

# ENHANCING CREATIVITY FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Edited by

Emily Achieng' Akuno, Simon Peter Otieno & Rachael Anyango Diang'a

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## Preface

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A nation's quest for human development and resource mobilisation is often tackled from various, diverse yet complementary angles. Whereas in Kenya, there has been a perceived rift between the academy and industry in the creative and performance disciplines, the desire for knowledgeable and skilled human resources is voiced in many fora.

The Development of Creativity for Youth Empowerment and Community Development is an initiative that works towards ameliorating the skills deficiency in the creative industry. As a multi-pronged project supported by the National Research Fund, it engages with the needs of industry in order to propose content for training that will help fill this gap. Granted, no single mitigation will be sufficient, because the needs of industry and society are complex, and hence our appreciation that this is one among many projects.

The papers in this publication capture some of the issues under discussion at the Creativity for Youth Empowerment conference hosted by the Technical University of Kenya at the Sarova Panafric Hotel in Nairobi on February 7 - 8 2019. I hope that they will provide knowledge and points of discussion way beyond the conference forum.

**Emily Achieng' Akuno**

*Project Convener.*

I

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# Artist Development for the Industry

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## Reimagining the place of the Kenya National Theatre in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Realities

Fredrick Mbogo

The Technical University, Department of Music and Performing Arts

### Abstract:

This paper traces the origin, and rationale of the Kenya National Theatre. It seeks to understand the metanarrative underscored in the process of creating a national theatre. It problematizes the idea of a national theatre especially within the historical meeting points that Kenya is presented with – from a colony to an independent state. Such questions as, “Who performs at the national theatre? What do they perform? For whom do they perform?” are interpreted within concerns of “Who decides what is to be performed? Are there censorship concerns? What is the place of politics in the performance tradition at the Kenya National Theatre?” A historical replay on Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s “rehearsals” of his play *I will Marry When I want* are juxtaposed with Francis Imbuga’s self-reflexive postulations in his *Shrine of Tears*. The slippery nature of power and how that destabilizes how a career or vocation in theatre arts is inspected through a play on Jacques Derrida’s theories of deconstruction. To what extent are the realities of a perceived 21<sup>st</sup> century performance tradition important in negating or affirming a maintained idea of a national theatre?

### Introduction

The Kenya National Theatre came into being through a parliamentary intervention (Cap 218 of 1951), which established the Kenya Cultural Centre under whose wing a theatre building whose doors were opened to audiences on November 6<sup>th</sup> 1952 was constructed. In the words of Annabel Maule (2004), “The National Theatre had been conceived in March 1946.” The story of the national theatre’s birth is given with the ending of second world war in mind: its setting up was part of a plan toward the provision of entertainment for soldiers who had retired to Nairobi. In *Performing Power*, Odera Outa (2009) shows how “The Kenya National Theatre (KNT) remained one of those glaring contradictions in so far as it was perceived to be serving foreign, specifically, British interests...” Indeed, the Kenya National Theatre has come to be seen as a site for the contest of power as suggested in the cover page and title of Kimani Njogu’s et al (2008) *(Re)claiming Performance Space in Kenya* – a photo of the Kenya National Theatre is given, perhaps as a suggestion of that “space” that needs reclaiming.

One can argue that the National Theatre’s location is not an accident given, as Ngweni (2016) has shown of spaces in Nairobi town, that the part of city it occupies was a restricted area where black Africans were not allowed to walk about “aimlessly”- in the 1940s and during the Mau Mau Emergency years of the 1950s. The idea that “Nairobi is often, even today, referred to as a European city,” brings to the fore the problem of ownership. Whose is the National Theatre? How comfortable should an ordinary citizen feel on Harry Thuku road with the University of Nairobi, as a bastion of knowledge, and the central police station, and its suggestion of force, as well as the Norfolk Hotel, a site for the affluent? The Kenya National Theatre is also next to the Kenya Broadcasting Station, whose influence as a government communication tool may have been compromised by the growth of the internet and the 1990s liberalization of the airwaves in Kenya, but which still remains one of the major public infrastructures for the disbursement of information.

Mshai Mwangola (2008), in a paper titled “Njia Panda: Kenyan Theatre in Search of Identity” explores the idea that the physical space in which the Kenya National Theatre building is located is a site “performing the tensions and conflicts inherent...in the making of a Kenyan identity.” While Mwangola (ibid) acknowledges that Harry Thuku road is “a cultural hub” given the proximities of the University of Nairobi, Kenya National Theatre, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation leading up to the National Museums of Kenya on Museum hill, and also Kijabe Street, which is Nairobi’s “Publisher’s Row” due to the big number of publishers stationed there, the road’s historical significance as a “headquarters of efforts to turn the Kenya colony into an independent “White Man’s country” in the model of (apartheid) South Africa and Rhodesia” in the late 1940s and early 1950s cannot be ignored.

If from the beginning, the building has been embroiled in ceaseless questions of contestation, in terms of who should approach it based on race, due to its location as seen in the 1940s and 1950s, and also who can mount a performance on its stage, due to the hefty charges for the hiring of its space, how then can it inspire a “national” feeling where every other Kenyan feels part of? Having been ascribed the “National Theatre” status, how can the theatre foster a need for the nurturing of talent so that young upcoming theatre practitioners can feel they are part of its narrative?

### Should the National Theatre be a building?

In a retelling of his theatre experience with the people of Kamirithu in Limuru, Ngugi wa Thiong'o goes into details about his struggles to stage the play *I will Marry When I want* at the Kenya National Theatre. African Theatre practitioners in the 1970s could not understand why they could not be allowed access to the Kenya National Theatre in a fashion that didn't seem disparaging. This led to "heated debates" according to Ngugi which,

...climaxed in racial violence in 1976 when one expatriate white lady had her nose bloodied by a black actor after she had called him a black bastard. The police came but in the identification parade she could not make out one African face from another. Seth Adagala, the director of the Kenya Festac 77 Drama Group, and I were later summoned to the CID headquarters after complains by the leader of the European Amateur Groups that we were interfering with the success of their theatrical enterprises...

How could a space named "National" be a source for such pain in a newly independent country like Kenya? This is unless we take into account that the building of the Kenya National Theatre and so much of its maintenance at the time was reliant on the British Council. Did it really belong to the African people of independent Kenya? And has it ever belonged to these people? Perhaps, as is suggested in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's plays, and writing, the Kenya National Theatre, and indeed much of what Kenya was and possibly is, has remained in the control of a clique of people who have deep reverence for the former colonialist. The neocolonial tag on Kenya therefore is manifest in this hopeless situation where ordinary citizens are mere cogs in a wheel controlled by forces beyond them; how then can they be represented in such institutions as the Kenya National Theatre?

It is easy to argue that currently, the Kenya National Theatre, as a space for performance, hosts a number of performances that are by the Africans, who formerly were restricted from this "snob" area of town and that therefore there is no cause for concern. The management of the theatre, which comes under a board running the Kenya Cultural Center, and an administration headed by a Director, is made up mostly of African theatre practitioners. To that extent, it is easy to suggest that the theatre is not under any perceived "neocolonial" interests. But as is discussed further in this paper, there is cause for concern over issues to do with access to the institution, in terms of hiring charges that must be paid by those hoping to stage plays at the theatre.

The problem with the Kenya National Theatre as has been pointed out by Mwangola (2008) and Ouda (2009) among others is that it has been seen as a symbol for those in power. To be in charge of the Kenya National Theatre is to be in control of the discourse that art generates. This means that for Ngugi wa Thiong'o to have hoped that *I will Marry When I want* would be staged at the Kenya National Theatre, while it was a critical assessment of how leaders in independent Kenya had participated in the oppression of their own people, was to be naïve. Subsequent Moi era censorship tendencies, as Ouda (2009) has documented, are in tandem with the argument that the Kenya National Theatre has been a site for the projection of only that kind of performance that would not challenge the status quo.

There are other theatre spaces in Kenya too which have had a great impact on the discourses that theatre contributes to the nation. Many of them are based on premises run by institutions out to promote foreign nations, such as the Goethe Institute for the Germans, Alliance Francaise for the French and the British Council for Britain. Many others are funded by organizations that present themselves as global, but which come with agenda that might not necessarily be local. This means that theatre in such spaces might be limited in how far it can go in terms of engaging audiences on what may be deemed the most pressing issues in society. In any case, as Ouda (2009) has shown, in a chapter he titles "The Neocolonial Edifice", spaces such as the French Cultural Center, while on the one hand seemingly providing necessary space for local production houses to stage their work under sponsorship or subsidy for the hiring of the stage and auditorium, are merely a part of, in the case with France "Resurrecting France's World Role."

In the post-Kamirithu theatre, as Ndigirigi (2014) has observed, there came a "dearth of theatre practitioners willing to take the kind of risks that Ngugi took with his art and life in the 1970s and 80s." Instead, there was an upsurge in the commercialization of theatre, so that practitioners in their quest at escaping the sharp tentacles of the censorship bodies preferred a theatre was not political, and that dwelled on social issues. Many of these theatrical endeavors were hosted in these foreign backed venues. They attracted a stream of audiences into auditoriums with stage plays that were easy to follow, and generally produce. In the early 1990s there emerged a steady series of productions following a Samuel French tradition- a publishing house that produced 'stageable' plays but whose stories are mostly European and American.

To that extent then, a form of theatre that carries with it a Kenyan identity was somewhat lost, mainly because of accessibility issues at the Kenya National Theatre, as well as the heavy hand of censorship. Granted, there were production houses such as Igiza Productions which produced Wahome Mutahi's plays such as *Jomo Kenyatta the Man*, *Makaririra Kioro* (They shall cry in the Toilet), or *Igooti ria Muingi* (The People's Court). Oby Obyerodhiambo's attempt at production through his *Sigana* form of theatre, as documented by Ouda (2009), was successful too at a time so that he was able to produce *La Femme Fatal* and then *Drumbeats of Keranyaga*, before he was forced to shut down. These two are among many other production houses that shunned the Kenya National Theatre or attempted to find alternative spaces

away from foreign owned theatre spaces. They created their own venues where they re-imagined what theatre should be. Perhaps, it is this sort of protest that prods Ngugi (1984:40) to wonder about “the concept and constitution of the National Theatre. Was it just the building? Was it just the kind of plays presented there?” The question of the National Theatre as a metaphor of Kenya is of interest here, so that one may wonder in the same Ngugi vein whether the National Theatre isn’t more than a building, and that like Kenya, it can be about a people. When seen as a metaphor, the location of the theatre, its building and physical facility, ceases to matter. Instead, what matters is what from people’s imagination theatre is. What do they perform? What are their ingredients of performance?

This sort of re-imagination of theatre has implications on how training in theatre can take place. The conversation about form or the nature of theatre becomes interesting in as far it questions the given idea of what theatre is from the colonial edifice that constructed the Kenya National Theatre. Liberating the idea of a “National Theatre” through imagining how theatre worked in precolonial times is surely a kind of glamourising a past, which in Ouda’s (2009) estimation negates present realities such as the taste the kind of audience has been exposed to.

An interesting problem then is: how can we find an authentic texture or voice for a “National Theatre” when already our audience has been made to believe in a different kind of theatre – one that is particularly “western” in orientation? The training is torn between pursuing an authentic-seeming line, as Ngugi attempts in his plays *I will Marry When I want* and *Mother Sing for Me*, or a hybrid form such as can be found in plays by Francis Imbuga such as *Aminata* or *Betrayal in The City*, or the line taken by Wahome Mutahi in his many “barroom” plays.

This struggle is necessarily one of identity so that even when forms that are friendly are given through media like television, as seen in programmes like *Tushauriane* and *Usinibarakishe*, there are still problems of acceptance. Nyairo (2015), in a reflection on big debate rousers of 1987, discusses the travails of *Usinibarakishe*, a television programme that hoped to raise awareness and create a buzz about health issues. It is quite clear that while the programme seemed relevant in terms of storylines that were quite relatable to Kenyans, it could not be allowed to go on. It was banned in 1986 because in Nyairo’s (2015: 107) estimation it of “our acquired Victorian modesty over sex and sexuality, state anxieties over losing control over public health debates, and the personal fears of confronting things like family planning – which usually happen in private and always result in the liberation of women. Naturally, we hid our false modesty behind the heavy two-tone curtains called Christianity and “our traditions.””

Here then is evidence that because of the constant redefinitions of our identities, the idea of “national” is constantly shifting thus enabling the powers that be to check what can be enjoyed – whether this be through censorship boards, or a prohibitive hiring fee at such a theatre space as the Kenya National Theatre. Self-censorship then becomes an avenue for survival, whether in order to cut costs of production to accommodate high charges of staging plays, or through the content given to an audience. The training of artists within such an environment where there is a hankering for the “authentic African” self and a “Christianised, Victorian-influenced” being, as well as a need for political correctness in whatever form, is an exercise that fraught with difficulties. It invites other problems one whether there can be a brand of theatre, for instance, that is Kenyan and that can be identified in foreign circles as Kenyan. Take for instance the dramatic exploits of Lupita Nyong’o in her career in America’s Hollywood, how could they be said to contribute to a search for the essence of a “Kenyan National” tradition of performance?

### On telling truths laughingly

Francis Imbuga had been the most consistent theatre personality in terms of writing and staging plays in the period stretching the early 1970s to the mid-2010s, until his untimely demise in 2015. His many plays including *Betrayal in The City*, *Aminata*, *The Successor*, and *Burning of Rags*, were popular with audiences, and were read as part of the curriculum in schools. As late as 2015, his play *Betrayal in The City* was the key text required in the reading of drama in secondary schools in Kenya – The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development had selected it, yet again, despite there being newer plays from emerging writers, perhaps as testament to the suitability of his plays for teaching purposes.

In his book *Telling the Truth Laughingly*, John Ruganda, the famed Ugandan playwright, critiques Francis Imbuga’s style of writing in terms of its imagery, use of symbolism and its linguistic exploits. He avers of “Imbuga’s...dramatic version” as engaging “humor which mollifies the targeted victim as simultaneously as it condemns him.” He observed, as did Kurtz (1998), Ouda (2009), among others, that Imbuga was involved in political commentary without necessarily turning his plays into didactic texts that tired his audiences but rather entertained them. To that extent, Imbuga was successful in developing a kind of theatre that remained true to his audience, in terms of immediacy, and that was alluring to watch.

His was a form of break from the numerous plays served at the Kenya National Theatre following in a tradition alien to the majority indigenous Africans from the 1950. The menu reliant on “mainstream” English playwrights including William Shakespeare, George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, and American Noel Coward among others, made the Kenya National Theatre a space for the rehashing of British Culture. The resistance to this was through University of Nairobi’s Department of Literature, headed by Ngugi wa Thiong’o in the 1970s, and which led to confrontations at the National



Theatre, with numerous conferences leading to the publication of Ngugi's "Language of African Theatre".

Francis Imbuga's career in the theatre started in the 1970s while a student at the University of Nairobi. Naturally, he must have taken an interest in the goings-on at the Kenya National Theatre especially in terms of the resistance that Ngugi was leading. Yet, for him, unlike with Ngugi, he confronted the problem differently. His plays, like his staged version of *Betrayal in the City*, were more self-reflexive, as opposed to Ngugi's more out-rightly aimed at the colonial edifice that had birthed a neo-colonial machinery. Mwangi's (2009) *Africa Writes Back to Self*, makes quite a clear distinction between writers, such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o whose works are critical of the colonizer and his empire which breeds the neocolonial situation, and the writers who are self-reflexive, where their main interest, as Imbuga's many plays attest, is critiquing the independent governments as separate entities from the colonial edifice.

