterprise, Shalamukani, Tiluleni Bomake and Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation who emphasised the struggle they face in terms of sales among their local communities.

In an attempt to resuscitate the demand of these products, contemporary design has made the fusion of 'traditional' beaded accessories together with formal and casual wear trendy. This is perhaps part of the cycle of change and production. The needs of society are changing; people still value their cultures and traditional attire but even tradition itself is in part changing. This may be culture changing with the times as Williams (1976:87-88) would suggest. This is not to say that these items have lost their significance but rather that they have come to have a different meaning and significance in modern society, which can for example be seen in their increased presence in the contemporary interior design industry.

Craft organisations threatened by their state of survival

The survivalist state of craft organisations is partly because of the lack of income and finances. The NAC craft funding had an impact in as far as production is concerned where organisations were funded to purchase material and equipment. This research cautions against the production of craft intended to be sold without an existing market as this translates into this production not being able to move from being survivalist to profitable organisations.

Finances play a crucial role in the well-being of these organisations. Mathaba points to this fact by giving the example that even when the organisation is active and receiving orders, without money it is very difficult to complete an order.

> "When we have orders, we try to push them, but we push them so painfully. When we have to finish it, two days before the order is due we have to call and apologise to the buyer for having to deliver the order late because we must first wait for there to be money before we can put together all the items we have made because we work in different spaces as I do not have enough space for us all to work together." (Mathaba, 2017)

Related to finances is the issue of production space because this needs financing. Sella Construction and Pottery, Tiluleni Bomake, Siyalu Arts & Craft, Letsopa Pottery and Art, Nshalati Business Enterprise, Shalamukani Community Project and Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation do not have workshops or production spaces. This has resulted in crafters working alone in their homes which makes it difficult for them to see each other's products and the quantity of products made because resources to conduct visits to crafters' homes are limited if they exist at all.

The above scenario points to the importance of finance, and that other than funds, resources such as transport and a production space weigh heavily on crafters, and that these are imperative to the progression and maintenance of healthy craft organisations.

The NAC has not encouraged crafters to think beyond the purchase of material and machinery. Rather it has perpetuated the cycle of dependence on funding for material and equipment without forward-thinking of the organisations. The NAC craft funding, besides in the case of Malengs Trading and Madi A Thavha, did not contribute towards continuous market access and product development. From this we may deduce that this funding may be of greater impact when paid to and used by intermediary organisations rather than small craft organisations directly.

Sustainable development initiatives in marginalised areas should focus on craft organisations

A shortage of employment, quality housing, increasing poverty, severe environmental problems and a lack of services currently characterise rural areas. This means that rural areas are burdened and drained which has caused the drastically high urbanisation rate. This, as witnessed in an interview with Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation, which came into existence from the dire need to have the elderly of Bambeni Village taken care of as they were left to fend for themselves while their

children and grandchildren had migrated to the city to look for work. This organisation tasked itself with the upkeep of the elderly which included assisting them with hygiene, accessing their pension grant, improving their literacy and providing them with health and exercise activities.

Without reform, the situation in these villages and rural areas may have severe consequences such as making them prone to chronic poverty. This reform should focus on ensuring that rural areas are developed to be lively and sustainable places where people can live and conduct profitable business (Schalkwyk, 2015:73-74).

> "Social development is the promotion of a sustainable society that is worthy of human dignity by empowering marginalised groups, women and men, to undertake their own development, to improve their social and economic position and to acquire their rightful place in society." (Bilance, 1997)

Sustainable development refers plainly to maintaining development over time. By this definition, a sustainable community can be seen as a community in which development is maintained over time. The term "community" can be anything from a small neighbourhood to a group of people who share some interests. It is typically geographically bounded in an area in which "residents meet their diverse needs while making effective use of natural resources, achieving social cohesion and strengthening their economic prosperity in such a manner that the needs of future generations will be met." (Schalkwyk, 2015:73-74)

Indeed, craft organisations should and can contribute to the development of rural areas by effecting social impact in these communities. To achieve this, the craft industry needs to be considered with a particular focus. Existing research, together with this research, shows that that craft organisations are small businesses that barely generate enough money to see them through some of their key functions, such as production, hence their dependence on grant funding.

Other challenges include access to support and development initiatives by government and stakeholders and the fact that while government may have these initiatives and policies in place, the implementation is sometimes poor resulting in the initiatives and programmes not achieving the impact that they could have otherwise had. Added to this, many of the organisations participating in this research bear witness to the challenge of acquiring capital and financial aid.

