

INTRODUCING VISUAL ART TO THE MARKET: THE VARIATION OF PRICING STYLES IN UGANDA'S LOCAL ART MARKET

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Abstract

This paper examines the prices of visual art from the point of view of the artists themselves. Based on interviews with selected visual Ugandan artists in the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA) & Jinja town, the most common factors involved in price decisions are identified: size, expense, status, market factors and the perception of the artist's value. Through Correlation Analysis (CA) and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), the relationships between the components of price determination decisions are described. First of all, the analysis reveals that some visual art producers adopt a traditional approach to production and distribution, while others take an artistic approach. These different guidelines determine price decisions. Secondly, prices based on the determination of an artist's aesthetic value tend not to be combined with prices based on market factors such as demand. While models of pricing decisions are uncovered, the complexity of decisions that set real prices shows that artists work to negotiate prices a living that combines economic activity which provides creative expression, assurance in fairness and community norms within and outside the world of art.

Keywords: art, artist, visual art, contemporary art, pricing art, cultural objects.

Introduction

The value of Ugandan art is very uncertain. This is especially true for artworks of unknown and emerging artists. Evaluation is often subjective and potential buyers often rely on the experience of critics, distributors and artists themselves in the evaluation of art (*Ridgeway, S., 1989*). There seem to be few objective criteria for determining value. How, then, do artists decide how to put a price on their work? Other scholars have examined the artistic prices of the traders in the organisational context of the galleries (*Velthuis, O., 2005*), the social construction of the value in the auctions (*Smith, C.W., 1989*) and the influence of the prices of the art auctions on the established prices from distributors (*Candela, E., & Scorcu, A.E., 2001*). This paper examines prices from the point of view of the artists themselves, the people

who create cultural objects and then, in the hope of selling the work, attach a price. This study does not focus on the determinants of specific prices or the prices that are actually obtained when a work of art is sold. Rather, the study investigates the behaviour and decision-making of individuals as they decide, within specifiable contexts and what to charge for the goods they have brought to market (Eichner, 1987).

The creation of art is often considered as something separate from commerce and, sometimes, it is located above it in a hierarchy of values. Few art teaching centres and higher institutions in the Uganda require or even offer courses on the business of being an artist. However, many artists, especially new artists and those outside the main markets, do a lot of the work of selling art themselves. As Plattner (1996) articulates: “*art is sold as a commodity, but it is produced as a religious vocation, as an object of intense personal expression*” (p.23). Studying the pricing decisions of the artists themselves allows the examination of the connection between the production and distribution of cultural goods.

Zelizer (2005a) argues that scholars who study the relationship between the economic world and the social world tend to adopt one of two approaches, “*separate spheres and hostile worlds*” or “*nothing but*”. The first approach considers economic activity and expressive activity as separate entities. If the two spheres come into contact, contamination and corruption is the likely outcome. Some who take this view are concerned that privacy can be corrupted by market transactions. Others worry about the contamination of the economic sphere, for example, arguing that the rationality of economic transactions is diminished when social relations develop between exchange partners. The second common approach, called the ‘nothing but’ approach, seeks to avoid the dualism of separate spheres by examining activities related to economics through a reductionist lens. Economic activity is considered only as a power, only to maximize personal benefit, or only on cultural expression (Zelizer, 2005b).

Recognizing the multifaceted aspects of economic activity, Zelizer (2005a) defends a third perspective called: “*connected life*”. The argument is that people construct and negotiate lives that combine economic activity with intimacy, meaningful relationships and self-expression. “*Shared understandings and their representations, the components of culture, support*

all economic life” (Zelizer, 2005b). Zelizer (1988) argues that markets are better understood as an interplay of economic, structural and cultural factors. At the top of Zelizer’s call, It’s understood how artist’s price decisions are part of a broader process of negotiating artistic meaning in the art world.

In the following section, the study reviewed the existing literature on prices, followed by a description of the data collected through qualitative and analysed interviews using conventional methods of Correspondence Analysis (CA) and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). The first section of analysis identifies and describes the most common elements included in the artist’s price decisions: size, cost, market, status and value for the artist. In the second part of the analysis, the relationship between the price elements is analysed through an examination of the elements which tend to conjugate within the decisions of the individual artists.

The literature of pricing

The general literature on prices suggests that the price itself is more art than science, especially for new and innovative products (*Ursprung, H.W., & Wiermann, C., 2011*). Lacking complete information, entrepreneurs tend to satisfy rather than maximize when making decisions (*Campos, N. F., & Barbosa, R. L., 2009*). Employers tend to use general rules, such as basing the price of a product on the average total cost plus a deduction per profit, instead of using the abstract calculations of theoretical economists (*Dorwood, N. 1987*). It has also been discovered that organisational and market environments influence price decisions (*Diamantopolous, A., & Matthews, B., 1995*). Few sociological studies have been conducted on prices in any sector, however, a key finding of the existing literature is that, even within the same organization a variety of strategies can be used (*Uzzi, B., & Lancaster, R., 2004; Zbaracki, M. J. & Bergen, M., 2006; Eccles, R.G. & White, H.C. , 1988*). Recent studies that examine prices from a sociological perspective find that prices are determined by the integration of the transaction relationship (*Uzzi and Lancaster, 2004*) and the concerns of status since the price often points to a company’s niche market (*Podolny, J.M., 2005*). Therefore, artist price decisions can vary and the artistic price is influenced by the organization’s context, social relationships and concerns for status.

The study of art prices is an emerging literature among European sociologists (*Moulin, R., 1987, Bonus, H., & Ronte, D., 1997; Candela and Scorcu, 2001, Rengers, M. & Velthuis, O., 2002*). The study of *Moulin (1987)* on the French art market suggests that the price is rarely determined by production costs, such as the artist's labour and the cost of materials. *Moulin* examines the price of paints in different market segments. For what is called 'trash' paint (which is sold on sidewalks and souvenir shops), the price level is established based on what buyers are willing to pay. Therefore, in this market segment, a determining factor in price is the type of neighbourhood in which the work is sold; the rich pay more than others for garbage. On the contrary, established painting, known as "old masters", is considered an investment. Factors such as limited supply and artist prestige influence the price in this segment. For what is called "trash" paint (which is sold on sidewalks and souvenir shops), the price level is established based on what buyers are willing to pay. Therefore, in this market segment, a determining factor in price is the type of neighbourhood in which the work is sold; the rich pay more than others for garbage. On the contrary, established painting, known as "old masters", is considered an investment. Factors such as limited supply and artist prestige influence the price in this segment. Auctions are one of the main means of selling an established painting, so the final price depends on the amount a person is willing to pay to win his competitor (*Moulin, 1987*), and the legitimacy for this evaluation method is built within the auction community (*Smith, 1989*).