Yet, Imbuga's and Ngugi's approach don't differ remarkably. Both employ artistic approaches, and languages, that are distinctly "African." In as far as both employ literary devices and theatrical gesturing, that expound meanings that have implications in the daily lives of the African, they can be classified under Lajul's (2014) postulations on the articulation of *African Philosophy*. Both their approaches chose to imbue in their main characters an approach to life that recalls the ancient use of sayings, proverbs and gestures and postures that come with implications of authority, or defiance, as the case may be. They attempt to portray characters with a mindset that pay homage to a culture that has suffered a major dislocation due to colonialism and its attendant alien education systems. *Betrayal in the City*, for instance, opens with a replay of fears at a burial site with the question:

Were the rituals surrounding the burial of a son pursued to proper ends? It invites a host of images with singing, a play on sayings, proverbs, and physical movements that rehash ritual. Here, the choice to present a family in mourning where Christianity has been avoided is evident – it is almost a suggestion that this way of doing things will not be eclipsed by 'new' religions, ones that have been introduced to us by the colonialist and his machinery. Obviously, Ngugi's take in *I will Marry When I want* and *Mother Sing for Me*, is to look at the contradictions of Christianity as a religion of the colonialist, and his neocolonial double, to lull the populace into softly accepting the continuous political, economic and social exploitation.

Both seem to break away from the Kenya National Theatre's agenda in the 1950s and 1960s. They want to create a performance mode that would accommodate ritual, movement, thought, language, diction, and texture that is African. Songs, poetry, sayings, proverbs, dance, costuming, set designing are all implicated in the stories that suggest Africanness, and which are departure from a performance mode that finds ease with the physical design of the Kenya National Theatre stage and auditorium. Ngugi's Kamirithu experience, for example, necessitates audience participation so much so that the boundary between audience and stage is constantly reimagined – to achieve this with the design of the Kenya National Theatre would be difficult.

While Ngugi and Imbuga both take part in critiquing Jomo Kenyatta's and Daniel Moi's political stranglehold in Kenya, Imbuga takes a less confrontational approach. Ngugi's *I will Marry When I want* does not disguise its political intents. Its characters, such as Gicaamba and Kiguunda, speak directly of the affront they are subjected to by factory owners supported by land owners that want to edge them out and exploit them if only to please the powers that be that are only agents of multinational companies from abroad – former colonialists. Imbuga on the other hand, is steeped in presenting characters that are drawn from a past, in a play such as *The Successor*, to talk about the anxieties surrounding the succession debate at the ending of Jomo Kenyatta's reign. In *Betrayal in The City*, Mosese and Jere are involved in a power take-over through the playful means role play – so that as they are exhibiting a play to "Boss", the supposed President of Kafira, they use real weapons to take over power. His is a comical exploration of a possibility that is of the now that does not draw necessarily from the long history of colonialism and its neo-colonial.

### Implications on training

Imbuga's theatre approach is instrumental in ways of imagining how performance can be approached. No longer should the study of theatre be wholesomely "western" without a divorce from realities that are African, or Kenyan specific. In Ngugi's Kamirithu experience, the implication is more towards a liberation of the mind, a consciousness raising process the empowers the individual to want to rise above oppressive circumstances. Indeed, the documented processes of Kamirithu has been replicated in places like Zimbabwe, and has been adopted in understanding of guerrilla theatre movements, as well as being applied as a good meeting point with Augusto Boal's "Theatre of the Oppressed" and "Theatre of the Poor." To that extent, there is a deliberate attempt to associate Ngugi's plays within political discourses so that the plays are more towards political awareness situations.

For Imbuga, his plays can be said, relatively, to be less of political conscious spaces but more for the idea of an aesthetic that is different from what has been offered as "mainstream" within the premises of the Kenya National Theatre. His plays offer room for Africa to reimagine a self within expressions borrowed from a past, ritual, sayings, proverbs, metaphor and imagery, to explore a present. His humor begins a moment of self-assessment which to some extent might

be termed Aristotelian – a mimetic moment, but without the attendant ease of enjoyment without reflection. Obviously, Imbuga’s approach has received imitators who have gone on to establish themselves as prominent players in the Kenya National Schools and College Drama Festivals that are carried out annually. His humor, in particular, has been replicated as has his suggestion on the use of stage design.

But Imbuga’s approach, where it seems less deliberate than Ngugi’s, is quite well thought-out as an engagement against the mainstreaming suggested by the Kenya National Theatre. In his novel *The Shrine of Tears*, Imbuga riles at the status of the Kenya National Theatre which in places has become a haven for drunkards and lazy “bench warmers” because there has been no direction to reinterpret its rationale. For Imbuga, the question is whether the National Theatre as it stands cannot be reinterpreted so that characters like Jay Boge, in his novel, who are the country’s youth can exploit it to sell their art. Is the National Theatre a space that can be accessed by an ordinary youth? Can the youth be liberated so that they imagine the National Theatre as more of a space in their minds where they can create without the restrictions of space- so that it is more the form, rather than the physical locale?

## Conclusion

This paper has been an inspection of the meanings given of The Kenya National Theatre. It acknowledges that the theatre made a controversial entry into Kenya. Its “snobbish” locale and its tendencies to seem unreachable for the ordinary Kenyan have had implications that are beyond the physical. This means that Kenyans wanting to practice theatre have been made to imagine theatre only as suggested in the limiting circumstances around the National Theatre. Its design, its consistent hosting of “western” drama and by its implications its preferences of mainstreaming European plays, has relegated practitioners’ imagination to poor imitations of alien forms. And yet, there has been resistance, firstly by the crop of academics around University of Nairobi in the 1970s, and then by the likes of Imbuga and Oby Obyerodhiambo. What this has meant is that there has tended in some quarters to be a re-interpretation of whether meanings of the National Theatre. With such a reinterpretation the implication on training, and working with the youth is liberating. And yet there arises a problem as to whether there has been enough awareness that a design that is beyond the theatre’s stage can be employed in redeeming forms of theatre that might gain greater viewership and therefore create a more thriving theatre industry. In this paper, Ngugi’s resistance has been compared to Imbuga’s on the idea of a National Theatre and its implication on the form of theatre. In this comparison, critical ideas about a to-and-fro constant movement of culture is encouraged in processes of discovering relevance in theatre. Perhaps of greater interest will be about whether the resistance to the idea of a “National Theatre” built on a colonial foundation will continue to offer ways of imagining a theatre industry, or whether these will remain academic exercises.

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## Training the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Kenyan Artist: How the Competency-Based Curriculum lends itself to art training.

Lydia Muthuma,

Department of Design and Creative Media, *The Technical University of Kenya*

### Abstract

*The new competency based curriculum (CBC) gives a perfect opportunity to revamp the education and training of visual artists. And, because of the new political dispensation –the devolved government– backed by the constitution of Kenya (2010) it is convenient to run this training under the devolved units albeit with support from national government. A model that is already working, Dust Depo Studio is offered as an example that can be replicated in various counties. Practical studio training is to be offered as a component of the national CBC. This discussion starts by showcasing the life of a young artist trained in Dust Depo. There follows a brief history of the studio and its artist in residence. A consideration of the CBC, with its newly added focus on skills and attitude is offered in order to demonstrate how conveniently its aims would be met by studio art training. Key aspects of the CBC are considered together with the salient criticisms. However, because curriculum change is an accomplished fact, having been rolled out in January 2018, the discussion goes on to point out how the suggested art studio training, can be ensconced in the CBC: as tertiary education; community based learning and model space for learning and practicing formative assessment.*

### Introduction: Self-Identity through Art

#### Pay or Purpose?

I met a young man in his 20s and asked him, ‘why are you a visual artist?’ Oh I actually studied media technology at the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication (KIMC) and was employed by KTN –one of the leading media houses in Kenya. The media job had no thrill, no challenge. I always did the same thing: same camera, same light, same sound. When my contract ended, I did not care to renew it. I came instead to *Dust Depo* (Patrick Mukabi’s painting studio at the Railway Museum in Nairobi). In KTN, I was paid; at *Dust Depo* I am not. However, although there is no pay, there is purpose. I chose purpose.

This conversation happened in the year 2017. I wanted to find out where visual artists get their training in Kenya. Few schools teach fine art and fewer tertiary level institutions dedicate themselves to nurturing young artists. Does Kenya need visual artists? Why is their training neglected? These questions led me to a nearby studio, *Dust Depo* to find out the why, what, where and how of training visual artists –if indeed they are necessary.

*Dust Depo* has been running for the last 10 years (2008 – 2018). It is an odd assortment of young men and women venturing into the life and world of visual art, specifically painting. Eric Mureithi, the one who left KTN to join *Dust Depo*, has been part of this studio since 2013 –this is his fifth year. When he joined the studio, Patrick Mukabi, the artist-in-residence, asked for zero charges. Instead, he gave Mureithi three injunctions: you must have a focus, you must stick to your timetable or routine, you must set yourself a 5-year goal to work toward. Mureithi has stuck to his routine and he believes he has met his self-set goal –to become an artist, a painter.

In his words, ‘here (*Dust Depo*) I set my own goals. There is no free time but there is purpose. My focus was not so much to sell art, to make money but to become a good artist.’ And when I prod him to explain ‘good artist’ he replies, ‘to become versatile, multidimensional, able to handle different media and different messages. When I first came, I was unrealistic I made myself a daily timetable from 6 am to 8 pm. It did not work! I have since reduced the number of hours according to the task in hand. In fact I now come to *Dust Depo* 2 to 3 days a week. The rest of the days I work from my house.’

Mureithi’s income has since increased sufficiently to allow him to change his residential address. He now lives in a house where he uses the spare bedroom as a painting studio. He goes on, ‘My 5-year goal was identity. I wanted to find out who I really am, as an artist and I have realised it. I can’t say that I am a struggling artist. I am just an artist without the qualifier. I work in the contemporary art scene, I am an *expressionist*, an *impressionist* and have a hint of *graffiti*.’ ‘Where did you learn these big terms?’ I ask.

From media studies, you collect a lot of technical terms and you learn to analyze Kenya from the perspective of the outside world. You hardly ‘see’ the country (the artistic expression) from the inside. I work on canvas, I decorate canvas shoes and other accessories, I illustrate on paper and graffiti. See these backyard walls of the Railway Museum,’ he explains while pointing to the nearby murals. ‘The museum lent us this space to re-count, through painting, its history and consequent development.

The rest of the conversation is dedicated to finances because I am slow to believe that Mureithi actually makes money from

painting—that neglected visual art form, which hardly features in the country’s efforts to eradicate youth unemployment. How tell the story of a young man who walked out of a paid job in search of purpose and identity! How explain that he makes more money than he did in the media house?

After discussing initial capital and cost of art materials, I ask about sales and marketing. ‘Online’ is his answer. Mureithi uses facebook and instagram. He also participates in locally organized exhibitions e.g. Affordable Art Show, National Museums of Kenya (NMK) annual show, International School of Kenya (ISK) Exhibition, the Manjano Festival and Kenya Art Fair. All these are standard annual shows, others happen at random. Mureithi takes part by exhibiting his paintings. He is careful to add that what really makes him money, a sort of disposable income, is the production of accessories i.e. decorating canvas shoes, denim jackets, caps; these are usually bought by young people who want to adapt international fashion to a local language and local franchise.

I insist that Mureithi must have a downside in his painting career. He owns up by complaining, ‘the worst is when people do not appreciate your paintings. Many buy them because they have loose change in their pockets not because they understand them or like them. It is a case of misplaced priorities. They save money to buy a car that will depreciate in value rather than a painting that can only appreciate in value! Art should come back to schools, it should be taught (to cultivate the sense of aesthetics) because not all school children can become engineers, doctors or lawyers. In *Dust Depo*, the learning is hands on. The learner is responsible, and he does it out of choice, not out of parental or societal expectations-cum-coercion.



Figure 1. Canvas Shoes Painted on Using Fabric Paints. Artist: Eric Mureithi, 2017



Figure 2. Old Denim Jacket Painted Using Fabric Paints. Artist: Eric Mureithi, 2017

Mureithi says that the studio is successful; it nurtures young artists providing a home where they can learn how to paint, to exhibit work and receive encouragement and needed critique from peers. If different counties had spaces like *Dust Depo*, art training and practice would really get a boost. I dream of establishing a ‘Dust Depo’ (art training studio) in my county, Nyeri. I would need to rent a shed, buy minimum art materials and willingly act as the artist-in-residence to encourage and nurture other artists. About KES 1 million per year would run such a facility. I see many talented and interested young people who could easily take this route.

### Dust Depo: the art studio

Why the name *Dust Depo*? I enquire from Patrick Mukabi, artist and founder of the studio. He corrects me by deleting the t in Depot, then answers, I did so after a branding seminar where the speaker complained about archiving paintings, claiming that they only collect dust. ‘So she reduces our lives to dust! I wondered and decided there and then that the name ‘Dust Depot’ (without the silent ‘t’) would capture some people’s perception of paintings. Besides, the name sounds poetic.’

Mukabi has been practicing painting for the last 20 years (c. 1986 to date, 2018) He started painting around 1986, after

completing studies in graphic design at the then Kenya Polytechnic (now upgraded to The Technical University of Kenya). He found graphic design somewhat slow, saying, ‘there were no computers then and you did everything by hand. Producing one logo would take so long.’ Although Mukabi was always interested in fine art, his father, Joshua Mukabi, a graduate of Makerere University, had advised him to study graphic design (not fine art) hoping to employ him in the graphics department of the Kenya Railways Cooperation. Mukabi, the younger, did not enjoy graphic design. After graduating from the Polytechnic he joined Kuona Trust (a foundation for Kenyan contemporary artists) to the disappointment of his father.

Kuona Trust is an offshoot of Gallery Watatu. Gallery Watatu (now defunct) was founded and operated by Ruth Schaffner, an émigré from Hitler’s Germany. The gallery was active in the 1970s to 1980s. Mukabi took his early paintings to Schaffner; they were turned down on account of style. Schaffner had been and still was promoting *naïve* art from East Africa. She however, took two of Mukabi’s paintings for an ongoing competition that had been sponsored by East Africa Industries, now Unilever.

Mukabi’s painting won the second prize, about KES 70,000. After deducting Gallery Watatu’s 50% (Schaffner’s undisclosed fee) Mukabi received a cheque of KES 35, 000 and a voucher for art materials worth KES 10,000 as prize money for coming second in that art competition. He continues, excitedly, ‘I went home and gave the cheque to my mum. I then went straight to Science Scope (a shop in Nairobi that stocks Windsor and Newton art materials) and bought oil paints, acrylics, pastels, brushes, palette knife ... all those things that a painter requires but can never afford.’

Schaffner was now interested in Mukabi’s paintings but she continued to advise style change. If Mukabi’s paintings were to be rendered in an abstract style, it would be easy for Schaffner to sell them as naïve contemporary East African art. ‘Try to paint like Sane Wadu, Brush Wanyu, Mbuthia... if you paint like them, I will make you big.’ Schaffner said.

Mukabi was not happy. He reported this conversation to his mother (his mentor) who replied, ‘if she (Schaffner) didn’t like your work but sold it, then continue painting as you like. It will still sell.’ This is because the prize painting was in realistic not the naïve-cum-abstract style.

Later Mukabi was directed toward Family Planning Private Sector (FPPS) run under the USAID. A calendar for FPPS was being prepared and paintings carrying the relevant message were required; the theme was the AIDS pandemic. Mukabi remembers that he ‘painted a woman in a nice lessa lying on top of a coffin.’ Lessa or khanga is an iconic piece of fabric, carrying significant history and culture. It has been used, for several centuries, along the East African coast. And, like the language of similar origin, Kiswahili, it has moved into the hinterland of East Africa.

A month later, Mukabi was announced the winner. The judges appreciated his message of hope amid the hopelessness of the AIDS story. He was paid KES 20,000 as copyright and an additional KES 40,000 as prize money. ‘That was the year I started my painting career,’ Mukabi recalls.