As a result, these organisations become dependent on the grant funding system and become regular beneficiaries of multiple funds or the same fund for consecutive years. Funds received in most cases are used to purchase material and machinery. This type of funding hardly considers the need for support such as training, business acumen and development. In some of the applications made to the NAC, crafters state their need for training which include aspects such as project and financial management, marketing and pricing. These requests were not responded to. This research adds that market research and report writing are also of importance. Crafters state that they also need technical workshops to improve their sewing skills and quality standards.

It goes without saying that funding bodies are not liable to teach crafters their craft; however, they should be able to identify potential and good investment when it comes to craft organisations. Having identified these, funding bodies should look at how best to develop the existing product, skills or knowledge of the crafters to assist them achieve optimal success in their products which will in turn influence sales, orders and exports.

With the correct support programmes, craft organisations in rural and township regions of South Africa stand a good chance of effecting the socio-economic change that their communities are so desperate for. This would mean that they have the potential to contribute to sustain socio-economic development for rural communities.

Pfuxanani's model is perhaps the closest to this school of thought. Members of this organisation have identified the need for the youth to be active in the community to build and develop it. This they have shown requires the community to unite and institute projects that are essential to community members. This, as seen in the projects run by this organisation, has attracted local government and has resulted in it contributing resources towards this organisation's projects.

This is a case in point with the local municipality of Maphata which has sourced the EPWP programme to financially relieve Pfuxanani by providing some of the organisation's members with equipment, uniforms and monthly stipends.

Providing agency to local crafters through Intermediary Craft Organisations

The craft organisations that have taken part in this research have thus far not been able to establish their trade as sustainable. They face months on end without sales, or orders which threatens their chances of becoming sustainable and visible. This often has financial implications on the individual crafter in that it requires them to purchase material and sometimes equipment from their pockets to produce.

A further challenge is that crafters make craft that is not market ready with sub-par quality, high pricing and the competition of mass-produced replicas.

Much of the recommendation of this research focuses on the establishment of a system that encourages the NAC's craft funding policy to consider partnerships with intermediary organisations.

Two of the six craft organisations participating in this research in Mpumalanga were intermediary organisations who operate by being the link between crafters and relevant stakeholders. These organisations were Future Perfect and Malengs Trading. Both organisations conduct market access related projects aimed at increasing the visibility and sale of craft. Malengs Trading has expressed their role as clearly being one that is focused on "enterprise development for the arts and craft" and Future Perfect focuses on increasing crafters' access to local markets and the quality of these products.

In Limpopo, this research discovered only one intermediary organisation which was Madi A Thavha. This organisation is by far the most established of the three intermediary organisations. Madi A Thavha has a gallery and craft shop and the craft produced by local crafters has been incorporated in the lodge facilities. It has established itself in the international market as some of its buyers are internationals.

Madi A Thavha has a far greater reach and because of this, many crafters have benefited from training workshops offered there. During the fieldwork process, this research visited seven of the 25 crafters who work with Madi A Thavha. They were all content with the relationship that they have built with the organisation, stating that they are always kept busy with large orders and that they can see how advanced their craft has become. Madi A Thavha received funding in 2014 and was later successful in its

Special Project Funding application which saw it become one of the NAC's flagship projects.

As Mbembe states, cultural products have become commercial products. This is best seen by the products produced by crafters working with Madi A Thavha. These products have adapted to this commercial state and boast a fair blend of contemporary living and cultural heritage. The organisation realised the need for contemporary cultural craft and attire and excellent quality to have marketable products. The organisation provides artists and crafters with skills in design and product development that draws its inspiration from the rich cultures of the Venda, Tsonga and Northern Sesotho. The organisation is focused on documenting and preserving the cultural products and ceremonies of these cultures through the Dancing Fish Gallery.

Considering the reach and focus of these intermediary organisations, it would seem that funding allocated to these organisations has a far reach too, particularly in rural and township areas. For this reason, funding intermediary organisations has the potential to improve the craft and lives of crafters and strengthen the industry with viable craft.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the various rural villages and townships from which selected craft organisations operate, it is evident that the local government is struggling to provide basic services in these regions which lack clean running water and electricity and are ridden with high levels of poverty and unemployment.

Consideration of these external factors and the lack of support provided to craft organisations by government and agencies of government dispels the myth that these craft organisations are not proactive and mindful of the importance of having their compliance documentation up to date. A deeper study into this revealed that the financial status, capacity, available resources and the location of some of these craft organisations pose grave challenges to organisations with regards to having compliance documentation readily available. For example, the location of these crafters, paired with their challenge of accessing the internet, means that acquiring the NAC craft funding application form and guidelines is a great challenge.