Contemporary art is a third segment which, according to *Moulin (1987)*, is different from "unwanted" or "established painting". In contrast to the painting market, the offer of a contemporary painting is unlimited while artists continue to create new works of art. The question is due in large part to the critical judgments and purchase choices of art collectors and key museums. It is usually sold by distributors inside the galleries, the production costs of the gallery (rent, acquisition costs, advertising) are taken into consideration in the price. Buyers tend to consider the competition and reputation of a distributor, as well as the price as a quality indicator. As in the markets of other goods (*Podolny, 2005*), the price is used to report quality to buyers. *Moulin (1987)* argues that traders are very resistant to falling prices, as buyers tend to associate price with aesthetic value.

The innovative study by *Velthuis (2005)* on pricing decisions taken by gallery owners in New York and Amsterdam, finds that contemporary art distributors make decisions based on what he calls “*price scripts*”, which simplify the decision to set prices applying a set of rules. When working with a new artist, the typical screenplay is to set low prices and consider the work of comparable artists. For the more established artists, the script implies establishing the current level of prices based on previous prices. The owners of the galleries tend to increase prices when demand is high, as when the last show of the artist has run out; periodically, as every year; or based on reputation, as when the artist receives critical criticism. Velthuis believes that price scripts used by gallery owners are complemented by reference values that provide numerical values for certain types of decisions, such as conventional minimum prices for certain types of media and some dimensions of works. In the Dutch art market, dimensions and means have been identified as determining the price within the working body of an artist, although the characteristics of the work of art do not explain the differences between the artists (*Rengers and Velthuis, 2002*).

Although ambitious in its scope, the existing literature does not investigate the price decisions of the artists themselves. Previous research has found that even when sales are mediated by a third party, artists often influence the decisions of gallery owners and museum curators (*Ridgeway, 1989, Greenfeld, L., 1988*). In the lower price markets, many private sales are made between artists and customers or directly in art festivals and alternative exhibition spaces. How do artists make decisions in these contexts? Do artists include production costs when they take their pricing decisions into consideration? Even if distributors rarely lower prices, do the artists do? Do artists in peripheral markets follow the same screenplays as distributors in elite markets? In examining the decisions on the prices of the creators of art, this paper attempts to fill this gap in the existing literature.

Both the general literature on prices and the emerging literature on the price of art can make two important conclusions. First of all, there are a variety of ways in which people make price decisions. Secondly, despite the diversity of possible pricing strategies, participants in economic exchanges tend to rely on certain conventions (scripts or general rules) to establish prices. A review of the literature reveals that few studies have examined the

prices of individual entrepreneurs, while many examine the price behaviour of organizations. Moreover, when considering studies about price, in art markets, it emerges from a point of view of distributors, rather than artists. This study therefore tries to contribute to the sociological literature on price fixing through an analysis of the decisions made by individuals involved in the production and distribution of cultural objects.

Methodology

The analysis in this document is based on 53 in-depth interviews with visual artists conducted between February 2017 and April 2018. The artists interviewed met three general criteria. They identified themselves as visual artists, worked in the same town located in Kampala city, Jinja town and have sold or are actively trying to sell their art.

The artists were identified using a theoretically informed sample with multiple entry points. The artists have been contacted in a variety of artistic events: in addition to openings in commercial and nonprofit galleries, contacts have been established at outdoor art festivals and open studio events have been organized. Others have been contacted through their websites or after viewing the works exhibited in nontraditional settings, such as hotels, bars and empty showcases. Using the theoretical sampling logic (*Glaser, B., & Strauss, A., 1967*), after each interview the artists were asked to recommend other local artists whom they thought were in a different professional phase or took a different approach to sell and fixing prices. Interviews were conducted with the recommended ones. Through this process, a high level of variation was achieved within a small sample.

The interviews were semi-structured and ranged from 45 minutes to 2 hours, with a duration of over an hour. The following analysis is based on the answers to the following open questions from the interview: When was the last time you sold a work of art? Have you decided on the price? How did you decide the price? Was this transaction typical of the other times you sold your work? How do you usually evaluate your work today?

In addition to the interview data, the analysis is based on interviews with representatives of 10 local, commercial and nonprofit galleries and 18 months of fieldwork in the local art in Kampala & Jinja, from October 2015 to March 2017.

The Ugandan Local Art Market

Ugandan art is predominantly produced using traditional art, modern and contemporary art practices. Majority of Ugandan visual artists, employ traditional and contemporary techniques in producing artworks that they sell in the local markets through art fairs/exhibitions and in galleries, categorised as either contemporary art, traditional art or tourist art. This study, focussed on findings in price decisions in Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA) & Jinja town local art markets, basing on interviews with selected visual Ugandan artists.

Kampala

The Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA) had a population that exceeded 750,000 people in 2010, as measured by the 2002 national census. For a city of its size, GKMA has a vibrant visual arts scene. It attracts artists and art organizations largely due to the beauty of the good natural climate, landscape and human resource.

Kampala city is recognized as a national centre for the arts in Uganda, overflowing with many talented, professional and upcoming artists whose traditional and modern art production techniques depict rich artistic elements suitable for aesthetic and utilitarian purposes to a wide range of audiences both locally and internationally. There are ingredients of rich traditional cultural attachments and identities realised through the items produced and preserved for future generations to come. Sculptures, paintings, pottery and local crafts which are traditional produced are consumed as aesthetic or utilitarian items by the communities and buyers who appreciate them.

The art climate in the 1990s, brought about the emergency of commercial art galleries in Kampala. Gallery café and Tulifanya gallery were among the first popular galleries in Uganda established in the 1990s that collected artists' works which were thought to be marketable and hence promoted. Umoja art gallery and Design Agenda among others, also opened their doors to receive new emerging artists as well as promoting the old artists in the field of art. Other commercial art points that later on sprung up, alongside gallery exhibitions, were Organised out-door exhibitions such as the MishMash open garden exhibition which was sponsored by Orange Uganda (now Africel Uganda) that, operated once a month, then the Fireworks

Annual Art Exhibition also organized by Fireworks Advertising Agency and the Signature Art Exhibition which is sponsored by several top-notch corporate companies.