Visual Art in Kenya has been supported by big business with foreign links. Mashariki Motors, the sellers of BMW, are an example. They were among Mukabi’s various patrons. Mashariki Motors used to sponsor a space attached to Nairobi’s National Museum the KUONA Trust. Later, the Dutch Embassy supported KUONA. Visual art in Kenya is more often than not supported by foreigners. However, in the last few years (from about 2008 to date) Kenyan money is beginning to offer this support. Businessman Chris Kirubi, Investments and Mortgages (I&M) Bank, Commercial Bank of Africa (CBA), Charles Muritu etc. are some of the patrons who are putting money into visual art.

Mukabi points out that now he has ventured into home schooling because visual art is not accorded significant weight in the 8-4-4 curriculum. The need for home schooling in art could be directly related to this lacuna. According to Mukabi, he is now delivering paintings to Kenyans. And, online marketing is working.

What would happen if county governments offered support to this art training model? Could they become the present

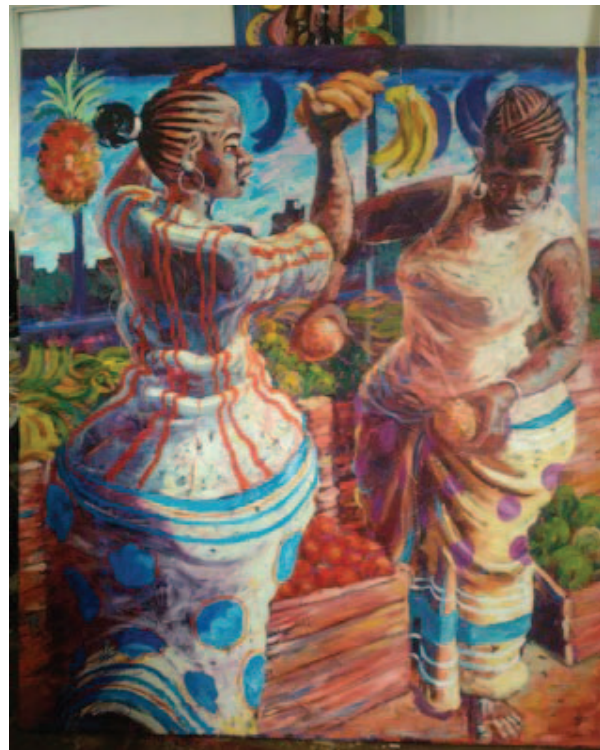


Figure 3. Soko Women Series. Artist: Patrick Mukabi.

Source: <https://1.bp.blogspot.com>



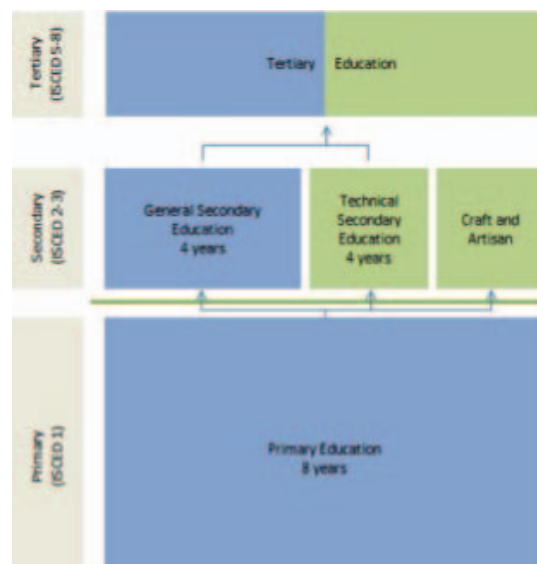
Figure 4. Artist: Patrick Mukabi.

Source: <http://artmatters.info/wp-content/uploads/2015>

day patrons of the young visual artists? The newly launched curriculum offers a unique opportunity to reconsider the training of visual artists. And why is Kenya introducing a new curriculum?

In January 2018, a new curriculum for Kenya was rolled out, beginning with early years education –pre primary and grades 1, 2 and 3. The system is designed to unfold incrementally. These learners are age four (4) to eight (8) and once started, on this competency based curriculum (CBC) they are not going to change, midstream, back to 8-4-4. (this latter refers to 8 years of primary schooling, 4 years of secondary education, followed by 4 years of university education hence 8-4-4) That

the 8-4-4 is being phased out and replaced with the CBC is an accomplished fact.



- launched in January 1985 (with revisions in 2002)
- designed to provide eight years of primary education, four years of secondary, and four years of university education.
- emphasis on Mathematics, English, and vocational subjects.
- assessment of students intellectual development as opposed to skills and attitude development.
- sole reliance on **summative** assessment

Figure 5. Structure of the 8-4-4 Curriculum.

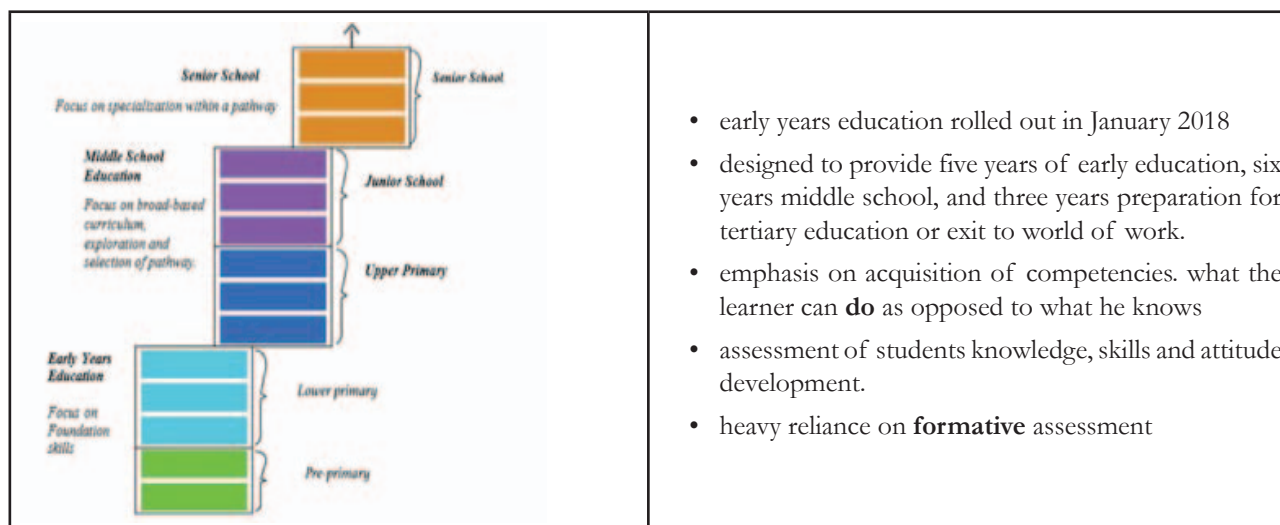
Source: Project iMlango Endline Evaluation Report, 2017. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/>

### Reasons for the Education Reform

The move from 8-4-4 to CBC has been praised and condemned in equal measure. Without going into an exhaustive examination of the merits and demerits of this move, this paper highlights only those characteristics that caused much comment. Kabita, D.N. and Ji, L., (2017, p 6) addressing the ‘many cynics and skeptics’ that challenge curriculum change, say:

...the majority of citizens [Kenyans] feel strongly that the current system of education (including both structure and curriculum) are not fit for purpose. This was confirmed by findings of a summative evaluation ... conducted by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development in 2009; and a national needs assessment study... in 2016. Vision 2030... also points towards the need to reform the country’s education.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See also Ogutu, D. M. Education System Change: Perspectives from Kenya in Brookings Institute op-ed, August 3, 2017



- early years education rolled out in January 2018
- designed to provide five years of early education, six years middle school, and three years preparation for tertiary education or exit to world of work.
- emphasis on acquisition of competencies. what the learner can **do** as opposed to what he knows
- assessment of students knowledge, skills and attitude development.
- heavy reliance on **formative** assessment

Figure 6. Structure of the Competency Based Curriculum

Source: <https://unesco.go.ke/>

Kabita *et. al.* are thorough in laying out the ground covered before arriving at the decision to reform Kenya’s education system. The five countries, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi resolved to form (once again) an integrated East Africa Community (EAC) One of the objectives, in the creation of this community, is to foster cooperation and integration. And one way of doing this, is to facilitate the movement of goods and services across the region, which in itself, requires the movement of labour. This in turn, requires that curriculum for partner states of EAC be harmonized to enhance mutual recognition of certificates... (EAC 2007, p 76) The resulting resolution culminated in the development of *‘A Framework on Harmonization of Curricula, Structure and Examinations in EAC’* (EAC 2012) All partner states, according to this resolution, are required to reform their curricula ... to align them to this framework. Tanzania, Rwanda and Kenya have started these reforms.

It is also pointed out, by the same authors, that Kenya is a signatory of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the year 2016; another underpinning reason for curriculum reform in Kenya. But before delving into what exactly was reformed (the discussion can be lengthy and lead away from the interests of this paper). cf IBE and BECF) let us look at some criticism against this CBC.

### Criticism of the Education Reform

Popular media has been rife with criticism. I shall however restrict myself to scholarly criticism. A journal article authored by a researcher from one of Kenya’s leading universities -University of Nairobi (cf. *The New Curriculum of Education in Kenya: A Linguistic and Education Paradigm Shift*) has little praise for the CBC, especially coupled with the provision of free secondary education. The author outlines several demerits of the education reform. The main ones include, “it is too futuristic and impractical to implement in Kenya by January 2018” and the supporting reasons run as follows: “during the planning stage, key stakeholders were not brought on board. It would be critical for a commission comprising of all (sic) stakeholders -including teachers representing all levels of education, parents/guardians, curriculum experts, the Ministry of Education as well as donor [sic] (who hopefully will fund this ambitious endeavour) be brought on board to thoroughly investigate the new curriculum.

However, in implementing the CBC, the curriculum reformers appear to have taken this very route unbeknownst to the above researcher. (cf IBE) It is with palpable caution, that the curriculum reformers state:

Almost all citizens in a country are stakeholders in education by way of being parents, learners, employers, teachers and siblings or relatives of learners. Curriculum change is, therefore, a high-stakes, technical, political, and sensitive issue ... curriculum is influenced by both national needs and international trends. KICD undertook several international benchmarking visits ... collaborated with universities, Ministries of Education, the Teacher Service Commission, Teachers Unions, and employers, among other stakeholders.” p 7. (cf also KICD site) (<https://kicd.ac.ke/curriculum-reform/need-assessment-reports-for-cbc/>)

Secondly, the curriculum reforms were arrived at after a national needs assessment which revealed that majority of Kenyans perceived education as a powerful tool ... they have a general feeling that the (current 8-4-4) education system “emphasised acquisition of knowledge ...” while its “examinations tested memorisation” of that same knowledge, hence a move towards the CBC.

Back to the criticisms -the article advises (p. 94) “ It would be advisable for the Government of Kenya- through its organs (the Education Ministry and constituent departments of Education and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) not to repeat the mistakes previously made during the roll-out of the 8-4-4 system.” And mistakes pointed out include: hurried and haphazard implementation, not “all teachers are adequately informed about the content of delivery, especially with regard to the shift from national examinations to individualized CATs. The shift in assessment style also needs to be carefully scrutinized...”

**The most misunderstood aspect of CBC: Formative Assessment**

The issue of summative and formative assessment is one of the most misunderstood aspects of the CBC. And if some university researchers misunderstand it, perhaps so do school teachers who are crucial in this process; they are the implementers of the CBC. (cf forthcoming article ‘Need for formative assessment in Higher Education’). Below is the comparative assessment emphasis:

Table 1: Emphasis and levels of Assessment

8-4-4	Competency Based Curriculum
1. knowledge 100% 2. skills 0% 3. attitude 0% <b>Summative</b> assessment 100%  <u>at two levels</u> after 8 years primary education <b>KCPE</b> after 4 years secondary education <b>KCSE</b>	1. knowledge 33% 2. skills 33% 3. attitude 33% <b>formative</b> assessment (% yet to be decided) <b>summative</b> assessment (% yet to be decided)  <u>at three levels</u> after 5 early years education (not yet decided) after 6 years middle school (not yet decided) after 3 years senior school (not yet decided)

The temptation is to equate summative assessment with national standardized testing e.g. Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) while assuming that continuous assessment tests (CATs) are the formative assessment. This is a false position. <sup>2</sup>

What distinguishes the two assessments is their purpose: summative, measures achievement; formative, supports learning. Besides, the CBC has moved from the previous position of measuring learner achievement in knowledge acquisition only. A grade A or B simply reflected the knowledge of mathematics, English or science and was silent about what the learner could actually do with this knowledge. Acquisition of knowledge is what is tested or assessed in the 8-4-4 system. CBC, on the other hand, places stress in a different sphere: while acquisition of knowledge is still important, it must yield some ground to skills, attitude and values. Where the focus used to be what the learner **knows**, CBC has shifted it to what the learner can **do**. Skill, attitude and values are as important as knowledge acquisition.

Studio training emphasizes what the learner can paint above his theoretical knowledge of the same subject. In *Dust Depo*, the learning is hands on. The learner is responsible, and he does it out of choice, not out of parental or societal expectations-cum-coercion.

CATs as administered in the 8-4-4 system are more summative (measure of learner’s achievement -how much knowledge has been transferred to the learner) than formative (a tool for teaching and a supporter of learning -what else does the learner need). Therefore the criticism that,

The shift in assessment style also needs to be carefully scrutinized. CATs administered subjectively at a teacher’s whim could end up disastrously, especially when administered by teachers who were used to preparing students for national exams after 8 years of Basic education and 4 years of Secondary school education.

is difficult to respond to because it misunderstands the purpose of formative assessment i.e. identifying learner’s gaps in knowledge, skill, attitude and values.

How grade, in summative assessment, the attitude and values of the learner? These lend themselves naturally to formative assessment while learning is still ongoing.

To accuse a teacher of being “subjective and whimsical” in assessing cannot apply to formative assessment. The teacher uses formative evaluation as a core part of teaching and learning. And, he can only impart his attitude and his values. Formative assessment is the tool used by those engaged in parenting. CBC is asking the teacher to stand ‘*in loco parentis*’; to fuse the role of teacher with that of parent. Studio training employs formative assessment and provides a chance for peer assessment.

Other criticisms of the CBC, with some being very apt, are directed toward curriculum support material like textbooks

<sup>2</sup> cf Higher Education 45: 477-501, 2003. © 2003 Kluwer Academic Publishers. Printed in the Netherlands



and digital infrastructure. The aim is not to discuss them exhaustively because this paper is about making use of the CBC to re-energise training in visual art.

There has been no mention of how community service learning will be supported. It is not clear how learning support material for community service learning will be provided. It is also not clear who shall be responsible. Studio training can be considered under community-based learning.

**Why refer to the new curriculum in training of artists?**

because CBC emphasises skill and visual art is largely dependent on skill acquisition; because CBC enforces formative assessment; and this is the very stuff of instructing artists. Studio art can therefore be used to train teachers/facilitators, from other academic disciplines, to set assessment rubrics for formative assessment. It can also be used for community based learning -a new feature of the CBC which is still uncharted territory. The proposed studio training can act as a transition from basic education to work (art practice) providing immediate job creation.

From the point of view of the county, it is to create a hub for artists -with mentoring, tutoring and business incubation possibilities; to help articulate cultural identity and heritage of the county; to support livelihoods and attract learners/visitors from other counties, nations and even international -a tourist-cum-learning hub and a heritage conservation base for the county. Further, it can be combined with other arts e.g. performing arts and services, and help in celebrating and harmonising cultural practices, i.e. county executives (CECs) officers concerned would be education CEC in consultation with: youth, gender, sports, culture, tourism and social services CEC.