NAC annual reports

This research found that the 'beneficiaries' listed in the annual reports were simply organisations and projects that were allocated funding in the respective financial year, and does not necessary mean that all beneficiaries claimed the funding allocated to them. Superficially, this may be considered as a discrepancy; however, public sector oversight frameworks require government's financial commitments to be disclosed. These commitments may not necessarily translate into actual funds being paid.

The initial sample of organisations selected to participate in the research but who were unable to because they did not receive funding were: Mabayeni Society for the Aged (R15 000) and Hatlani Development Primary Co-op (R20 000). These amounts were allocated but not paid, and the NAC termed these "forfeited" funds.

This sample was further altered because of the fact that the contact details of some organisations were outdated and as a result they could not be reached. This was the case with Redeeming Manufacturing in Limpopo.

Redress and transformation requires rigorous action, and funding small amounts of material and equipment will not aid in this regard. Beneficiaries are expectant of annual grant funding without viable plans and products.

Achille Mbembe states that culture has undeniably become a commodity that can be sold like any other on the market (2009). Due to the commodification of craft, the industry requires comprehensive consideration of the value chain of the production and sale of craft. This means that the industry, particularly crafters, needs to pay more attention to innovative design, quality standards, marketing and distribution aspects as seen in the case of Madi A Thavha.

This research found that although literature states that there is a correlation between cultural products and the demand for these, this is not the case in these South African communities. This results in the questioning and critique of exactly what value our society holds for these products.

During the interviews, respondents stated that while they were constantly producing craft, more often than not, their craft was not bought. This, they say is because of the lack of market access. Interrogation of this revealed that while the lack of markets is true, this is additionally attributed to the lack of product development that these products are exposed to. This resulted in a disjuncture between the production and sale of these cultural products.

This instance speaks to the lack of innovative craft products. The NAC has gone some way in addressing this as seen in the competitive bidding process for design innovation which was awarded to Madi A Thavha. This intermediary organisation then ran the Creativity in Craft Training programme, which coincided with the NAC's craft initiative programme in various rural villages in the Limpopo province. This programme focused on exposing and sharing innovative design tools which crafters could employ in the production of their craft (NAC 2014/15:27).

From this we see the reach and the scope of work that intermediary organisations can achieve.

Craft SMMEs leading the SMME sector of South Africa

In the SMME research conducted in 2016, SEDA endeavoured to provide a clear distinction between the formal and informal SMME sectors. It stated that the formal sector comprises of predominantly educated white people with a higher income and exists mostly in the Western Cape and Gauteng provinces, while the informal sector is dominated by black-owned enterprises and is prevalent in rural areas. In other

words, SMMEs in South Africa are mostly “survivalist” enterprises in street trading and “backyard manufacturing” (SEDA, 2016:5). To put this into context with this research, the findings of my research correlate to these facts as the craft organisations participating in this research are small informal organisations run from the scarcely resourced rural villages of Limpopo and Mpumalanga.

The SMME sector as a whole is faced by a number of challenges which include limited skills, infrastructure and finance often worsened by the rural state of some of the provinces, where economic potential is limited as well (SAAPAM, 2015:606). SEDA (2016:7-10) goes on to add that other challenges are attributed to the lack of markets, high levels of crime, delays in governmental processes related to obtaining certificates and licenses and a lack of research. These challenges pose a threat to the existence of SMMEs and this too has been discovered during this research. The craft organisations taking part in this research are faced with the same challenges, with the addition of literacy challenges.

These challenges are particularly stifling for women entrepreneurs because of cultural norms that restrict working women, and financial and technical challenges. As seen in eight out of the 12 organisations run by women participating in this research, women entrepreneurs dominate the informal sector. Their organisations have a shorter life-span, are sometimes less mobile and have very limited business networks (Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2014).

Intermediary organisations play a pivotal role in ensuring that crafters have access to resources offered by government without being involved in the laborious administrative processes, access to markets and working towards achieving economic potential.

To strengthen the presence of the intermediary organisations, a model or system that takes into consideration the eco-system of the craft sectors ought to be developed. This system should be one that involves all key players in the sector including government departments, agencies of government and private companies to improve the craft sector, to increase the number of successful craft organisation and initiatives and to make better use of existing resources for the overall development of the craft sector as well as small businesses.