Jinja

The 2002 national census estimated that the population of Jinja was 71,213, including 36,325 men and 34,888 women. In 2010, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) estimated the population at 82,800. Jinja town, situated in Eastern Uganda, has cultural and traditional sites, water and sports activities around the source of River Nile which provide a source of artistic inspiration and painting themes for artists living and working there. The construction of luxurious hotels and beach resorts along the river source has also contributed to the rise in tourism for both local and international visitors, giving birth to a vibrant tourist art industry and handicraft production in Jinja. Furthermore, Jinja is among Uganda's most popular vacation destinations, drawing both local and international visitors who visit the source of the Nile, Bugyagali falls, boat rides, forest walks or rides and exotic ethnic / cultural sites.

However, Jinja is not recognized as a national centre for the arts. In a region of the country historically known as 'home for the source of the River Nile', Jinja is on the sidelines. While some local artists have representation in major national and international markets, most of the artists studied here show and sell their work locally and in other peripheral markets.

As art markets, Kampala & Jinja are not extremely expensive. In fact, art in this context can be devalued simply because it is not created and sold in an elite market (*Rengers and Velthuis, 2002*). A visitor can enter a gallery and see the original art that sells for a few Uganda shillings. Depending on the gallery, typical prices range between Uganda shillings 3000/- 50,000, 100,000/- and up to 500,000/-, with 1,000,000/= the ceiling of the price found for some contemporary art works (and above one million, depending on other factors such as size, expense & status). The main exception is the regional niche of the 'commissioned art' that has a higher price. Many artists in the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA), and more so in Jinja, are new and have difficulty in art marketing. This is common for the upcoming artists who are just getting into the commercial art market. As a result, they are different in terms of the experience of selling their work and the types of

places they have shown. Many of their art works are displayed in alternative spaces, as well as in local galleries. Only a handful of artists interviewed have an agent or an exclusive relationship with an art-dealer or distributor.

Both Kampala and Jinja are known for their realism, abstract and semi-abstract art. While these genres are popular, one can find many types of visual art. The most frequently used genre however is 'realism'. Majority of visual art is represented realistically in paintings because of the typical perspective of the consumer towards a definition of art as something that is recognizable. One artist pointed out that "people come up with the idea that true art resembles the real object", and that's it's a good thing for an object to be represented in 'photographic' quality (*Interview*). The spectators of this art can easily and immediately understand what the paintings represent, with three most frequently used groups of paintings, in the body of art produced and sold, namely, a), local traditional activities (traditional dancers, homesteads, subsistence farming and local trade), b), landscapes (mountains and rivers), and c), wildlife (lions, elephants, and monkeys).

Recognizing the convenience of both GKMA & Jinja town, graduates, self-taught artists and other artists from the region - including other parts of the country, have been attracted to produce and trade their art in these places. In terms of style, there is a significant variation.

The artists

The variation was sought through the sampling strategy and it was achieved. Among the artists interviewed, 32 were women and 21 were men. Their age varied between 22 and 70 years. Most were permanent residents of GKMA & Jinja, though some moved from other parts of the country. Two-dimensional and three-dimensional artists were represented. Majority were painters, using mediums like watercolour, oil and acrylic. Ten art works were best described as mixed media; four focused on crafts and three on ceramics; and six were mainly sculptors.

Although all the interviewed people identified themselves artists, they varied according to whether they earned their living through art. While 32 were employed full-time as artists, more than half had additional sources of family income. Another 14 were maintained through a combination of the sale of works of art and worked in fields related to art, including work in

galleries, workshops, graphics production and teaching. Seven of the artists had daily jobs not related to art or were merely engaged in educating the youth.

The artists interviewed sold their artwork at a variety of prices. About a quarter usually sold artworks for less than shillings 3000/-. Eighteen had prices between shillings 3000/- and 50,000/-. Another ten had prices between shillings 30,000/- and 100,000/-. While many of the artists had sold work for over shillings 175,000/-, none charged most of the artworks above this benchmark. Some had made bigger installations or public art projects with prices much higher than their typical artworks.

What the artists had in common was that they actively participated in the sale of their artworks. Few had exclusive agents or relationships with art dealers. As a result, they were involved in both the production, distribution and marketing of their artworks. In most cases, artists made price decisions or they did it in collaboration with gallery representatives.

Configuration and Relational Methods

From the onset of the interview process, it was clear that the artists that were spoken to, addressed prices in various ways. No evaluation formulas merged. To make sense of diversity, the study took an inductive approach to identify and classify different pricing styles. The transcripts of the interviews were coded to identify the factors considered by each artist in their decision. Subsequently, the factors were grouped according to substantial knowledge (*Ragin, C.C., 2000*). Through this process, the most common decisional elements were identified, which allowed the creation of a data matrix of common price elements by individual artists. The matrix indicated the presence or absence of a price setting element in the price decision of each artist.

To help describe the variety of pricing decisions, the study analysed the data matrix using two types of formal analysis, Correspondence Analysis (CA) and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). These different approaches to data analysis have characteristics that can be usefully integrated (*Breiger, R. L., 2004*). The CA was used for the first time to analyse the relationship between the elements of price decisions (*Sonnett, 2004*). CA allows portraying two or more types of entities in the same visual space

(Breiger, R. L., 2000). In the results that follow, the elements of price decisions were examined with respect to each other and to the cases (the artists) that embodied these elements.

The study also used the QCA techniques to discover empirical types (Ragin, 2000). This method strives to integrate the features of case-oriented research into medium to large sample size studies. The goal is to compare cases with complete entities, described by function configurations. This approach distinguishes QCA from other statistical methods that focus on the relationship between variables (Ragin, C.C., 1987). By adopting a case-oriented approach, QCA uses Boolean methods of logical comparison to examine and simplify complex patterns of variable configurations. The results specify the minimum number of configurations needed to logically cover all the cases in the data.

QCA is useful for the inductive discovery of empirical types. According to Ragin (1987), typologies allow researchers to locate case positions within a multidimensional attribute space. The empirical typologies allow the identification of attributes or characteristics that tend to appear together within the cases. In this study, an empirical type consists of a combination of elements combined in the decision to evaluate an artist. Therefore, the study conceptualized the styles of pricing decisions as configurations of price items that generally appear together. A further strength of QCA is that it explains the absence of attributes. Therefore, QCA allows the identification of price items that are not in a particular decision style, together with the included elements.

Elements of Price Decisions

Unlike the elite markets where the retailer or the often-defined price gallery representative (Velthuis, 2005), artists working in Kampala & Jinja indicate that they usually make price decisions themselves. Majority exhibit in places where no one else has commented on prices, such as bars, hotels and restaurants, open websites and art fairs. When viewed in a gallery, some visual artists make price decisions in consultation with the gallery representative, but the final decision usually depends on the artist. Interviews with local gallery representatives confirmed that this is standard practice, even if they encourage an artist to change prices if prices are considered inappropriate.