## Exploring the Role of Networks within Creative Industries in Kenya

Mawira Gibson,  
 The Technical University of Kenya, gibmwash@gmail.com

### Abstract

*Creative economy is becoming one of the alternative economic growth contributors globally. Developed countries like UK are heavily relying on creative economy for their economic growth and sustenance. The contribution of creative economy includes improved GDP, employment opportunities, as well as social and cultural regeneration. However, the success of creative industries in developed countries is due to government support with converse being true for developing countries like Kenya. Therefore, owing to the lack of structural support from the government in the developing countries, networking is emerging as one of the key alternatives the practitioners rely on for the success of their creative ventures. The reliance on social capital and social network has led to new definitions of creative industries in the scholarly domain. Some of these definitions relate creative economy with generation of value from choices made within these social networks which help develop competitive advantages. With this, the creative industry venture is able to maintain a good market share for its survival. The creative industries are, therefore, as seen above, an emergent category of analysis centered on the economics of complex social networks. The paper, therefore, will seek to unfold the extent to which the creative industry practitioners or ventures in Nairobi engage in networking. This can only be possible through discussion of the key players within these networks and the role they play in the development, growth and competitive advantage of the creative industries. The discussion will be limited to Nairobi owing to the fact that a bigger percentage of creative industry ventures in Kenya are found in the capital.*

**Key words:** *Creative industries, creative economy, creatives, networking, social networks.*

### Introduction/Context

Creative economy is fast becoming one of the alternative economic growth contributors globally. Developed countries like UK now heavily rely on creative economy for their economic growth and sustenance. For example, in 2016, statistics from Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) estimated the creative industries to contribute £91.8bn to the economy (DCMS, 2016). The contribution of creative economy is seen in countries improved GDP, employment opportunities, as well as social and cultural regeneration. This success of creative industries in developed countries owes to the fact that there is enough government support. This includes research, policy support and funding to specific areas of need within the industry.

Unfortunately, despite evidence of (some) support to the creative industries by some of the developing countries, the gains are still minimal. A good example is Ghana and South Africa who have put policy interventions to support their creative economy (UNCTAD, 2010). However, there is very little to show for this support as the industries still lag behind with no secure markets and income generation avenues. Creative economy development in developing countries] is mainly hampered not only by lack of capital, but also by a lack of human capacities and infrastructure. These shortfalls hinge on professional skills, notably in project organization and business management, inadequate networking capabilities and community (political interference) contexts that constrain rather than promote creative talent and entrepreneurship. (UNDP, 2013).

Despite most of the developing countries being endowed with rich cultural resources and social capital, they are yet realize the immense benefits that can be accrued from creative industries. With the little or no support from the government, the creatives are forced to heavily rely on donors and other means for their survival. Consequently, owing to the lack of structural support from the governments and the fact that creative industry is highly individualized (especially in developing countries), networking has come to be one of the factors creatives rely on for the success of their creative ventures.

### Literature review

#### Networking and Creative industries

Most of the definitions of creative industries are based on industrial classifications which are based on creative nature of inputs and the intellectual property nature of outputs. These industrial classification definitions are based on what they do, or what they produce and how they do it (Potts, 2008). However, this mode of definition was developed over half a century ago and now needs to factor in the changes in the economic system which is now more complex, service oriented and knowledge based (Foster, 2006 ), (Beinhocker, 2006). New definition of creative industries as proposed by Potts, Jason, Cunningham, Stuart, Hartley, Ormerod (2008) revolves around a class of economic choice theory. This is whereby because of inherent novelty and uncertainty, the decisions both to produce and to consume are determined

by the choice of others in a network. Therefore, creative industry is can also be defined as set of agents in a market characterized by adoption of novel ideas within social networks for production and consumption (Potts, 2008).

Though creative industries share many generic characteristics of service economy, they are an outgrowth of non-market economy of cultural public good. However, they now have significant market value and contribution to individual wealth and GDP (Potts, 2008). This increase in market value and wealth generation is based on the outgrowth of social dynamism in the general economy as a result of influence by internet, ICT and globalization. Therefore, this has changed the way creative goods and services are produced, marketed and consumed. The connectedness of both creator and consumer in the creative industries has therefore led to considerable reduction of uncertainty in production and consumption of creative goods and services. Therefore, the role of network in creative industries can't be underestimated.

Networking is a process that fosters the exchange of information and ideas among individuals or groups that share a common interest. It may be for social, professional or business purposes. Professionals connect to their network(s) through a series of symbolic ties and contacts (Kagen, 2017 ). These symbolic ties and contracts in creative industries have helped counter jobs and market insecurities, thus finding continual employment and market for their creative goods and services (Coe, 2000), (Daskalaki, 2010), (Huggins, 2012). Therefore, due to the fact that creative industries involve SMEs and informal sector, they are highly project – oriented in structure, and therefore require a high level of co-operation for their success. Indeed, as Schonfeld and Reinstaller (2005) states, “the value of art is a function of social consensus.” This is due to the unique characteristics of cultural goods (and services) which require specific focus on the interaction between the creative industries players (producer, distributor and consumer) (Schonfeld, 2005). The social relationships and informal interactions in creative industries make it easier to obtain information, ideas and knowledge and to generate economic values as well as competitive advantage (Daskalaki, 2010) (Potts, 2008). Therefore, the success of creative industries is heavily dependent on networking which includes social features (trust and friendship) and networking events (conferences and meetings).

#### **Role of networks to creative industries.**

- a) Networks foster rise of labor markets leading to a wide pool of skills which in turn support the production and consumption of cultural and creative goods and services. This only become possible through networks of firms and their interactions as well as the facilities and social overheads such as schools, universities, research establishments, design centres, cultural centres etc. (UNDP, 2013).
- b) Less exposed creatives especially in developing countries become more visible through the campaigns, programmes, organizations, fairs, markets, exhibitions and cultural spaces. These provides opportunities for networking and working together as well as for articulating claims and rights to government support and media coverage ( exposure) (UNDP, 2013).
- c) Creative hubs and centres which also serves as collaborative outfits help in developing local and regional networking and collaboration opportunities through events which stimulate creative economy by serving as distribution platforms for new ideas and products. They also act as venues for networking among creative workers as well as generating the much needed spillover effects not only by employing people in the cultural professions and raising awareness and consumption of the arts locally, but also through increased earnings in the hospitality, transport sectors etc. (UNDP, 2013).

#### **Challenges of networking in creative industries**

Some of the challenges that block the cultural and creative industries development and which are related to networking include:

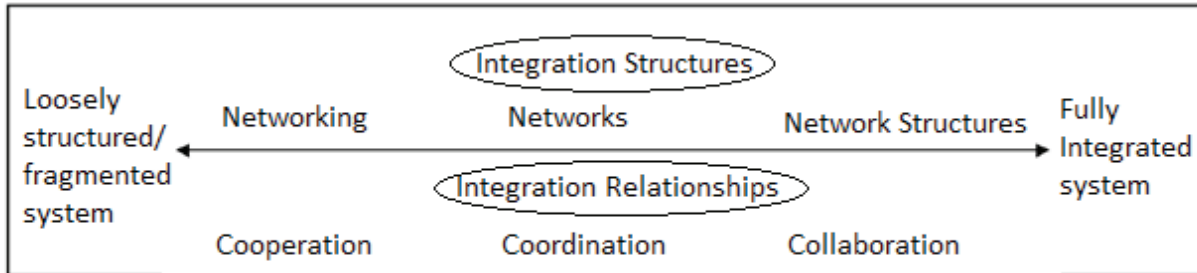
- a) Informality both in enterprises and employment or occupations. This mainly affects developing economies where various kinds of low productivity but yet high skill activities form part of the informal economy (example *Jua Kali* sector in Kenya). These informal networks of apprenticeship and skill preservation are usually under- represented in national funding and policy making (UNDP, 2013)
- b) The digital platforms though its ability to abolish the tyranny of distance, it exists as a block to face-to-face networking thus preventing the personal connections possible within highly clustered creative scenes (UNDP, 2013)

#### **Theoretical underpinnings**

This study is based on Brown and Keast's (2003) “continuum of connectedness”, a theoretical framework which helps in understanding the different level of networking in Nairobi as well as Coleman's social theory which seeks to highlights on the benefits accrued from different types of networks.

Browns and Keast's theory of continuum of connectedness identifies strength which captures the looseness or the tightness of the integration of connectedness. They came up with three most common horizontal relationships based on three categories

of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. Subsequently, they came up with a continuum of connectedness which factored in networking arrangements (which refer to loose connections between players and organizations - cooperation), networks (which represent more formal and closer connections between people or organizations - coordination), and network structures (which are tightly interconnected and highly interdependent constructs that rely on members moving outside of traditional functional specialties to create new ways of working – collaboration). See figure below.



**Figure. A continuum of connectedness**

Coleman's social theory looks at tightly-knit groups of relations as more beneficial. The networks with heavy level of connections leads to easier access to more valuable information as well as reduction of risk associated with the lack of trust since the engagements are governed by sanctions (Coleman, 1990).

### Methodology

Creative industries activity relies on quantitative data. However, identifying and understanding the operation of networks within these creative industries requires ethnographic and qualitative research methods (Brennan-Horley & Gibson 2009; James 2006). Therefore, the study involved empirical methods through ethnographic observation and informal encounters as well as semi structured interview by the researcher. The study also included collection of secondary data from organizations which have information on networking.

The researcher also used semi structured interview consisting of questionnaires where the actors to be interviewed as well as the questions (areas) were specified and defined. However, the researcher left room for the interviewees to lead the direction of the interview thereby discovering more information than the questionnaire could realize (Fitzgerald, 2009).

Finally, the study involved the snowballing method in identifying samples whereby the researcher used it as a name generator by asking the respondent to name their connections to the other actors in the network. The same was asked of all the actors who emerged from the previous analysis. This process continued until enough information was collected based on the limited time and resources the researcher had. In this method, it is not difficult to achieve closure (Hanneman, Introduction to Social Network Methods, 2005).

### Research problem:

The study sought to understand why (role) and how creatives and creative entities in Nairobi network (connect) with each other.

### Objectives:

Following Browns and Keast continuum of connectedness, the researched has the following objectives:

1. What is the level of networking among creatives in Nairobi in regards to cooperation, coordination, and collaboration?
2. Why do the creatives in Nairobi network.
3. What are the main challenges to networking among the creatives.

### Findings:

#### Networking in creative industries in Kenya (Nairobi)

This study focused on creative industries activities as found in Nairobi – capital city of Kenya where the key drivers of economic growth (i.e. production resources, skills, and institutions of coordination) are often concentrated (Storper, 2009). The industry comprises of SMEs, creative hubs, clusters, performance arenas, exhibitions, support institutions (both governmental and non-governmental).

Though networking does not play a crucial part in the success of the creative industries endeavors, there is evidence which portray that most of the creatives in Nairobi engage in networking. For example, of all the organizations with websites during the creative industries mapping by the department of culture in 2012, networking comes third after information sharing and marketing (culture, 2012). The importance of networking cannot be underestimated as Katungulu Mwendwa (a fashion designer) attributes her success through a continually building connections especially with clients by keeping them informed of new products and as well as allowing them to grow an interest in the brand beyond getting a one-off piece every now and then (HEVA, 2017 ). Networking according the respondents is basically used for marketing of products, outsourcing for raw materials, gaining new skills and seeking for labour support in the industry.

Most of the artists use creative hubs, exhibition spaces, and events to informally share information. This is because they offer cheaper and easier means of sharing information, skills and labour and also act as a locus for marketing of products. The informal sector *Jua Kali* which in swahili means 'hot sun' represents the best example of networking in Nairobi creative industries. This is where artists (creatives) are often found outside in open air and under the hot equatorial sun working as a network of people sharing space and a common knowledge of artistic conventions. As Margaretta states, the *Matatu* ( public transport service) culture strengthens this *Jua Kali* phenomenon wherein the network of people act cooperatively in more or less recurring or routine ways with a clear cut division of labor among the *matatu* artists and their support personnel as they create the well-known graffiti art (Swigert, 2011).

Mobile phone also play a major role in networking through whatsapp groups specifically dedicated to various sectors of creative economy. Other social media platforms used by the artists include Facebook and Instagram. However, owing to the demanding nature of their work, most of the artists network spontaneously especially when working or selling their products to consumers. One the key wood sculptor in Kenya Kepher at Kuona Artists collective reiterated that he had no time to network because of the demanding nature of his work. He relies on his quality of his artwork and the word of mouth by his clients to build up his brand. Artists only focused on networks related their line of work with no particular interests on networks which would help them develop professionally.

Most of the creatives are engaged in networks within their line of work with no much interest in other networks. Artists were keen on networks initiated by government institutions as they were sure of a ready market and outcomes. Even though opportunities from these networks are hard to come by, the results are more reliable. This is a sharp contrast to the readily available support they get from non-governmental organizations. These they claim were in hands of middlemen who benefited most from the information and products they get from the artists. Most of these non-governmental organizations duplicate their roles and repeat same activities over and over rather than support the real needs of the creatives. Creatives cited the need for moral support as well as value addition especially to their profession (skills and market) as the most important reasons why they keep to a particular network.

A number of festivals, and summits, are also a feature of Nairobi creative industries including PAWA Festivals, Sawa Sawa Festivals by Sakasi Trust, Story Moja Festival, ONGEA summit by PHAT music, etc. Apart from exhibiting the best that there is in Kenyan creative industries, these festivals offer platforms for creatives and other players within the creative industries to network through discussion forums, workshops and showcases where various opportunities of growing the industry ( training, trade and information sharing) are shared. However, despite of these events the level of engagement by the artists is on temporary basis with a few collaborations.

## Conclusions/Recommendations

The lack of prioritizing in networking has been highlighted in Kenyan music industry when compared to the success of Tanzanian music industry. Kenyan creatives should understand that networking *is part of business and that the success of their ventures needs to go beyond the labor intensive and individualistic nature of their art* (Shreekezy, 2014 ). *Despite the labour intensive nature of their ventures, creatives need to develop their professional capacity. The government also needs to realize this and create more opportunities for public – private collaboration and intervention* (Gachara, 2018 ).

There is also a need to realize the importance of networking with other sectors so as to increase knowledge base in quality products, new trends and skills as well as new markets. In the article ' A role for universities' in building a creative economy' by Donald Otoyoy Ondieki and Emily Achieng' Akuno, the importance of networking and collaboration between the artists and the institutions of higher learning is emphasized especially in developing the professionalism that is much required to make the artistic ventures a success (Ondieki, 2016). These institutions however, need to generate information and support skills which are relevant to the industry through research and curriculum reforms.

Through donor support, most of the artists (within precincts of Nairobi) are now able to access spaces and platforms where they can develop and share ideas as well as have access to wide networks. However, as earlier noted, most of the artists prefer government supported networks despite the challenges of access especially due to lack of information on the existence of such networking opportunities. This alienates artists from areas outside of Nairobi (the capital city) (Daily, 2016). This can be mitigated by the government creating centralized information hubs just like Huduma Centres where artists can gain free information.

The creative industry in Kenya is very individualized with little evidence of coordination let alone collaborations. This is clearly reflected in lack of organization of artists into serious support groups and clusters which can network to a level of permanence so as to lobby the government collectively. Most of the Sacco's and associations formed by the artists don't survive long enough to support or aid the artists in their cause. Most of the collaborative projects are semi-permanent and based on availability of funding especially from non – governmental organizations. Therefore, the government and other institutions should help with structural support to the creative industry for a unified reliable growth.