Government is dedicated to the development of an enabling environment and long-term sustainability of these SMMEs as they are crucial role players in the economy.

They contribute to GDP and can be key drivers of economic growth, innovation and job creation (SEDA, 2016:5). This research positions itself by acknowledging the efforts that government has put in place towards achieving an enabling environment for these organisations. However, it notes and emphasises the need for an even more rigorous approach where the circulation of this information regarding these initiatives and resources is taken as respondents in this research did not have this information at their disposal. Furthermore, it calls for all stakeholders to increase visibility in rural and township areas of the two provinces and a consolidated approach by stakeholders and government to establishing this enabling environment.

Craft as a catalyst for social development

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (2014:4-6) elaborates the ways in which arts and craft can be considered cultural capital that contributes to the country. These are as economic drivers, educational assets, a civic catalyst, preserving cultural legacies and a vehicle for skills development. This is particularly useful to this research in that the use of craft in South African rural and township areas is synonymous with economic, educational benefits as well as the preservation of cultural legacies, or as Bourdieu states, craft in these communities is used as a catalyst to overcome some social challenges, which is evident in the services provided and the motivation for establishing craft organisations participating in this research. Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is useful as it considers arts and culture as possessing cultural value. Bourdieu writes that cultural capital is either embodied (acquired over time through socialisation and education), an objectified state (material objects that we own that signal our wealth) or institutionalised state which refers to ways in which cultural capital is measured, quantified or certified (Bourdieu, 1986:47-51).

Modern day significance and uses of craft

The ultimate significance and value of modern day craft is its ability to effect and impact the lives of people through cultural expression, preservation of culture, serving communities and personal advancement. This intrinsic value of craft can be seen in the impacts of participating and engaging in the production of craft. To these personal impacts are added the instrumental values in the collective social impacts and economic impacts.

These findings attest to the instrumental and social value of craft, where participation and engagement in culturally inspired craft products and services have particularly impacted the lives of crafters, their families and respective communities.

By providing crafters support and the opportunity to produce craft that can assist them lessen and overcome social challenges faced by their communities, government would be lessening its substantial responsibility of providing those that are disadvantaged with social grant support. This approach would be government acknowledging and accepting craft focused communities as key stakeholders and partners in the growth and development of the industry. It would therefore make the arts a good public investment.

It is therefore crucial for government to invest in the craft industry as it is in the public interest and allows for fair access to arts resources (National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2014:5). To add to this, what this research has shown is that provided with the correct support, craft organisations and their products and services could serve as assets to government in areas such as trade, travel and tourism, which they already have been doing as seen in SEDA's report of SMMEs in South Africa (2016). It could achieve higher levels of trade and more coverage detailing the strengths and weaknesses of industry and possible means to address these.

Therefore, the NAC funding should encourage more than just the purchase of material and machinery. It should make a contribution to the overall value chain of craft such as product development and market access.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made in light of the findings of this research together with the goals of the NAC as taken from the annual plan of the year under review.

The goals outlined in the annual plan are as follows: to establish an effective funding model, to contribute to the redress and transformation of the arts, to advocate the benefits of the arts, to create programmes in support of new areas of work and lastly, to fulfil the mandate of the NAC (NAC, 2013-2014:4).

1. To achieve the full objectives of the NAC's organisation craft funding and an effective funding model, the NAC should establish partnerships with intermediary organisations that address the key issues in the industry such as training on product development, business acumen, marketing, market research and quality assurance in their respective provinces.

   The relationship between intermediary organisations, government and other relevant stakeholders would require monitoring and regulation to protect crafters against exploitation and misuse of funds. This relationship should be reflected through a framework that allows government to maintain the role that it has played in encouraging the growth of craft through funding, exhibitions and distribution aspects of the value chain of craft. The development of such a system may possibly provide relief where issues of capacity, limited funds and resources into consideration as government is limited with regards to these factors. This framework would allow for sound use of limited resources.

   Furthermore, government needs to have a greater buy-in in the industry through initiatives such as government buying craft as part of corporate gifting, with all new state infrastructure required to incorporate craft products as part of its design and aesthetic appeal as assets and for government collections.