Most galleries also dictate that an artist's prices should be consistent across galleries and other places. Artists have described prices as a difficult decision, even for those who have sold their artworks for many years. As artists who had made a living through art for years, they deduce that: "a price is more an art form than the art itself" (*interview*).

While individual reports of price decisions varied, all the interviewed visual artists based their pricing decisions on at least one of the following general elements: the size of the work; expenses related to the creation or sale of work; market factors, such as the demand; status factors, usually in terms of the artist's reputation; and the value of the work estimated by the artist (*see Table 1*).

Table 1: Common elements contained in price decisions

Decision element	Examples	No. of cases
Size	Prices per square inch	37
	Higher prices for larger jobs	
Expenses	Time / work	38
	Material	
	Framing costs	
Market	What the market will have	40
	Increases based on demand	
Status	Revenue based on reputation	31
	Prices based on the perceived value of the media	
Pricing by artist's perception	How good was the second job the artist and/or his close collaborators	32

The five elements mentioned, do not exhaust all the factors considered in price decision. For instance, the price of some artists, their artworks are based on the belief that art must be accessible. Others make price decision where the artworks were created or what the works represent in the price. For each of the five elements, there are some artists who may find it difficult to adopt them. A brief description of each of these five elements of price decisions is discussed below.

As other studies have found (*Velthuis, 2005; Rengers and Velthuis, 2002*), the size of an artwork is a common factor in price decisions. While most follow the general rule that larger jobs should be more expensive, some artists use a more precise “square inch” method. For example, a painting that measures 24 inches and 30 inches would be Shillings 240,000/- if it is priced at ten thousand shillings, per square inch. Some artists use this method, but most of those who refer to prices in square inches find it problematic. In the artist’s experience, the formula exceeds the prices of larger works or is not suitable for their environment. Among the minority of artists who do not mention the size, it is still recognized as a standard practice. These artists have often indicated that the choice to overcome this convention requires an explanation to the gallery owners and potential buyers.

Most visual artists used shopping as a factor in their pricing decisions. Production costs, including framing and merger costs, were generally considered in the price. Others also considered the cost of materials, particularly when they work using expensive media, such as commercial brand artists paints and canvases. When art is shown in other towns and beyond, some artists consider the cost of shipping their artworks. Only a few calculate the costs of their works. Among those who consider the cost of labour, none takes a strong position on the theory of labour value. These artists are willing to exploit themselves by labelling some hours worked as ‘billable’ and others as ‘research’. Although the study found out that a handful of artists vehemently believed in the fairness of the use of expenses to calculate the price, others explicitly stated that spending should never be a consideration. The absence of expenses as a factor was particularly common among artists who focused primarily on reputation or status in the art world as the main criteria for determining the price.

Within the artistic community, there are recognized results that confer a status on an artist and his work. Some artists base prices on these results, for example by increasing prices after showing them in the respected galleries or after examining or including the artworks of the main collectors. To cultivate relationships with collectors, several artists indicated that they had granted discounts to well-known collectors to strengthen their relationship. Some artists also referred to a hierarchy of status based on the type of medium. For example, among the paintings, oil is considered more valuable than other

media. The paintings made on canvas are more precious than those on paper. The study found out that a status ranking of the used media frequently influenced the pricing decision. Market factors were also mentioned by majority of artists. A well-known local painter, an owner of a company that is not tied to the arts before devoting himself entirely to art, believed that price fixing “*simply implies determining what the market can support*” (interview). Not all artists had used that economic language, but many had referred to the price increase based on demand, for instance, when an art work is sold at a show or if they had problems replacing the artwork sold in the galleries. Others analysed comparable labour prices to get an idea of acceptable prices, particularly labour prices that had been sold. Although many had indicated that market factors may have caused them to raise prices, most did not decrease prices when demand decreased, an observation that was also made in the art elite markets (Velthuis, 2005). It is not common to lower prices, because it is believed that the price points to the value of labour. Price reductions devalue art. However, some artists will offer work at ‘selling prices’, especially in older pieces, some even come to draw attention to discounted items with coloured stickers

.Most artists claimed to have discounted prices for reasons unrelated to supply and demand. In particular, most employ a sort of ‘discount for good friends’ in which they charge less to close friends and family. Even those who avoid discounts still make exceptions. One of the artist explained that he gives a “*high price to my mother, close relatives who have done wonderful things for my mother and the person with whom I am currently living with*” (interview).

The majority of the artists mentioned their estimate of the value of labour as a price factor. Some artists decide that some jobs are simply better than others and therefore deserve a higher price. These artists recognize that evaluating their work in this way is subjective. As artists, they are willing to trust their aesthetic sensibilities. They believe they know good work when they see it. For example, the prices of a sculptor working with ‘*dynamics*’ higher than other works of the same size that are ‘*acceptable*’ only, thus creating a price range for each dimension within the body of work.

Not all artists rely on their ability to determine which pieces are better than others and, therefore, deserve a higher price. In some cases, artists

evaluate their work through interaction with other people close to them, such as friends, partners, teachers and other artists. Several artists have set up a new working group and have trusted consultants offering opinions on prices, also referring to this practice as '*hosting price list*'. While many artists consider aesthetic value in their pricing decisions, it is noteworthy that others strongly reject this criterion. These artists advance their argument that the price based on aesthetic value is a novice mistake because the new artists think that each new piece is "*their best work*" (*field notes*) and, therefore, priceless. From their point of view, mature artists should set prices based on status and other accepted criteria in art marketing.

Relationships between the price elements

As shown in Table 2 and discussed in the previous section, most artists used more than one element when setting the price of their artworks. In fact, only four used only one of the five elements. In summary, 20 of the 32 possible combinations or configurations of elements were used by the 53 interviewed artists. This variety of answers reveals accounts of individual artists on their current pricing decisions to explore the relationship between the price elements contained in the decisions. In this section, the study analysed the relationships between the elements of pricing using the results of a CA, a technique useful for visually examining positions within a cultural field (*Bourdieu, P., 1984*). The study also analysed empirical types of pricing decisions based on configurations of the five price elements using the results of the QCA and put these empirical types in the field of price elements represented in CA.

Pricing as a domain

To examine the relationship between the elements, the study made a CA based on disjunctive coding of the interview data as shown in Table 2.