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## Promoting Youth Empowerment Through Modern Creative Dance in Kenyan Higher Education Institutions

Franklin Nyambane

Kenyatta University, [nyambsfrank@gmail.com](mailto:nyambsfrank@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Dance culture in the Kenyan music industry has adapted to forces of technological innovations, urbanization and cultural integration. This is manifested by the popularity of modern creative dances among the youth. These dances depict abstract phenomena and multicultural traits in both context and technique. Consumption of these dances in Kenya has grown over the years through national celebrations, religious worship, political gatherings, commercial advertisements and drama festivals, aided by a vibrant audio-visual media. Whereas studies have been conducted on the value of dance in preserving culture, promoting physical health through fitness exercise, enhancing creativity and self-expression and as a means of entertainment, few studies address the viability of dance in propelling economic growth through youth empowerment in Kenya. Additionally, dance curricula in the Kenyan Higher Education system reveal that modern creative dance has not been considered as a field of study with potential for economic benefit. This descriptive study will explore possibilities of teaching and learning modern creative dance in Kenyan higher education with the aim of empowering the youth towards sustainable economic growth through possible careers within the dance industry. The paper will examine the extent to which current practices in dance education in Kenyan Universities compare with dance practices in the music industry. This paper aims at proposing incorporation of modern creative dance in the curricula of universities offering dance education in Kenya. Respondents will include one lecturer supervising dance, one instructor of dance and one undergraduate dance class at Kenyatta University, Nairobi and an established dancer and dance instructor from Gladiators Dance Crew in Kisii County. Data will be gathered using questionnaires, interviews, observation schedules and focused group discussion and analyzed using qualitative methods.*

### Introduction

There are calls to empower youths who form the vast majority of human population in most countries in Africa (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2016). According to African Union Commission (2015) the people of Africa and her Diaspora, united in diversity, young and old, men and women, girls and boys from all walks of life, deeply conscious of history, express our deep appreciation to all generations of Pan-Africanists. In particular, to the founders of the Organisation of African Unity for having bequeathed us an Africa with exemplary successes in the fight against slavery, colonialism and apartheid. Agenda 2063, rooted in Pan Africanism and African Renaissance, provides a robust framework for addressing past injustices and the realisation of the 21st Century as the African Century. 2. We echo the Pan-African call that Africa must unite in order to realize its Renaissance. Present generations are confident that the destiny of Africa is in their hands, and that they must act now to shape the future they want. Fifty years after the first thirty-three (33, one of the reason for youth empowerment is achieving sustainable economic development. Owino & Akuno (2001) observe that youths are core in developing the music industry agenda, where dance is a companion. Education systems are put on the spotlight to consider policies that would foster such developments (Regional Conference on Arts Education, 2001). In this regard, art based programs have surfaced in education systems with objectives of imparting artistic skills, knowledge and attitudes to learners.

However, there is a challenge in ascertaining content for art-based programs in higher education due to changing cultural trends (Amegago, 2011; Oyugi, 2012). This is apparent in dance education where little has been done in accommodating changes experienced in Kenya dance industry. These changes observed in dance emanate from technological advancements (Bateson, 2012) and the growth of a multicultural society (Mabingo, 2015; Siljamäki, Anttila, & Sääkslahti, 2010). Dance forms with these changes have expanded the possibilities for infusing several elements; distinguish them from those practised and performed within their authentic cultures. These elements include multi-cultural idioms through borrowing of dance styles from different cultures. There are also attempts to imitate natural phenomenon such as movements made by certain animals and artificial phenomenon such as movement and postures made by helicopters and gunmen; just to mention a few. In addition, there is infusion of acrobatic techniques and dramatic impressions to enhance the communicative aspect of dance. These changes in dance characterized by the aforementioned elements provide an expanded approach to dance choreography in terms of dance design, patterns and formations; composition dwelling on imagination and novelty; and improvisation through creativity and adapting to different dance performances.

Dance education in higher institutions of learning appears to focus on certain dances that resonate with the cultures they represent. Performance, teaching and learning of these dances is aligned to the cultural norms of the communities they belong to (Wanyama, 2006). This is indeed necessary to propel the objective of using dance to safeguard ethnic cultures. It would be interesting to explore how dance education absorbs new forms of dance with the aim of preserving

cultures they represent. Nevertheless, little has been done in exploring the prospects of dance in fostering economic growth through possible career options in the industry. This paper draws a comparison of dance content, approaches to training and its aims in institutions of higher learning and dance as practised outside the academy. The comparison is aimed at examining content, approaches and aims of dance education. This comparison will provide a basis for analyzing the economic aspect through career development in dance.

### **Review of Literature**

Amegogo (2006) notes that through dance, tourists are attracted, and entertainment spots are kept busy with ‘dance inviting’ music. Anderson & Risner (2008) however observes that most studies do not address dance as a worthy venture towards economic growth. Kiiru (2015) studies dances of Kenyan traditions performed in Bomas of Kenya (BoK). The study focuses on tension between preserving Kenyan cultures through dance in its ‘original form’ and ‘stage form’. The study does not account for economic shift from authentic contexts, where performers were incentivized by cattle and land, the then main sources of wealth (Nyamwaka, 2011), to stage performances where monetary remuneration is used. Nonetheless, economic aspect of dance has existed but in different chronological dimensions. This study projects to highlight the present economic credence to modern creative dance in Kenya.

Modern creative dance is performed in Kenya Drama Festival (KDF), an annual event that brings together learning institutions (Kenya Drama Festivals Syllabus, 2017). Introduction of modern creative dance is a big step in creating job opportunities for dancers and instructors. This descriptive paper will give more insights on introducing modern creative dance in higher learning institutions.

Mochere (2014) notes that content covered in education affects curriculum outcomes depending on its relevance to societal needs and practices. The study points out that, learners get withdrawn if content taught is not related to the market. Njooa (2015) notes that music education needs to acclimatize with trends in music industry. These studies expose a need to ascertain curriculum content in and outside the academy. This paper aims at describing dance industry within a formal education perspective on the assumption that education is a gateway to career development (UNESCO, 2009). Dances with multicultural characteristics stand the test of times due to their relatively high consumption. These dances have also been exported to health sciences to enhance physical education and body health (Ashley, 2012) and this book offers a timely examination of teaching about culturally different dances. At a time when the world of dance is, on the one hand, seemingly becoming more like fusion cookery there is another faction promoting isolation and preservation of tradition. How, if at all, may these two worlds co-exist in dance education? Understanding teaching about culturally different dances from postmodern, postcolonial, pluralist and critical perspectives creates an urgent demand to develop relevant pedagogy in dance education. What is required to support dance educators into the next phase of dance education, so as to avoid teaching from within a Eurocentric, creative dance model alone? An ethnographic investigation with teachers in New Zealand lays a foundation for the examination of issues, challenges and opportunities associated with teaching about culturally different dances. Concerns and issues surrounding notions of tradition, innovation, appropriation, interculturalism, social justice and critical pedagogy emerge. Engaging with both practice and theory is a priority in this book, and a nexus model, in which the theoretical fields of critical cultural theory, semiotics, ethnography and anthropology can be activated as teachers teach, is proposed as informing approaches to teaching about culturally different dances. Even though some practical suggestions for teaching are presented, the main concern is to motivate further thinking and research into teaching about dancing with cultural difference. Cover photo: Photo credit: lester de Vere photography ltd. *Dancing with Difference* (2009; Boda & Kiszela, 2015; Hanna, 2008). This opens up career opportunities for dancers and dance instructors. Findings in this paper add voice to recognizing dance industry as a worthy employer to the youths (Owino & Akuno, 2001), and a need for higher institutions to streamline content with market driven demands.

### **Theoretical Underpinnings**

This paper is informed by Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) and Cultural Intelligence (CQ) theories. The DBAE championed by Paul Getty is grounded on production, criticism, history and aesthetics in arts education (Hedayat et al., 2013). DBAE is seen to adapt to changing trends in education (Delacruz & Dunn, 1996). This paper focuses on dance, an art that undergoes cultural transformations. According to Stinson (2003) “author” : [ { “dropping-particle” : “”, “family” : “Stinson”, “given” : “Susan W.”, “non-dropping-particle” : “”, “parse-names” : false, “suffix” : “” } ], “container-title” : “European Journal of Teacher Education”, “id” : “ITEM-1”, “issue” : “2”, “issued” : { “date-parts” : [ [ “2003” ] ] }, “page” : “253-264”, “title” : “Reflections on Teacher Education in Turkey”, “type” : “article-journal”, “volume” : “26” }, “uris” : [ “http://www.mendeley.com/documents/?uuiid=c9aa9936-d9b8-46ef-b9af-58ebbd603a80” ] }, “mendeley” : { “formattedCitation” : “(Stinson, 2003, the DBAE is a focal point for dance education with keen interest in its pedagogy, analysis and appreciation. DBAE theory draws attention of this paper in describing attributes of dance forms, interpret their significance in learning contexts, create a comparison within historical cultures and justify their worth in economic sustainability.



Cultural Intelligence (CQ) champions the ability of persons to work effectively in multicultural dimensions (Ang et al., 2007; Mohr, 2005; Molina, 2012; Wattenberg, 2017). CQ theory proposes cultural tolerance and inclusion in social-economic spheres of life. This is supported by globalization that steadily transforms the world to a small cultural village (Molina, 2012; Ziyatdinova & Tigerstedt, 2017). CQ is grounded on four factors. The metacognitive factor advocates for cultural understanding; cognitive advocates for cultural interaction; motivational advocates for willing attitude towards other cultures and behavioral inculcates adoption and demonstration of multicultural characteristics (Mohr, 2005; Ziyatdinova & Tigerstedt, 2017). The four principles of CQ provide a guiding framework for understanding, experiencing and responding to the rich diverse dance cultures. Modern creative dance is a manifestation of cultural integration. This paper proposes a dance education that acclimatizes to multicultural forms hence providing a more productive workforce (Livermore & Van Dyne, 2015) to the dance industry.

### **Objectives**

This paper is guided by the following objectives

1. To examine how dance is taught and learnt in higher learning institutions in Kenya
2. To determine how dance is taught and learnt in commercially established dance crews in Kenya
3. To illustrate how dance education promotes economic development in Kenya
4. To identify areas where higher learning institutions and commercial institutions can collaborate in the teaching and learning of dance for economic empowerment

### **Findings**

1. **Teaching and learning of dance at Kenyatta University**

#### **Objectives**

The main objective of dance education is to understand, perform and appreciate the diverse dance cultures of African communities. This is directed towards preserving dance traditions of African cultures. Students learn choreography of selected dances and are assessed through group performance at the end of the semester.

#### **Content**

Content for dance education is determined by the teaching and learning of choreography, dance techniques and dance production. Experienced dance instructors conduct training in selected dances of African traditions. The choice of dance stipulated by a departmental syllabus takes into account the level of study of the learners. First year students are taught simpler dances that introduce them to basic movements, which grow in complexity as they progress to subsequent levels of study. The dances taught represent cultures from which they originate. Dance techniques and formations are aligned to the specific cultures they represent. These are contextualized theoretically through understanding of gender, age, role and occasions they were performed. Dance steps and formations are adapted for stage performances as a representation of cultural perspectives of ethnic communities they represent. Students also learn songs and vocal embellishment techniques that accompany the dances. In addition, students learn playing instruments that accompany the dances.

#### **Approaches**

Teaching is carried out by a resource person who is also the dance instructor. The instructor demonstrates dance steps as the students repeatedly imitate until they perfect the skills. There is use of recorded dance music. This is to maximize concentration of the dance steps, as singing would cause disruption. Quick learners also assist those whom have not mastered dance steps. In most cases, quick learners in a particular dance are members of, or have been brought up in environments where the dance originates. For purposes of perfection of the dance techniques, learners carry out a video recording as they dance and create a session where they view and review their own performances before the final assessment.

2. **Teaching and learning dance in Modern Creative Dance crews**

#### **Objectives**

The main objective for training dance is to create, prepare and perform dance for economic purposes. Dance crews are hired to perform in various occasions to provide entertainment. Companies also engage dance crews in marketing their products especially in market places. Dance crews aim at creating a vast repertoire of dances to maximize opportunities for generating income.

#### **Content**

Content for dance is determined by dance composition, improvisation, choreography and production. Dance crews create dances with various formations and techniques guided by a pre-recorded mix tape (music used for dance). In dance composition, new dance styles are generated. In dance improvisation, an existing dance step is modified to suit the occasion or to fit in the mix tape. Choreography involves coordination of dance techniques, formations and creating a flow of

sections in the dance. The main sections of choreography involve synchronizing all dance techniques and solo parts where individual dancers display their expertise in performing certain unique and complex dance techniques. Dance production brings together aspects of stage use, lighting effects, camera works and the location. Dance production therefore depends on the intended purpose of the dance. This can be either for recording purposes or for a live performance. For a live performance, dance crews package themselves with emceeing and disk jockey as part of their production.

### Approaches

Dancers and dance instructors are passion driven and talented youths. To become a dancer, one has to be talented then undergo training. Talented dancers are sought from competitions such as the Kenya Drama Festival, road shows and public events where dance takes place. Dance crews find it difficult to recruit new members who have no idea about dance; they prefer engaging those with dancing skills. After gauging their potential, dance instructors, who double up as administrators, select them for further training. Training sessions start by warm up exercises involving gymnastics and physical fitness. There is no particular framework for dance styles and techniques. During training, any dancer or instructor comes up with a dance technique and demonstrates it to the rest. The technique is practised, improved and once it is satisfactory, the dance instructor adopts it as part of the crew's repertoire. Dance resources used are the internet- YouTube, dance video clips and resource persons.

### 3. Dance education in promoting economic development in Kenya

Dance education as practised at Kenyatta University and the commercially established institution visited leads to two common careers; dance instructing and dancing which form the backbone of dance crews. Their services majorly seen as entertainment eventually culminate in monetary returns. To begin with, there are dance festivals and competitions, which bring together various dance crews, and the participants are rewarded. Secondly, entertainment spots such as nightclubs engage dance crews to popularize their events in a bid to attract customers. Thirdly, musicians seek services of dance crews in designing dances for recording their videos. Fourthly, various organizations, companies and political parties use dance to attract an audience in market places and beside roads for them to market their goods, services or put across some communications. With the introduction of modern creative dance in Kenya Drama Festivals, learning institutions hire dancers and dance instructors who train students and are paid for their services. There are religious groups who engage dance crews during their worship to create a lively congregation. The tourism sector engages traditional dancers in welcoming guests in the country at the airports. All these are avenues that culminate towards economic gains through dance.

### Discussion of main points

#### 1. Teaching and learning dance in higher learning institutions

All students taking music courses learn dance as part of their study. Dance is taught and learnt alongside music with content on songs and instrumentations. This supports the notion found in African traditions that music and dance go hand in hand. A model for dances of African traditions encompasses singing, playing instruments and dancing (B.A. Dhidha, personal communication, October 4, 2018).

The dances determined by the syllabi are selected from ethnic communities in Kenya. Choreography embodies dancing cultures of the ethnic communities they belong. There is a challenge in contextualizing the functionality of these dances as they were performed. Some dances were performed in a courtship context where men would impress unmarried women by displaying their skills and strength. Such a courtship context is theorized in teaching and learning as the actual courtship would not be part of the objectives as it were. It is also important to note dancing techniques are practically demonstrated by the dance instructor who has a deeper understanding of the authentic movements in a particular dance. Authenticity is passed across generations through a model where learners imitate exact dancing techniques and formations as demonstrated by the instructors. It can be argued that the objective of dance education in higher learning institutions is primarily to safeguard dance cultures of ethnic communities in Kenya. Going by this objective, little is achieved in placing dance as a field with potential for enhancing economic development in a society where ethnic oriented boundaries are broken. There is need of restructuring dance education to conform to a multicultural society where cultures are integrated. This is supported by Cultural Intelligence theory that indicates a higher level of efficiency through accepting, integrating and understanding other cultures.