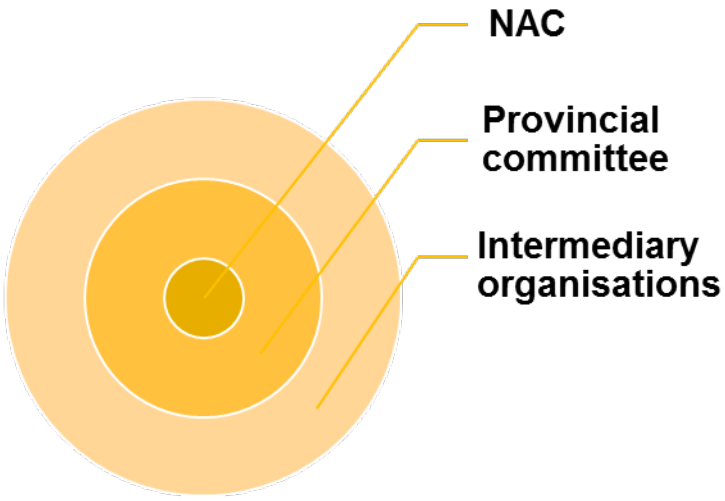
2. In response to the NAC's objective of lobbying and advocating for the arts, the agency should consider lobbying provincial agencies, departments and municipalities to partner to create and avail more opportunities and resources to crafters provincially and nationally.

In this case the NAC should act as the nucleus of this inter-governmental collaboration. Provinces will act as incubators, to directly coordinate in partnership with suitable provincial institutions and intermediary organisations to facilitate aspects that would enhance crafters and their organisations such as business acumen programmes focused on market access, product development and skills training.

For this to happen, provinces need to have consolidated and up-to-date information regarding existing and active craft organisations such as how many exist regionally or per municipality, their service and product offering, ownership details and the number of jobs created by these enterprises or people benefitting from it. Added to this, provincial governments need to know of the key significant projects and initiatives by major intermediary organisations in the provinces. This information can then be used to design and identify opportunities that allow organisations to produce to supply for the markets' demands and to distribute resources to local crafters.

This initiative could be extended further, by having a selection of these enterprises take part in national and international training and exhibitions.

Recommended model



This model could also be extended nationally to become an incubation model by allowing the provinces leading in the craft industry, which are Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, to incubate two provinces each.

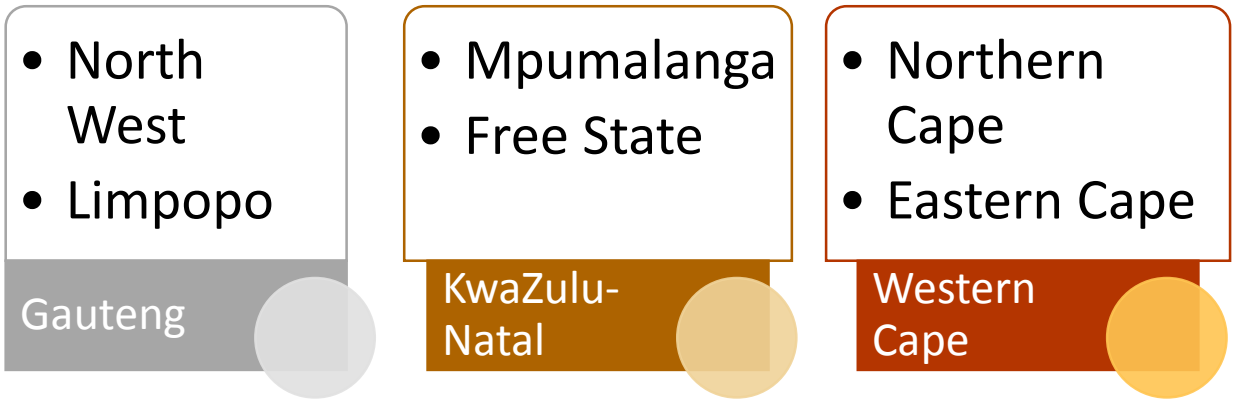


Figure 2 Diagram detailing the proposed model for incubation.

The implications of this would be that national and provincial government would have to commit resources such as financial and human capital to establish this framework and a committee to co-ordinate this initiative.

3. In order for the NAC organisation craft funding to achieve extensive impact, the funding policy needs to consider the needs of each organisation and how to enhance existing products' needs to ensure profitable investment. For example, in the cases of Tiluleni Bomake, Future Perfect, Shalamukani Community Project and Nhlayisekani Old Age Organisation, they needed training more than material. Had these organisations received technical support which could have been part of product development, they would have perhaps been able to secure a place in the local market. In doing this, the NAC would be working on strengthening craft organisations and this would develop local economies and enhance the industry.

   Added to this funding, they need to consider issues such as literacy and location of organisations.

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