The chosen encoding creates a matrix that includes variables that were inverse to those contained in the original data matrix and is the protocol appropriate for correspondence analysis that includes individuals, also known as multiple correspondence analysis (*Le Roux, B., & Rouanet, H., 2004*). In this case, it is similar to that described in the Table 2 matrix, but the elements indicating prices that are absent in each case (i.e., price decision of each artist). The artists are contained in the rows and the price

elements in the columns and a 1 indicates the absence of the element. This method is particularly useful for this analysis, as price decisions are characterized by the missing assessment elements, as well as by the elements included in the decision. That is, disjunctive coding helps to show what configurations of elements reject artists. It also allows you to interpret the results together with the result of the QCA analysis discussed later in this section.

Table 2 Price styles as configurations of decision elements

Size	Expenses	Market	Status	Value to artist	Number of cases
1	1	1	0	1	7
1	0	1	1	0	6
1	1	1	1	1	6
0	1	1	1	1	5
1	1	1	0	0	5
1	1	0	0	1	3
1	1	0	1	1	3
0	0	0	1	1	2
0	1	0	0	0	2
1	0	1	1	1	2
1	1	0	1	0	2
1	1	1	1	0	2
0	0	0	0	1	1
0	0	1	0	0	1
0	0	1	1	0	1
0	0	1	1	1	1
0	1	1	0	0	1
0	1	1	0	1	1
0	1	1	1	0	1
1	0	1	0	1	1

The number of existing configurations: 20; Number of cases: 53.

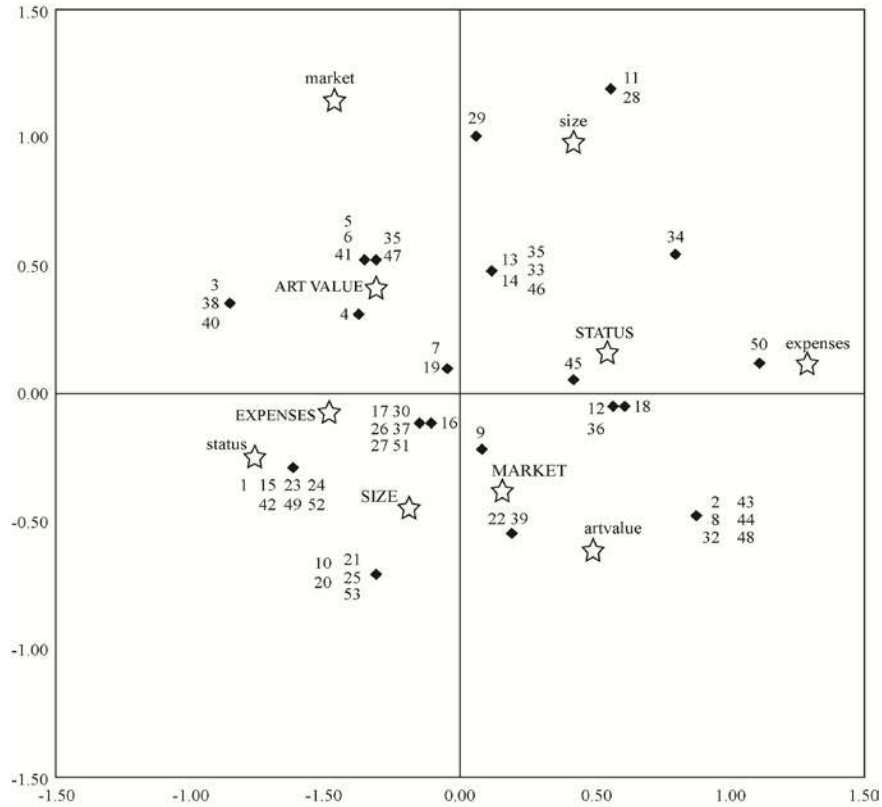


Fig. 1. The structure of pricing decisions. *Note:* price elements that are uppercased are present in a decision. Price elements in lowercase letters are absent from a decision. The location of the individual artists is indicated by a diamond and is labelled with a case identification number

The diamonds indicate the position of the artists in relation to the price elements, with the case number assigned to each artist, indicated next to the position. Various relationships between the price elements are illuminated. The presence of expenses and the size are found in the lower left quadrant of the figure. The angle between expense and size and origin (the centre point) is small, suggesting that these two elements are related. This is not surprising, given that in interviews many artists, though not all, indicate that they accept the size convention because larger works require more materials and more time investment.

In contrast to the close relationship between expense and size, some of the other elements are almost opposite to each other, as shown by an angle close to 180° between the price and origin elements. In particular, the presence of the artistic value, which is the estimate of the value of the work of an artist, is contrary to the presence of market factors, such as prices based on demand. An artist's esteem is often based on personal aesthetic criteria and an intimate knowledge of one's own abilities. On the contrary, taking into account market factors, the merchandising process is highlighted by creating a work of art commensurate with other works or even other consumer goods. This result of Analysis of correspondence reveals two poles similar to the distinction between *Podolny, J.M., & Hill-Popper, M. (2004)* between a hedonistic conception of value and a transcendent conception of value.

Based on *Podolny & Hill-Popper (2004)* conceptually distinguish the conceptions of the value of competition. With a hedonistic conception of value: "*the perception of a consumer of the value of an exchange offer depends on how that offer directly compares with other offers of exchange in a set of abstract dimensions*" (*Podolny & Hill-Popper, ibid, p.94*). Evaluation involves the consumer as a judge, dividing the object into key attributes, each of which can be evaluated and summarized. The ideal-typical hedonic evaluation is when a consumer magazine classifies a product in multiple dimensions and adds the scores into a general classification for the product. The hedonic value implies the use of a common metric to compare different entities, or what *Espel and, W. N., & Stevens, M. L. (1998)* call the social process of censorship.

In contrast to the hedonic conception, it is a transcendent conception of value "*when the corresponding value derives exchange depends on the extent to which each is invested in an advantageous position with respect to the other is from the object*" (*Podolny & Hill-Popper, ibid, p .94*). Value is created by reducing the social distance between the consumer and the producer. The transcendent evaluation tends to be holistic. When artists base their price on their perception of value, they are indicating that their privacy and connection with work gives them the ability to value. By setting prices this way, artists assume that buyers will be willing to pay more for a job creator to consider higher than other jobs of the same size and media.