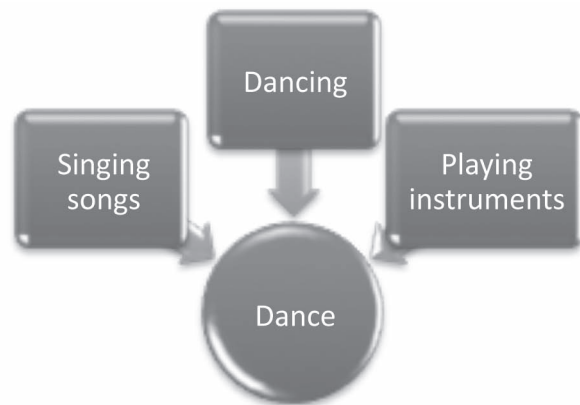
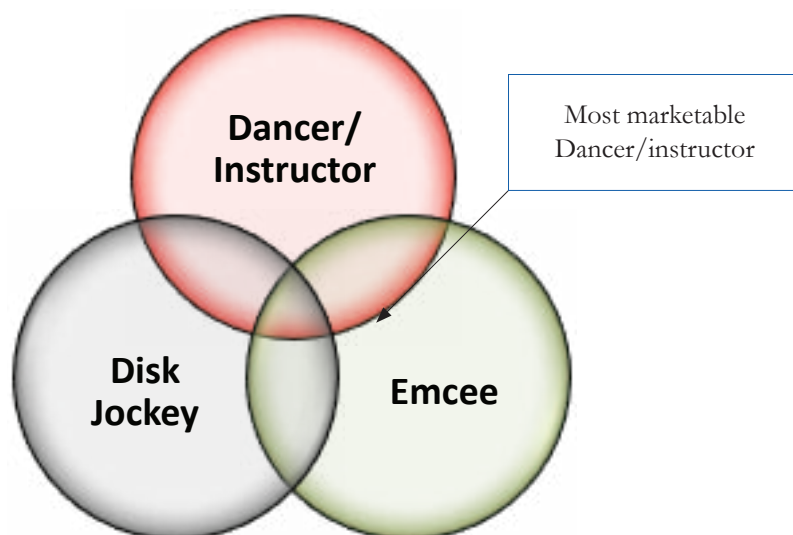


Figure 1: Model for Dances of African Traditions

**1. Teaching and learning of dance in commercially established dance crews**

Commercially established dance crews use dance to create income-generating opportunities for the youths. Dance content is directed towards reaching a bigger audience that would vary in age, gender and culture. The content is driven by dance composition, improvisation and production. Through composition and improvisation, dances adapt to intended contexts by use of pre-recorded mix tapes. This enables dance crews to maximize their potential in generating income, as they would fit into client's needs. In addition, dance crews package themselves with two other related fields; disk jockey and emceeing. This implies that a dancer with both emceeing and disk jockey skills would be more marketable than one with only dancing skills.

The activities for disk jockey and emcee are independent; however, clients would always prefer to have the entire package from a dance crew. Dancers take the initiatives to learn these skills informally from friends who have the skills or enroll in some academies that offer training in the skills.



**Figure 2: Interface of dance occupations**

**2. Areas where higher learning institutions and commercial institutions can collaborate in teaching and learning dance for economic empowerment**

There are two areas where higher learning institutions and commercial institutions would collaborate to empower the youths economically. The first area would be in terms of content. Higher institutions of learning focus on dances of African traditions. Focus on these dances appears to sideline other cultures. It is possible for a dance student to feel alienated if his/her culture is neglected. Commercial institutions would as well incorporate dances of African traditions to their

repertoire so that specialists in these dances would get platforms to perform and subsequently earn a living. This will also enable those who make traditional instruments to get a ready market, as the demand would grow. Second area would be in terms of approach. It would be interesting to allow composition and improvisation of dance in higher learning institutions. This move would create a bigger repertoire of dance. Students studying dance would be exposed to a variety of dances and prepare them to pursue dance careers after completing their studies.

**Conclusions and implications for music education**

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made.

1. Dance education has existed from informal approaches in village settings to formal approaches in learning institutions. The shift from village to learning institutions provides a reality of context, content and technique aimed at preserving dance cultures of various communities. Amidst this preservation, performers of these dances are in position to earn a living through their practice of dance. It would be necessary to expound dance as a field of study in relation to available careers in the music industry.
2. Globalization has shifted ethnic boundaries in Kenya and around the world. New cultures have emerged that have given rise to new forms of dances. In line with the objective of preserving cultures, the education system would consider these dances to be incorporated in learning as an attempt to preserve them as well.
3. There is need to incorporate market driven content in dance education that conforms to the demands in the music industry. This would create interest within students and as well inform stakeholders to look up to higher institutions of learning in producing a better and learned workforce in the industry.
4. Students studying dance would be exposed to careers in dance early enough and be allowed to establish links with dance crews to familiarize with the dance industry. This will be a motivating factor to the students, as they will get an opportunity to get firsthand experience with dance industry and industry stakeholders who would never worry getting experts to work with.
5. This study finally proposes the inclusion of modern creative dance in higher institutions of learning with the objective of empowering the youth with market driven content. This move would create well-informed graduates

who would easily fit into the dance industry market. In addition, the move would add voice of recognizing dance and related arts as worthy fields towards the economic pillar in Kenya.

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## The University Curriculum and the Creative Economy: The Case of Training Theatre Artists in Kenyan Universities

Shikuku Emmanuel Tsikhungu  
Kenyatta University, [teshikuku@gmail.com](mailto:teshikuku@gmail.com)

### Introduction

The development of arts and the artists in Kenya can be heavily bolstered with proper training which can only be assured if a practice based curriculum is designed and carefully implemented to meet the demands of the industry. However, the University in Kenya is saddled with a double heritage where it trains both academic minded individual and a professional minded graduate. Thus the graduate of a Kenyan University is expected to effectively theorize issues in the profession that he/she is trained in. Some established Universities in Kenya have been teaching theatre to eventual practitioners of the art. In the larger field of the arts and particularly the performing arts, only two out of the seventy four (74) Universities established in Kenya teach theatre arts<sup>1</sup>. These are Kenyatta University with its Bachelor of Arts (Film and Theatre Arts) and Maseno University with its Bachelor of Arts (Drama & Theatre Studies). Other Universities like Moi University and University of Nairobi simply offer some unit courses in theatre arts that culminate to the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Education (Arts).

Medford and Fliotsos (2018) suggest the teaching of theatre arts ought to deal with five key issues which are teaching with Digital Technology, Teaching in Response to Educational Trends, Teaching New Directions in Performance, Teaching beyond the Traditional, and Teaching Collaboratively or Across Disciplines. These five key areas will help the teacher of theatre arts navigate the challenges that beset the 21<sup>st</sup> century curriculum while at the same time equipping the theatre graduate with skills to contribute to the creative economy. The creative economy has variously been defined as that segment of the economy that relies on practitioners of a creative nature. It relies on the talent and intellect output more than a tangible product of an industry (Akuno et.al, 2017).

Using the five key areas mentioned above, this paper maps out how the curricular of theatre arts in two Kenyan Universities have been designed and the extent to which they meet the threshold of preparing graduate artists who can contribute to the creative economy. The paper proposes to do so in the belief that arts and artist development can only be realized if the training is streamlined to meet the demands of the industry. As its methodology, the paper will first analyse the two curricular from Maseno University and Kenyatta University. Two graduates; one from each of the selected Universities who are practicing theatre artists have been interviewed to shed light on the benefit of their higher education in theatre arts to their practice.<sup>2</sup>

### The Artist training as a panacea of the creative economy

As the 1963 Robbins Report on Higher Education in the United Kingdom points out, universities are charged with four main functions of which instruction in skills is only one.<sup>3</sup> The other three are the search for truth (hence the importance of academic freedom), the transmission of a common culture and common standards of citizenship, and, most importantly perhaps, the promotion of the general powers of the mind in order to produce cultivated men and women rather than mere specialists and automata for the labour market.<sup>4</sup> It becomes thus difficult for a truly and holistic university curriculum to base itself only on equipping its graduate with skills which are necessary for the functioning of the narrow definition of the term creative economy. **Creative economy are** those sectors which specialize in the use of creative talent for commercial purposes.

The key word in this definition is talent. For institutions training human resource in creative economy, one of the most challenging question remains whether talent can be trained or not. An attempt at responding to this question leads one into further questions foremost being, what exactly are these industries that this talent is required? The British Council on their website about the creative economy assert that it includes those industries that hold both commercial and cultural value like advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, film, video, photography, music, performing arts, publishing, research & development, software, computer games, electronic publishing, and TV/radio. It is further notes that, 'The creative economy has no single definition. It is an evolving concept which builds on the interplay between human creativity and ideas and intellectual property, knowledge and technology. Essentially it is the knowledge-based economic activities upon which the 'creative industries' are based.' The idea of knowledge-based economic activities actually brings in the fourth objective of a University which is to produce graduates that promote the general improvement of the mind. It also hinges on the third objective of the University which aims to transmit a common culture of citizenship.

What seems lost in all these definitions is the creation of intellectual property which is akin to manufacturing within the mechanical industry circles. That the end product in the creative industry is a cultural good that can be plugged into the

economy necessitates the training of the creative artist. An end product is not an end in itself; it needs to be traded for profit. The creative economy is therefore not just the production but the sum of all the parts of the creative industries, including trade, labour, marketing and distribution at a profit. This profit inevitably must be sufficient to sustain more trade, more production, more marketing and more distribution. It must be self-sustaining. Where does training fit in this self-sustaining circle?

The creative economy is of growing importance to the economy of many countries and gives employment to a large number of people not only because of its value to the economy but because it projects a country's culture, image and influence globally.<sup>5</sup> It is now indubitable that the creative economies depended on the creative talent of individuals and on the generation of intellectual property and this becomes a great asset particularly to theatre artist who uses purely his or her talent with little help from technologies to explore the world through a narrative story. It becomes important thus to ask how the academy can teach the theatre arts trainee on copyrighting his or her talent. Protecting talent as the value of an idea through patents, trademarks or other legal and regulatory mechanisms to stop it from being copied or turned to commercial advantage without the permission of the person whose idea it is seen as central to any understanding of theatre art become a skill that the trainee needs to understand as a key link in the industry. The two Universities selected for this study did not teach copyright as a course to students. However, at Kenyatta University, copyright is taught under a unit course titled Entertainment law and ethics. The two interviewees confirmed that they were not taught copyright in the lecture rooms. They had to learn during their practice.

Since the benefits of theatre or any performing arts as a creativity driver in the social and cultural spheres is random, it has become more apparent that it makes no sense to focus on their economic value in isolation from their social and cultural value. This actually brings us to the second objective of the University as an institution of higher learning which is the transmission of a common culture and common standards of citizenship. In Kenya, it is already recognised that the combination of culture and commerce is the fuel of the 21<sup>st</sup> century nation. It may be that policies to promote and protect creativity will be the crucial determinants of success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and theatre arts is at the centre of this creativity. The trainee artist thus then becomes a key cog in formulating policies that will protect creativity. For example, the key policy on having a commission of performing arts remains unmet in 2018 despite concerted efforts by key industry players to have the government form one. Such a commission would be funded and solely charged with promoting the arts in the country through research, archival and documentation. Akuno et. al (2017) have pointed out the failure of higher education institutions in Kenya to research and document raw facts and figure to substantiate the size and scope of the economic impact of the arts on the creative industries. They ament that the absence of facts and figures creates a lacuna in the knowledge of this key area of economy. They warn that lack of such important research exposes the disconnect between higher education research and the industry it produces graduate for. It is thus imperative that the curriculum of the University should strive to equip its graduate theatre arts graduate with skills necessary to recognize and carry out such research.

In his treatise on why the Government of Kenya needs to take the cultural and creative economic activities seriously, Kimani Njogu laments that, 'due to the inability by the government to institute research in and about creative industries in order quantify their true value, decision making about arts and culture by leaders in Kenya continue being ad hoc rather than mainstream.'<sup>6</sup> Instead of encouraging local creative industries by opening distribution channels and ensuring that creators get their full dues, Kenya is marketed to the world as a 'consuming and filming destination' not as 'a production destination'.<sup>7</sup> In theatre, the government is loudly silent on its promotion, opting only to censor when it feels threatened like the case of the razing down of the Kamirithu Educational Centre in 1978. Yet the theatre arts are at the core to the celebration of Kenya's diversity and aspirations hence calling for the institutionalisation of the making of policies friendly to its promotion. The theatre arts graduate therefore, besides just acquiring skills, is required to articulate issues that will help in formulation of policies that will steer theatre and performing arts as drivers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Kenya. Taking courses such as Arts management and entertainment law and ethics which are offered to graduate trainees of theatre at Kenyatta University and Maseno University thus become core to the training rather than elective.

### **Situating the Theatre Graduate Artist in the Kenyan Creative Economy**

Theatre practice falls into this definition of the creative economy. Its contribution to the Kenyan economy has never been quantified no in-depth study has been made to ascertain its estimated output on the GDP. One of the challenges that theatre practice has experienced has been consistent organized training of its practitioners. Some of the established practitioners have even casually dismissed training as a waste of time and resources since one only requires 'talent' and 'passion' to be a practitioner. The academy can draw from the indigenous theatre practices that were functional. These functions included didactic, apprenticeship as well as entertainment. How does the University therefore aid a student taking courses in performing arts to embrace these advantages? A student enrolled in the Kenyatta University has the following avenues of participation in the arts;

- a. Performing arts clubs registered under the Directorate of Students' Affairs. These include Kenyatta University Travelling Theatre, Tripple E theatre, KUPAT among others;

- b. Religious based performing groups notable of which are KUCU and KUCC;
- c. The troupe that performs during the Kenya National Drama Festival
- d. Involvement in Theatre Festivals notable being Kenya International Theatre Festival.

Participation in the above mentioned clubs and troupes allows participants to utilize their energies positively in their various endeavors in the University. It is through expending energy in such constructive activities that they avoid negative and harmful practices that can lead to disciplinary actions.

Secondly, cross disciplinary students who take part in this festival can raise their stature. A biochemist involved in the creative arts will be a confident and better biochemist. Creativity permeates all the spheres of life and one of the key requirements of employers in the present job market is creativity and innovativeness. Perhaps this is one of the areas that the creative economy has not been able to exhaustively theorize.

Third is the question of emotional quotient. The concept of being able to relate to a problem that another person is going through for you to be able to find creative ways of solving it is one that the creative theorists may need to reconsider in the way students participate in arts in Universities.

### **The trainee Theatre artist at Kenyatta University and Maseno University**

Besides, having the above three avenues, a student specifically enrolled in the Department of Film and Theatre Arts has other extra avenues of practice that are academic in nature. In the student's catalogue of Kenyatta University such a student is mandatorily required to take 50 courses about half of which are in theatre arts and most of which (almost 75%) are practical in nature.<sup>8</sup> What practical means is that the student is required to engage in part or the whole of theatrical production in the course of the semester? A simple example is a student taking a course in theatre directing will be required to direct a theatre production with and among his fellow students as part of his or her assessment. This simple task constitutes a higher percentage of the students' overall grade sometimes going up to 70 % of the overall. It is estimated that making the courses practical is in a way training the future graduate in the needs of the industry.

Practice based curriculum trains the student in theatre discipline according to Ms. Suki Wanza of the graduates of Maseno University who was interviewed for this study.<sup>9</sup> She confesses that engaging in practical's for class projects allowed her latitude to experiment and be more creative since every semester she took part in at least two productions. She teamed with her colleagues to source for material for costume, props, sets and backdrops and where they could not find, they improvised. Mr. Andy Ruri, the theatre arts graduate of Kenyatta University concurs with Wanza by noting that the practice-based curriculum helped him learn by doing and this sharpened his skills particularly in playwriting.<sup>10</sup> By continuously writing scripts in the lecture room, Mr. Ruri confesses that he learnt to determine what works and what doesn't. It also helped him discover his niche as a playwright; i.e. relying on characterization process in telling the story rather than the narrative style.