Other price elements that are almost opposite in the analysis of correspondence are status and the expenses. Based on interviews and fieldwork, I interpret them as different orientations for creating art. Cost-based pricing is a handmade method, similar to other hand-made products. On the contrary, prices are based on the utilization factors of status recognized in the world of contemporary art. In sectors where it is difficult for customers to determine the actual quality of the goods or services offered, status can be used as the quality of the signal (*Podolny, J.M., 1993*). This has been observed in sectors ranging from investment banking to wine (*Benjamin, B.A. & Podolny, J.M., 1999*), and was also observed in art markets (*Velthuis, 2005; Fine, G.A., 2004*). The analysis of correspondence suggests a dimension that varies from one orientation of the vessel to one end and an artistic orientation from the other.

While Fig. 1 suggests the key dimensions of variation, considerable complexity remains. If more visual artists rated the contemporary art marketing way, the size would be closer to status correlated with the expenses, since size is one of the benchmark values used in the elite art markets (*Velthuis, 2005*). If the artists followed the price of distributors, the status should also be contrary to the perception of the value of the artist, as based on subjective evaluations of quality in the main markets prices to be avoided. These results indicate that many artists in Kampala & Jinja do not follow the rules of the elitist art world.

In some cases, non-compliance is the result of an artist who is new to the art world. A Jinja artist who is now represented by an art dealer in a Kampala city, talked about his first price errors. When he first started, he thought of each new piece as 'his baby'. Later, when he served as director of an art gallery, he saw many new artists making the same mistakes, whether to think of each job as a precious child or focusing on the costs associated with creating jobs. His confidence in prices based on the status, which he called 'perceived value', was strengthened by his experience with the administration of the gallery:

The real value is materials & time. You know, all the numbers you can add, two plus two [are] four. And the perceived value is where you showed? Who represents you? Which collections [includes your work]?. This is what gives you the security of giving a price to your work. And this is what makes the

difference for an artist who understands it. But an artist who perceives a work of art as “a masterpiece” and “it’s my child”. They do not understand that they have to build a career so that they can have a higher perceived value instead of real value (Interview).

From the interviews, it is also clear that some artists knew the rules, but they consciously made different decisions about how things were done in larger markets. In fact, many artists were concerned about the status and used the size convention, but they could not avoid the possibility of selling works of art at a price lower than that spent on materials or the production process. They were concerned with the criteria in the art world, but at the end of the day, they could also balance their current accounts. Some preferred to keep a painting rather than selling it for less than the cost of materials. Other artists were part of the local contemporary art scene, but some were not willing to submit to all conventions, for example by ignoring their sense of value for a particular piece.

Model of pricing styles

Since many artists combine two or more common price items when making a decision, pricing decisions can be described in terms of combinations or configurations of items. Although 32 (for example, 2), configurations of the five elements were possible, there were actually 20 configurations in the price accounts of the interviewed artists. These were shown in Table 2. Compared to the possible number of configurations, this was a limited diversity. However, the presence of 20 different combinations indicates that there was no uniform or regulatory approach to pricing among artists in Kampala & Jinja. The data in Table 2 also indicate that the most common configurations contained three or more elements, suggesting that art prices often implied multiple criteria.

To make sense of the diversity of pricing decisions, the study constructed empirical types, in which a type consisted of a combination of conditions that appeared together in one or more cases (*Ragin, 1987*). In order to reduce the number of configurations describing price styles, an analysis of the configurations is shown in Table 2 using a precise qualitative comparative analysis. For each case, the result was coded as ‘1’, because each case is a decision to set prices. The elements for each case were coded with ‘1’ if present or with ‘0’ if it did not exist. The data table was imported into the

fsQCA program and analysed using the Quine-McClusky fine-tuning algorithm. This analysis reduces the number of configurations, logically determining the minimum number of configurations needed to cover all cases.

When interpreting QCA results, the “+” sign indicates logical OR and the “*” sign indicates logical AND. The conditions present in a configuration are indicated by capital letters and conditions that are absent within a configuration are indicated by lowercase letters. The brittle-set solution follows:

- EXPENSES*MARKET+
- MARKET*STATUS+
- size*MARKET*artvalue+
- SIZE*EXPENSES*STATUS+
- SIZE*EXPENSES*ARTVALUE+
- SIZE*MARKET*ARTVALUE+
- size*EXPENSES*status*artvalue+
- size*expenses*market*ARTVALUE

The results reveal eight empirical types, which were inserted on separate lines above. The first type is listed in the first line and includes the presence of expenses and market factors in a decision. (The sign “*” means logical AND.) Since the status, size and value of the artist do not appear in this type, these elements may be present or absent for a case that will be described by this type. The ‘+’ sign indicates logical OR, therefore, ‘+’ at the end of the first line means that EXPENDITURE * MARKET is a type, but there are other types. The line that follows, describes the second type which includes the presence of the market and status; The expenses, dimensions and value of the artist may be present or absent because a case falls into this type. Again, the sign ‘+’ which means logical OR indicates that there are other types necessary to cover all cases. Unlike the first two types, some types include the absence of a price element. For example, the third type listed includes the presence of the market element with the absence of reference to the dimensions and the absence of the value for the artist; status and expenses may be present or absent because a case falls into this type, as they are not specified.

With the results of the QCA, it is possible that a particular case is found in more than one of these types. In fact, a third or 18 of the 53 artists belong to the two most common types: MARKET and EXPENSES, and STATUS and MARKET. There is a significant overlap because the results are constructed in such a way that all artists use at least one of these types of decisions. In other words, the types cover all cases. The results also indicate that there is no price element contained in all price types. In other words, there is no element that functions as a necessary condition for a price decision. This provides further evidence that there are no clear pricing rules.

Since the results of the QCA reveal eight types, eight empirical types in the analysis have been overlapped from the previously discussed correspondence. In Fig.2, the types of price styles suggested by QCA are indicated in the same field shown in Fig.1. The circles have been drawn around the cases corresponding to each of the eight types. The circles overlap because some cases can be described as belonging to more than one type of price style.

Two circles in Fig. 2 are drawn with bold dotted lines because they cover a large proportion of cases. The first of these two types is STATUS and MARKET. The second of these two types is MARKET and EXPENSES. Forty-two (42) of the 53 cases belong to one or both types. The remaining 11 cases not included in these two most common types which include ARTVALUE. Therefore, the mapping of QCA results in correspondence analysis suggests three main types: STATUS and MARKET, MARKET and EXPENSES, and ARTVALUE, each of which may or may not be combined with other elements. As claimed by *Ragin, C.C., & Sonnett, J. (2005)*, researchers must find a balance between complexity and parsimony using substantive and theoretical knowledge to simplify QCA results. The simplification of the eight types contained in the three-way QCA solution has substantial validity.

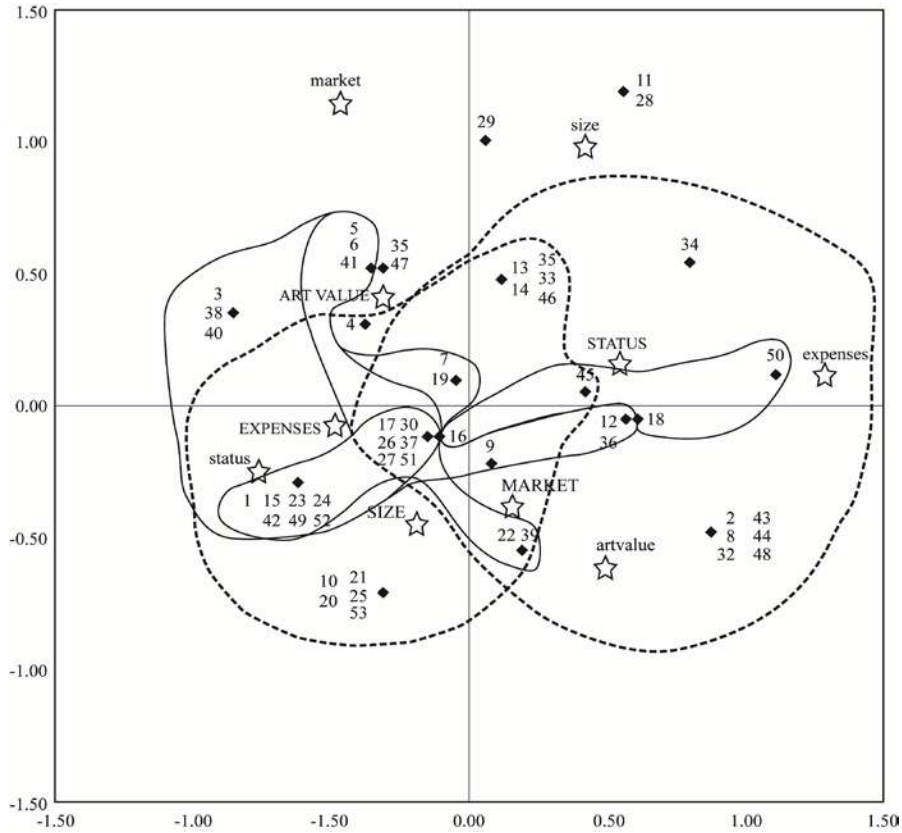


Fig. 2. Price styles in relation to price elements. Note: this is the same correspondence analysis of Fig. 1 with the addition of circles drawn around artists who share a price style. Since an artist's pricing decision can fall into more than one style discovered by the QCA results, the circles overlap.

A price decision can be market-oriented with a traditional approach to taking expenses into consideration. Or a price decision can be market-oriented with a global orientation of art to status. If a decision does not take one or both of these common approaches, it includes the concept of its own value that transcends market-matching processes, incorporating its own assessment of the value of the producer in the decision to set prices. Each of these three types is analysed in more detail in the following sections.

Status and market factors

The STATE and MARKET factors are some of the main criteria used by art distributors in pricing art in elite art markets (Velthuis, 2005). The results of QCA show that even in a peripheral art market these elements are often found to coexist, especially for those artists who sell in the organisational context of art galleries. The following quote from a painter who also supports himself through commercial art illustrates the connection between these two elements:

“[I sold a painting] for four hundred thousand shillings, but it is the market. If you know if the market can support it. I could not have done it several years ago, because I did not have any kind of reputation and they told me: ‘Okay, why is it worth it?’ But now that I did it... I just had more experience. And with the Jinja art studio and with several pieces in Kampala and across [the region], I have a little more weight when it comes to prices. But. When I go to exhibitions, I do not want to be so far from the general price that people do not even see, you know. So, they are probably above average [compared to similar artists]” (Interview).

This artist has supported himself and his family with art for 16 years. When he began to sell his work seriously, he considered that the artworks were good, but it was not established. Now he has his own exhibition space in his bar ‘the office’, that attracts rich visitors from outside Jinja town. He has achieved results that include winning prizes at competitive art fairs and that his work has been bought by several art collectors.

He associates what “the market can sustain” with his reputation as a visual artist. However, he is more skilled than when he started. In art fairs, he tries to stay within the price range of a similar job, so as not to leave the market.

If it is possible to set the price of an art outside the market, it is also possible for an artist to put too low a price to take it seriously. Several artists have suggested that the price itself indicates to potential buyers their reputation and, therefore, the value of art. A sculptor who shows up at outdoor art fairs has experienced the increase in the price of a particular piece. He discovered that if the price increases, it actually generates more interest in the work.

Many artists have mentioned the possibility of diminishing work, valuing it so low that potential buyers do not take it seriously or consider it a respectable art. The owner of a gallery described the following scenario:

“We have had several cases in which people enter and look at a painting. And they say, ‘It’s a beautiful painting!... I love paintings!’ ...I only have the spot for that painting!... It’s just the painting I was looking for!’ And they will approach the painting, then look at the price label and leave,... ‘Oh, it’s only 100,000/-!. I thought it would be 600,000/-’. And then they’ll leave and they’ll never look at that painting again, and what that tells me, is that person is ... a person with a 600,000/- spot on his wall. Many people do not have much confidence or do not really know what good art is against bad art, and if it’s 100,000/-[spot], it should not be that good...Cheap art means poor quality art” (interview)

Market Factors and Expenses

In contrast to the combination of MARKET and STATUS, which is observable in the elite art markets, as well as among some local artists, the combination of MARKET and EXPENSES is a more crafted approach. For example, some of the artists interviewed replicated their work. Each piece was handmade, but they repeatedly used the same design. The artists who replicate their work and therefore adopt a more crafted approach will probably use the STATE and the EXPENSES as factors in price decisions.

The next quote is of an artist who creates decorative and functional art using recycled plastic material. Much of his works are sold wholesale to gift shops and supermarkets within Kampala city, with retailers doubling the wholesale price. Most of his works are sold for less than 10,000/-. Here he analyses the market factors, in particular the demand, combined with the expenses:

“[When the price is fixed] Generally what I do is try to get the lowest amount of money wholesale to get a small profit, and then double it, and that’s what I sell for retail, which is kind of common. But many people find it hard to say that it is very expensive to retail. But if I cut it in half, I will not earn wholesale money. So, if that kind of product works like that, I will simply limit it to liquidating it. I simply will not do it or I will not sell them anymore. It’s not worth it. There’s no profit, but this hat [design] I did, was sold wholesale at

five thousand shillings. And they have been selling out of my work studio at ten thousand shillings and took them to the shop...And I was like, 'You know, maybe I should sell at fifteen thousand [shillings like the retail price]? 'And they were like,...No, twenty thousand [shillings]'

This artist must trust the shops that buy his work to measure demand. Suggesting that the retail price is commonly twice the wholesale price, refers to a convention in the price of consumer goods in general. This makes sense since the organisational context of his sales is within the craft stores. At the same time, this convention is quite similar to the practice of art galleries. Commercial galleries usually take 50% of the sale price of a painting or a sculpture.