Secondly, such a student is required to take two attachment avenues to interact with the industry players up close and candid in the promise that such an interaction will enable the student fit into the industry once he or she is through with training. While at Maseno University, Ms. Wanza says that they were lucky to have attachment sought for by the University since the theatre arts class had only a handful of students and the students were very dedicated to theatre arts. This made her work easy as the supervisors visited them at the area of attachment often to check on their progress and advise. Contrary to Ms. Wanza's experience, Mr. Ruri did not go for attachment as it was not compulsory during his time as an undergraduate student of Theatre Arts at Kenyatta University

Thirdly, such a student takes courses in the marketing and management of art. This is the business side of arts that teaches the student to consider artistic talent as a brand that can be packaged and sold just like any other good or commodity. Lessons learnt through the study of marketing courses helped Ms. Wanza strengthen her niche as an actress. She understood that branding herself as a an actress alone could not help her much in the industry so she took advantage of courses offered in music at Maseno University to learn to sing, dance and organize events. That is why she doubles up as a singer as was seen in their highly successful musical *Contract Love* by Legacy Arts and Film Lab. As an organizer, she learnt early during her training that she needs to hone her ability to talk about shows and the company she co-founded with her like-minded colleagues. All these efforts allowed her package herself as a multi-skilled theatre artist.

Mr. Ruri had a different experience in marketing and management. He avers that the practice of marketing and managing art that he found in the industry was different from what he learnt in the lectures. While at the University he says that there was too much emphasis on the traditional forms of marketing of the arts, like the use of posters, newspapers and going for interviews in television and radio stations and others, he found out that the best marketing strategies of the arts in the industry was actually on social media; something he wasn't taught in class. His experience is that digital marketing works at the present. However, like Ms. Wanza, he also says that the traditional models of marketing equip one with confidence and presence. He confesses that sometimes journalists, who are public figures, can be very instrumental in marketing an artistic production by simply endorsing and publicising it on their variously media platforms including

social media. It would then seem like the curricular of theatre arts of the universities need to be reviewed to ensure that digital technology is at the heart of training to equip the graduates with practical skills of using it in the industry. This is one of the areas that Medford and Fliotsos (2018) advocate for.

Fourth is that the candidate is required at the tail-end of the four-year course to team up with colleagues for a full-length theatre production. This is seen as the culmination of training in which the sum total of the parts that the candidate trained in the initial years is put into practice and tested. Andy Ruri pointed out that the practical project he took part taught sharpened his skills of writing especially when he learnt how to write using writing softwares. It also taught him rules of writing which he cheekily notes that once he had learnt them, he was able to creatively break them to the delight of his audiences. When the play they had produced was presented to the audience, he says that the audience reception gave him a satisfaction that indeed rules can be creatively broken to serve the purpose of creativity in art. It also enabled him to understand his niche of writing which is laying more emphasis on characterization process.

The curriculum for theatre has more emphasis on practical courses. Splitting classes so that they are not so many for intensive and rigorous training is indeed a boast in the personalized training of the artist. Capping it at 30 students per class enables the artist lecturer to interact with the trainee artists in a more personalized way by offering them individualized attention rather than group attention. However there has been are still calls to bring it down to not more than 15 students per lecture. The thought behind this kind of curriculum is that the four aspects above will have prepared the candidate not just as a producer of the creative talent but also a merchant in the same. The graduate artist, it is hoped, will be able to brand the artistic product produced, make a self-sustaining product out of it.

This kind of structuring is also replicated at Maseno University's Department of Music and Performing Arts although with a heavier bias towards theatre in Music and music in theatre arts.

### **The academy into the industry**

The Kenyan University can learn from South African Universities particularly the Stellenbosch University on how to invite the theatre artist into the lecture hall. At Stellenbosch University, theatre artists are invited to offer seminars and assess practical examinations that lecturers simply moderate. In this way the, the trainee artist interacts with the industry way before graduation and this offers not just knowledge exchange but assurance of continuity of growth of the theatre practice and industry.

Although the academy has also been quite instrumental at the Kenya National Drama Festival as adjudicators, actors, trainers and organizers, the uptake of these key functions by the theatre trainee artist is very low. There are almost no mechanisms that allow the trainee theatre artist in the academy to be initiated into the art of adjudication. If ever the trainee artist becomes an adjudicator, it is more by chance than by a systematic mechanism.

The academy that offers creative subsidies to lecturers who successfully organize productions offers an incentive that goes a long way in encouraging the link between effective artist training and the industry. It is only by practicing that lecturers can offer meaningful training. It is also by practicing that lecturers stretch the practice through research and experimentation.

A strengthened industrial and field attachment components of training prepares the training artist to meet the demands of the industry practice. This can be done through regular meetings between the industry supervisor and the academic supervisor. Currently, students on attachment at Maseno University and Kenyatta University are assessed only once by their academic supervisors. It is during this assessment that the university supervisor meets the industry supervisor to discuss strengths and challenges that the students face. This one meeting cannot have no mechanism of checking progress through feedback and evaluation.

With devolution through counties, the academy can take advantage and liaise with ministries of arts and cultures in counties to establish vibrant theatre performances in county festivals. This can also be a source of employment.

Theatre establishments around the country can be attached to Universities as training centres. Garrison theatre, Nakuru Players, Kitale club, Little theatre Mombasa, Studio theatre and others can be attached to Universities for purposes of training and practice. This will stretch the creativity and imagination of students involved to diversify and widen their theatre activities, spaces and interactions with the society.

Some students end up pursuing theatre arts at the two universities by chance. Since they may have not achieved/scored enough marks to secure admission into the first choice courses, they opt to pursue theatre arts in the assumption that it is an 'easier' course. They assume that theatre arts is merely play and no serious academic work. Such students end up getting disappointed when they find it rather difficult since theatre arts is not just play. The two universities can sieve the students they select for admission through pre-admission auditions. Selection to these departments needs to be based on interest and knowledge rather than by attaining the cut off points.

Theatre art trainees can improve their industry knowledge by taking part in the many experiments that Kenyan practitioners are currently churning out. The Storymoja Festival, the Sigana Festival, The Kenyan International Theatre



Festival, experiments being done at Godown Arts Centre, Experiments by Heartstrings, FCA among others. These are fertile grounds not just for participating in but also for carrying out research.

There are a number of associations that are dedicated to the growth of theatre in Kenya. This include PRISK (performing arts rights society of Kenya), TASK (The Artists Society of Kenya), KAG (The Kenya Actors Guild) as well as the Kenya International Drama in Education Association (IDEA). One of the links between the academia and the industry can be achieved by recruitment and registration drives of these associations in Universities. Recruiting student members will motivate participation in their activities or creation of University chapters which would ensure growth and regeneration. It will also boast the participation of this students in the industry hence plugging them into the creative economy right from the University. An interview with the two graduates selected for this study revealed that there is no such mechanism in place.

## Conclusion

Hobgood (1988) notes that theatre requires more than clever minds and willing hands; it demands a full commitment in the use of self (body, mind, and spirit) and an alert awareness of contemporary life (social, ideological, cultural). It is therefore imperative to train theatre artists in mind, body and spirit. Indeed the art of theatre arises from a distinctive kind of talent, and an essential function of the theatre teacher is the recognition, nurturing, and development of that talent. The university important in achieving this function by designing a curriculum that supports both the theatre arts trainee and the teacher of theatre arts. From the results of the interviews with the two graduates of theatre arts in the two Kenyan Universities and the reviews of the two curricular offered in this Universities, this article appeals for better student preparation for successful navigation through a highly globalized and multicultural market of the creative economy.

## NOTES (Endnotes)

- 1 See the figures on the commissions portal <http://www.cue.or.ke/index.php/status-of-universities>)
- 2 I thank Ms. Suki Wanza a graduate of Maseno University, Department of Music and Performing Arts and Andy Ruri, a graduate of Kenyatta Universities Department of Theatre Arts and Film Technology for accepting to be interviewed and providing information that went into the writing of this article. I also acknowledge with gratitude the help I got from Dr. Nancy Masasabi in getting the curriculum of Theatre Arts of Maseno University.
- 3 See *Committee on Higher Education (23 September 1963), Higher education: report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins 1961–63, Cmnd. 2154, London: HMSO*
- 4 See Also Wanjala Nasong'o's indictment of those who view the Kenyan University as a place to churn out skills only in the daily nation here <https://www.nation.co.ke/lifestyle/weekend/branding-university-courses-as-useless/1220-4835236-h4dxhcz/index.html>
- 5 See the value and definition of the creative economy from <https://creativeconomy.britishcouncil.org/guide/what-creative-economy/>
- 6 See <https://www.nation.co.ke/lifestyle/weekend/Kenya-should-pay-more-attention-to-culture/1220-4298450-a6yyvgz/index.html>
- 7 See Kimani Njogu's indictment of the government's appetite to censor while shying away from promoting the arts in his column article in the Daily Nation. The article can be found here <https://www.nation.co.ke/lifestyle/weekend/Kenya-should-pay-more-attention-to-culture/1220-4298450-a6yyvgz/index.html>
- 8 See Kenyatta University (2014). *Students Catalogue for 2014-2017*. Nairobi: Kenyatta University Press
- 9 Ms. Suki Wanza graduated from Maseno University with a Bachelor of Arts in Drama and Theatres Studies. She has worked as a theatre coordinator with PATH international. She has worked also worked in youth peer education and community theatre with the National organization of peer educators (NOPE). She has acted with Bagarumu theatre in Nakuru, Celestial studies in Mombasa and currently works with Legacy Arts and Film Lab as programme coordinator. She has also starred as Harriet in the musical production *CONTRACT LOVE*, and as Margaret in *TOO EARLY FOR BIRDS: THE BRAZEN EDITION*.
- 10 Andy Ruri graduated from Kenyatta University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Theatre Arts and Film Technology) in 2014. While at Kenyatta University he wrote and directed an award winning play, *HALLO ADULTS* which was ranked the best play in the 2012 edition of the Kenya Schools and Colleges Drama Festival. Since then he has written and directed acclaimed plays like *HOME COMING*, *THE DEVILS COMPOUND* and *LONG TIME BROTHER*.

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**II**

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**Community  
Engagement**

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## From Kamaru to Kwame: Cultural Awakening through Music

Maina wa Mūtonya,

Pwani University, Kenya, [mutonya@gmail.com](mailto:mutonya@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Musicians Joseph Kamaru and Kwame Rigii represent two generations that are as distinct as they are diverse in their approach to the dynamic cultural issues in postcolonial Kenya, and more specifically in the Gĩkũyũ community. Although the two musicians as cultural practitioners have thrived in different stages of the evolution of the creative economy in Kenya, and have very diverse backgrounds, this research attempts to draw the links to their use of music as a tool for a cultural renaissance in their different epochs. Whereas Kamaru's music since the 1960s, that advocated due to its respect for traditions and cultures of the community, has been the vanguard of what today is referred to as the popular music of the Gĩkũyũ, Kwame Rigii represents a brand of contemporary urban musicians whose affinity to tradition defines new ways in which Gĩkũyũ culture is being reimagined. This paper, in considering the two artists, engages with the way music has provided avenues through which we can interrogate the aspects of the Gĩkũyũ culture that have gone through moments of 'renaissance' in post-independence Kenya.*

### Introduction

Contemporary Kenyan popular music is defined by the intra- and inter-ethnic collaborations that forge a blend between the local and the foreign, the *traditional* and the modern. As Githiora (2008, 92) argues, “modern-day Kenyan musicians ... have either retained or continue to re-create traditional musical forms and practices by remaking modern music that is grounded in popular traditional forms.” The music is firmly rooted in contemporary urban society and reflects the “interests and conflicts of its transitional nature as a meeting point between new western values and old traditional concepts” (Okwonkwo, 1986, 653). The conceptualisation and representation of urban identity is “an enactment of the complex and multi-layered interweaving of culture, tradition ... gender and class” (Clark, 2003, p.3).

This interplay between the local and the foreign allows us as researchers to interrogate the role of popular music in creating and promoting cultural awareness. The broader question would be around the identity of the culture that is represented in the various styles and beats of the Kenyan popular music. Is it the musician's use of the vernacular language that qualifies the music to be of cultural relevance or are we talking of the themes that can be inferred from the songs? Or is the use and appropriation of traditional instruments or appearance in traditional garbs that is seen as the appreciation of traditional material culture enough to make an argument of a music that carries a culture of a people? These wide-ranging questions form the mainstay of our paper as we consider two musicians from the Gĩkũyũ community.

### Joseph Kamaru, Music and Cultural Nationalism

Kamaru's music since the 1960s, has advocated for the respect of traditions and cultures of the community. He has been the vanguard of what today is referred to as the popular music of the Gĩkũyũ. Kamaru, who died in October 2018, ranks as the most prolific and successful Gĩkũyũ musician having recorded at least 2,000 songs since his entry into the landscape of Kenyan music in 1966. His songs provide a commentary on current day social and political issues. He is further renowned for his skillful application of Gĩkũyũ traditions and customs in his lyrics.

Some of his melodies are adapted from tunes that were circulating in the 1930s and 40s. Though his music is largely in the Gĩkũyũ language, Kamaru has on occasions, ventured into Swahili and English language songs with mixed success. His album, *Chiira wa Mama Chirũ* contains a wide range of styles from the near-benga “*cavacha*” to those that have some traditional Gĩkũyũ folk elements underlying them.

Kamaru sees the role of the musician in the society as being the custodian of the community's culture. In most of his songs, he commits his lyrics to enlightening his audience about the Gĩkũyũ culture. In the song, *Mitugo ya Agĩkũyũ* (The Customs of the Gĩkũyũ), he teaches the audience about the most important aspects of the Gĩkũyũ culture, tradition and customs. Listening to the song would seem like a summary of Kenyatta's Facing Mt Kenya (1938), where stanza by stanza, he pronounces the names of Gĩkũyũ clans, the traditional setting of the Gĩkũyũ house, the various ceremonies of the community, the generations, and how meat was shared along gender and age brackets as well as the various traditional dances and dresses. He sees himself as a ‘teacher, expressing the traditional values of his culture, as well as contemporary social comment’ (wa Ndigirigi, 1988).

Most of his songs are purely in Gĩkũyũ language. His music, however, requires a critical appreciation. The music is deeply rooted in Gĩkũyũ oral tradition. The fact that his music, spanning over four decades, is readily available in music shops in Kenya denotes a wide audience. Linguistic ambiguity is one of the cornerstones of Kamaru's music. His late 1980s release, conveniently named *Adults Only* was loaded with sexual innuendos and bawdy lyrics. The songs became

quite popular, but it was only those armed with the proficiency of the language who could understand the lyrics. Kamaru's use of proverbs, especially, as well as the linguistic ambiguity send out messages to his audience, but who are subject to interpreting the proverbs differently.

By use of proverbs, the popularity of Kamaru's music derives from the fact that they are presented in a language and a discursive medium that renders them more available for criticism and discussion. For instance, his song *Chunga Marima* can be read from two levels, once we appreciate the several proverbs therein. The song apparently was a castigation of the dissenters of Moi's rule in the 1980s. On a cautionary note though, Kamaru is giving advice to politicians, as seen in the phrase below (Adapted from Wanjohi, 1997, 165):

*Mwaka wa bitu ndũhoyanaĩrwo rigĩ* - When hyenas are in abundance, one doesn't beg a wicker-work door.

Signifying the jungle that politics is, Kamaru applies this proverb, which is normally used for counselling, moderation and prudence in generosity, denoting that Moi's trusted aides betrayed him by planning the coup in 1982. The proverb extends help to the besieged, that in politics, it's all about your survival first. The proverb however derives a lot from the lives of the pre-colonial Gĩkũyũ. Living in animal infested areas, hyenas would at some seasons wreak havoc by attacking people in their homes. The wicker-work door, a kind of a gate outside and around the hut could easily prevent the marauding animals from reaching your home. Since all people would be affected, this won't be the right time to lend it or borrow the door from your neighbour. Drawing from Gĩkũyũ oral tradition points at crucial observations when discussing Kamaru's audience: Wekesa argues that 'people's sense of themselves always come from the use of images, symbols and a wide series of responses which they come to identify with, and which also distinguish them from others' (Wafula, 2002, p.9).