Along with demand, expenses are a factor and even influence the choices of some artists on what art to create. The artist usually quotes transport or delivery charges for most of his work, so he avoids bigger and heavy works. He is also working on a project to train some members of his community - especially youth, to make some of their own artistic products. His motivation includes providing his future employees with sustainable income, but also increasing production and keeping costs low.

Value For The Artist

Most artists who do not use the MARKET and STATE and / or MARKET and EXPENSES styles, consider their perception of value when they set the price of their art. The perception of the artist's value is sometimes combined with expense or status factors, but rarely with market considerations. This can be seen by comparing the relatively small angles between ARTVALUE and STATUS or EXPENSES (angles based on the central point (see Fig. 1), compared with the angle close to 180° between ARTVALUE and MARKET.

As discussed above, value-based pricing for the artist and expenses such as materials and labour can be a fledgling pricing strategy. Once an artist is socialized through interaction with other artists or gallery representatives, he often stops using his own sense of aesthetic merit in the pricing decision. When a new artist begins to sell a significant amount of work or gets recognition for his work, he can begin to consider market and status factors instead of his sense of value. In fact, the interviews reveal that prices based on value for the artist are a strategy used by many new artists.

At the same time, other artists who have had long and successful artist careers and who are part of established artistic communities also consider their aesthetic judgment when setting prices. An artist who has been described by others as “the man of town” considers both his own perception of value and his status in setting prices for his sculpture pieces. Over time, he has raised prices while his fame within the local art community has grown. He has served on the boards of numerous nonprofit organizations and organized local art events, which increased his visibility. When asked to explain his decision to raise prices, he replied:

“Reputation, a lot of volunteering, having my name out there in any way. Therefore, more people get to know me about this. They know me through voluntary work activities. So for me, it is advertising through voluntary work. . . [So reputation is the main factor in raising prices?] Yes, it’s an important part of this” (Interview).

This same artist refuses to believe in the dimensions or size of his art works, even if he recognizes the convention. Instead, he decides how good he is at thinking that a certain piece is in consultation his your partner:

“It’s like, well, you can go for the size, like 3000/- per inch, or something of that sort, and I tried a little. And it’s just like this does not work... And I probably price them according to. . .How much I would like to be paid. . . So when customers ask me, I would as in say. . . ‘It’s bigger, but has a lower price?’ It’s because it’s based on how much I like it. And that’s how things cost” (Interview).

Of course, this artist is not a beginner. In fact, he has sold his art for quite a number of years. Therefore, cost based on aesthetic value is sometimes a pricing policy of hipsters, artists who know the conventions of the art world, but who consciously reject some of them (Becker, H.S 1982).

Conclusion

The diversity of price styles shows that there is no uniform price approach between the artists studied. In this context, there are no clear rules on price behaviour. The price of art by artists who market and sell their work is not an institutionalized practice (DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W.W., 1983). Therefore, the results of this study contribute to the growing recognition of

the fact that there is no more than one way to organize economic practices even under the capitalist system itself and in the same field of production and distribution (*Bourdieu, P., 1993; Berk, G., & Schneiberg, M., 2005*).

In addition to cataloguing the diversity of price approaches, artists' explanations of their decisions have been used to examine the relationship between the components of price decisions. Through the objective of a type of entrepreneurial decision, different positions based on sources of competitive legitimacy have been discovered in a field of cultural production (*Bourdieu, 1993*). This analysis revealed two key dimensions of the variation. The first dimension captures alternative conceptions of value. At one end of this dimension, the value is determined in the market. At the other extreme, the value is based on the aesthetic merit determined by the creator of the work. Unlike spending, size and status factors that are more likely to be combined with market concerns, the value of the work for the artist is not correlated with market factors. Estimating the value of an artist is a method of evaluation that transcends the process of measuring the market.

The second dimension of the variation highlights the competitive orientations towards the production and sale of art. At one extreme there is a craft orientation that takes into account the costs, generally the cost of materials and sometimes works. At the other end of this dimension, there is a global orientation of art that incorporates status in the decision to set prices. Prices based on reputation are promoted by many art galleries and are more commonly found among artists oriented towards the fine arts. The analysis also revealed that the most common styles of price decisions combine status factors or expenses with market factors. Increasing prices when demand is strong is an approach adopted by artists with an artistic orientation.

While formal data analysis techniques have revealed patterns and types of price styles, returning to the cases, the actual decisions made by individual artists, it is clear that many fall into more than one type of empirical decision. For some, pride makes it unacceptable to sell a work of art at a price that does not cover the cost of the materials used to produce the art work. At the same time, many artists are aware of the role of status in determining the value of visual art. In fact, they learn about the importance of status-based prices through their relationships with other artists in the art

world. Therefore, many artists really make decisions that combine a craft approach and a global artistic approach. Others believe in price based on reputation or cost function, but reject another convention in the art and craft world: they raise the price when they know that a job is a great artistic achievement. Instead of concluding that the artists simply do not know what they are doing, the results of this study can be taken as evidence to support *Zelizer's* argument (2005a) that economic decisions do not take place in a vacuum separate from the rest of life. Artists lead connected lives. At the end of the day, they should be able to sleep with their pricing decisions.

This study investigated the variety of price styles among artists working in a peripheral market. Future research could investigate the relationship between artists' specific demographic characteristics and types of price styles. Academics studying the artists' business decisions can investigate whether gender, age, duration of artistic career, art school graduates and other demographic characteristics correlate with price styles.

Furthermore, the implications of this study go beyond the question of the price of art. The results show that pricing decisions can be used as a goal to see how multiple motivations come together with the entrepreneurs involved in the creation and sale of their art products. The examination of price styles enlightens both the expressive and the instrumental aspects of economic activity and shows that economic activity is not easily reduced to one or the other. Given the marked increase in the variety of creative products and services available on the market, future entrepreneurship research should be attentive to the challenges faced by those who invest emotionally, physically and psychologically in the creative process and who must then price, to the fruits deriving from their works.

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