Given the 1982 context of the song then, the above proverb again can be read as a warning to the Gĩkũyũ community, that they should be self-reliant, especially in politics. Kamaru's vacillation and middle-ground stance is manifest once again. In the same song he uses a host of other proverbs which, when analysed would reveal this ambiguity, for instance:

*Njõya cia njamba ti cio cia mvera* - The feathers of a cock are different from those of a hen.

*Mũikia ndoi mvehereri* - Whoever is throwing a missile doesn't know where it will land.

The first proverb above mentions the metaphor of the cockerel and the hen, but also shows the relationships between the rulers and the ruled, or the differences between the ruling elite.

Just like readers in works of fiction, the audience in music grasps essential features of these proverbs and uses them to interpret their own social experience. According to Barber, "proverbs meaning is never complete until they are applied to a concrete situation" (Barber, 1997, p.357). Therefore, one can argue that a single proverb can be applied to different situations. I am arguing that though Kamaru's songs were recorded years ago, the use of proverbs makes them relevant presently in discussing Kenya's changing politics. The concerns with the everyday life, be it social or political, has made Kamaru's music appeal to a wide audience across different ages of people born in different periods of Kenya's political history.

While Kamaru, representing the old generation of musicians in Kenya borrows heavily from the Gĩkũyũ oral tradition, a new breed of musicians has sprouted whose main contribution, especially in the study of identities is to blur the perceived boundaries; ethnic/national, rural/urban, sacred/profane, moral/amoral and traditional/modern.

### **Kwame Rigii: Cosmopolitan Nativism and the 'Modern Tradition'**

Kwame Rigii represents a brand of young, contemporary urban musicians whose affinity to tradition defines new ways in which Gĩkũyũ culture is being reimagined. But to underscore the relevance and importance of Joseph Kamaru in the realm of Gĩkũyũ popular music, one of Kwame's celebrated songs is a rendition of a song *Mvene Nyaga*, originally done by Kamaru in the 1960s. The song is a fervent supplication to God, to foment unity among the Gĩkũyũ people in Kenya. It is a song with deep cultural symbolism and ethnic consciousness for *Nyũmba ya Mũmbi*,<sup>3</sup> that has antecedents in the independence struggle. But within the current cultural rebirth happening in the community, the song becomes a signature tune for traditional ceremonies and the attendant cultural activities. The video version of Kwame's version of the song ends with the artist holding a banner, loudly and proudly proclaiming "*Tũĩ a Mũmbi*" (We are sons and daughters of Mũmbi).

Kwame, a young artist, whose style of music could well fit within what can be referred to as the contemporary urban beat, refers to the genre of his music as urban folk (Ruthi, 2018). However, the pertinent themes in his music resonate with the cultural rebirth that is taking place within the Gĩkũyũ community. He presents some of his music dressed in the traditional attire of his community and sometimes sings in the Gĩkũyũ language. In fact he has done a rendition of Garth Brooks', country song, 'If tomorrow never comes' in Gĩkũyũ.<sup>4</sup>

Kwame is deeply involved in the 'return to the roots' movement in the Gĩkũyũ community that has seen concerted

3 Mũmbi is revered mother of the ethnic community. The Gĩkũyũ people invoke the name of their mythical ancestors when the community feels threatened.

4 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLC7rxKuS9o>

efforts to recuperate the ‘lost traditions’. He appears as a panelist on Inooro TV, a Gĩkũyũ TV station in a program that is aimed at raising cultural consciousness as well as educating the audience on the importance of observing cultural rites and traditions as was the practice before colonialism.

As an artiste and cultural practitioner, Kwame exhibits what has been termed as *cosmopolitan nativism* where “the process of identity formation is defined by images of a fleeting past, a transient moment that is calling for its repetition in the present” (Nyairo and Ogude, 2003, p. 385). Whereas his works do not present the attendant antinomy that comes with this level of nativism, Kwame is a good example of what we mentioned above in relation to a confluence between new western values and old traditional concepts, a hallmark of contemporary urban music in Kenya.

Different from Kamaru, who at one time ditched secular music to venture into gospel songs, Kwame presents himself as a cultural practitioner in his TV shows and other fora and sees art as a means of creating cultural pride and consciousness. As an urban artist, whose music is not necessarily in the Gĩkũyũ vernacular language but is deeply involved in raising cultural awareness, he points to an indulging interplay between rural and urban identities. Ferguson argues that themes of rurality or the country have often provided metaphors for the construction of indigenous critiques of urban, capitalist encroachment. The village is associated with moral purity as contrasted to the town, which is conceived as “immoral, artificial, corrupt and anomic” (Ferguson, 1992, p. 80). Kamaru’s songs, while raising cultural awareness, as seen above, are very critical of the city and the urban spaces. Musicians like Joseph Kamaru and D.K. Kamau in the earlier days always castigated the city and its entrapments, singling out prostitution and the good-time girls who would fleece working and married men of all their wages and salaries. A keen listener of Kamaru’s work will note the disdain in which he perceives city life, which he claims has had adverse effects, not only in the personal relationship of one but also within the larger cultural realm. In his song *Nairobi ĩriagwo kĩa*, Kamaru describes Nairobi as a graveyard for many romantic relationships “*Nairobi ti ĩcubo, mbĩĩra nyĩngĩ cia wendo nĩkuo iĩ*”.

The village has been celebrated as virtuous while the city is evil, but Mũgithi artists<sup>5</sup> work to subvert this paradigm while celebrating the city. Kwame, as a musician and a cultural activist blurs this urban/rural dyad and contradiction, by being both an urban born young artist, but who actively professes and promotes the culture and tradition of his community. Kwame cannot be viewed in the same light as Mũgithi artists mentioned above who seem to glorify the city, while mocking that which represents the rural or the village.

In Ferguson’s perspective, the imagined locus of moral purity and wholeness of the village, as contrasted to the city, obscures the reality of the village too as the “seat of actual and antagonistic social relations.” (Ferguson, 1992, p. 90). Much, however, can be said of the duplicitous nature of the “country” much as it can be said of the “city.” Thus, as Haugerud (1995, p.139) asserts, presumed boundaries between town and countryside, like those between town and countryside are fuzzy at best. It thus becomes imperative to engage further with the representation of the rural in the study of African music.

### Rethinking the Rural in African Popular Music

The mention of research on African popular music invokes thoughts of traditional dances and the application of indigenous instruments, especially the drum. Even when themes rotate around contemporary music from the continent, there have been deliberate efforts to deny the dynamic nature that defines the soundscape of this music. Field researchers of African popular music have identified the rural areas as sources of what has been referred to as ‘authentic’ African music. Hence, it becomes easy to equate the traditional to the rural, while modern and contemporary is always associated to the urban.

Whereas the traditional has been a source of inspiration to many contemporary musicians, the divide between tradition/modernity; rural/urban should be negotiated carefully in research in an attempt to understand better the music. Again, aware of the diverse interpretations of this tradition/modernity dyad, it is always important to “differentiate the ideology of tradition and modernity from tradition or modernity as they are experienced” (Brodnicka, 2003, p. 2). The example of Kwame invites researchers to question such paradigms and binarism in the study of African music, and in our case, of the popular music of the Gĩkũyũ, in relation to promoting cultural awareness. It then becomes untenable to classify Kwame’s music in the usual rural/urban; traditional/modern dichotomies. Other artists like Ohangla Makadem have blended traditional instruments with contemporary rhythms in a way that signifies the complex and dynamic nature of African popular music.

This presents scholars with the challenge to understand and conduct research on the music of Africa in its entirety. The search for the authentic African popular music could limit one’s interpretation of the diversity that defines the music of the continent. Secondly, what has been referred to as traditional African music is itself transforming, taking cognisance of the social changes that perpetually confront any progressive society. Thus, the notion of the ‘rural’, as the space for ‘authenticity’, need to be reconsidered.

5 These are musicians, armed with only a guitar, (as opposed to a fully-fledged band) who mostly perform covers and renditions of other musicians, while frequently altering the lyrics of the original songs. Most Mũgithi songs are seen as a celebration of sex as well as the urban life. See, Mutonya (2013) for an insightful analysis of this genre of Gĩkũyũ music.

## Conclusions

In this preceding discussion, it emerges clear that music and musicians have played a key role, not only in re-imagining the cultural traditions of their people, but also in proactively engaging in efforts geared towards raising cultural consciousness and recuperating the lost, dismembered tradition. The debate around the urban and the rural is necessary but not important if art and music achieve the goal of empowerment, in both creative and cultural ways. From a theoretical perspective though, such critical engagements are necessary especially in deconstructing the study of African popular music and other components of the creative economy.

Joseph Kamaru and Kwame Rigii become telling examples in this endeavor though they represent different facets in the creative economy. Kamaru, even in his death continues to be a reference point in any discussion around Gĩkũyũ music and culture too. In fact, it can be argued that his music has become an important repertoire in the cultural renaissance witnessed in the Gĩkũyũ society. On his part, Kwame represents the young and emerging voices in the cultural rebirth and the evocation of moments of cultural pride and consciousness in the community

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## Discography

- Aga Gũkinyamĩra* – Kwame Rigii <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLC7rxKuS9o>
- Mwene Nyaga* – Kwame Rigii <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aoII8FIJj8>
- Mwene Nyaga* – Joseph Kamaru <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9D9M0tQkns>
- Chunga Marima* – Joseph Kamaru <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0re9PXXK8oQ>
- Nairobi Īriagwo Kĩ* – Joseph Kamaru <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IO-uxNArjE>
- Mĩtugo ya Agĩkũyũ* – Joseph Kamaru <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHamKKlqyvw>

## Community Engagement through the Creative Arts With Reference to Film and Television

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Eston N. Munyi

Kenyatta University School of Film and Creative Arts, [estonmunyi@yahoo.com](mailto:estonmunyi@yahoo.com)

### Paper Objectives

1. To strengthen and invigorate film productions ideas within the young creative minds for business ventures in the country.
2. To challenge policy makers, academicians and stakeholders in the film and television industry to give this sector competitive edge in the economy to provide job opportunities to the youth.

### Introduction

My presentation delves into the role that Film and Television ought to play for profitable youth engagement. The youth bracket on our population is roughly 70%. This numerical strength gives the youth the largest space in our demographic pyramid. It is this tyranny of numbers, in my considered opinion that these credible minds cannot ignore. I therefore suggest solutions must be found during our deliberations in this forum to keep our Youth busy and profitably employed.

At the onset of our independence the handing over, taking over technicalities gave film and television a very weak position in operationalization of the economy. Yet at this time Film and Television had shaped up a business revolution in Europe and United States of America. Colour film and television technology had already been established. Film and Television stories were on the forefront on entertainment and advertising forming a lucrative business sector for its professionals.

For us here in Kenya this important economic engagement did not see the light of the day until, in 1976, when the Government of Kenya together with the then Federal Republic of West Germany, established the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication, Film School. It had a very small youth catchment for training. Its initial enrollment admitted twenty two young film makers from the whole of Africa. Kenya as the host country had sixteen students which set the professional activities of the film industry rolling, but from a birds-eye view this was only a drop in the ocean. And therefore unlike Europe and America where film and television had taken a business format, here in Kenya the thinking remained government, with its main preoccupation as the support for development programs. Yet the forefathers of the film industry such as Lumiere Brothers of France and the famous film entrepreneur of the United States of America, George Eastman, the founder of KODAK company in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had at the onset proved to the world, film was a wonderful entertainment and a great business undertaking. The country had got it wrong. This situation has persisted for a long time. It is therefore incumbent on us to address the bottlenecks to unlock this lucrative sector for dynamic youth employment and engagement.

### Film and Television for Industry

Countries that have identified film and television as business activities have stepped their trade benefits to astronomical levels. The reasons are obvious film and television cuts across into a number of fields like hospitality, transport, tourism, catering, tailoring, carpentry, medicine, insurance etc. The volume of employment for the youth in the above fields is excellent and the young professionals in these areas will find good jobs. The four presidential pillars of development mooted recently by development strategists should indeed find space for the youth to produce films for both local market and international trade to reduce capital flight spent on paying for film and television programs.

### Government and the Film Industry

The government has established several commissions and departments to promote the film industry. The big question is, are they all performing towards a viable film industry, what are the tangible benefits in relationship to the box office collections. Have we been able to premier a full length feature film wholly locally produced without foreign crew domination? How many international treaties have we signed for Productions that we expect to have for both local and international distribution networks? How well do they operationalize the activities that promote private film business? Are these platforms youth employment friendly and are they creators of wealth like Nigeria, India, South Africa and North Africa? If these questions are not answered satisfactorily then film business viability is not being adequately addressed. It is therefore critically urgent to call for concerted effort to look into these concerns.

**Television Establishments**

The advent of private broadcasting Television Stations in Kenya in the late eighties and early nineties played a key role in local business development of the broadcasting sector. However, the production of in house programs by television stations down played the business synergy of the country. In most cases television stations imported cheap poor content programs than what could have been produced locally. This denied the young film and television professionals business and created instant capital flight to pay for the foreign productions on our broadcasting screens. Therefore a weak growth in home grown productions denied a major community bracket of our population business and employment.

**Kalasha International Film and Television Festival**

When the Kenya Film Commission was established in 2006, there was no major film festival in the country. This meant that the creativity that was spread across the nation always disappeared back into our minds and production offices without viewership. The establishment of Kalasha Film and Television awards breathed a fresh air into the creative domain. It was a welcome idea and quite fulfilling. However, having been on for a number of years, we need to take stock of the number of film and television projects that this initiative has supported from idea to postproduction in an effort to create jobs. Have we as a country benefited regionally and internationally by pumping so much finance to celebrate the Kalasha event? Does the youth have enough leverage in business pursuit due to the Kalasha initiative? Yet we know film festivals and television markets are important business arrangements for professionals.

Historically our entertainment has been provided for by excellent productions that have been produced by overseas film companies in our God given studios and locations in the country. Their Box Office collections across the world and even in our own country have been colossal figures whether in dollars, sterling pounds or the esteemed Kenya shilling. If creativity is plenty and studios are readily available in such a favorable environment then the film business initiatives should be identified to tap both good ideas and create employment for the community and not always look for overseas thinkers.

It is my honest opinion that a lot has to be done to bring this industry to world status. We have that capability. If Kalasha Film and Television market is international, how many co-productions have we collaborated with and what are the youth engagements that we have been able to initiate to produce a major film locally. Kalasha being tusks of a young elephant, it should be progressively operationalized to grow the industry by accommodating full length feature films good enough to keep our cinema screens active. This can be done. For every Kalasha event a film of international clout and creativity should be premiered locally.

**County Film Festival**

When the Kenya constitution was promulgated in 2010 it favorably created forty seven counties which automatically gave film and television productions a competitive business strength. It is important for the counties to initiate co-production agreements to support the youth employment and creativity in their respective areas of jurisdiction. In some cases they can even develop their own film festivals and prepare productions to challenge entries at the international film festivals.

**University Film and Television Education and Training**

Institutions of higher learning identified film and television Education and training as a major component of their curriculum. These Institutions have done a commendable job on this area with very limited technical facilities throwing the profession into operational obstacles that undermine the very qualifications that are so dear. It is important for higher Education Institutions to underline the importance of well equipped studios and a qualified technical staff whose professional practicums will be able to turn out qualified young film graduands. If this is not given the attention that it deserves, then the film and television programs will continue to suffer professional handicaps, creating employment hitches.

**Continental Film Collaboration**

For the last four years Kenya has been the Host country for the Pan African Federation of Film makers [FEPACI]. A golden plate domiciled in Kenya from South Africa for Africans. Yet we know Africa as a continent has a vibrant youth population creative enough to support a Pan African film festival in the Eastern Africa region, with the same status as FESPACO,[this is the continental film festival] it was started in the early sixties in Burkina Faso .It is necessary to engage FEPACI organization to understand their thinking as far as creative youth productions are concerned within Eastern Africa. Is it possible for them to fund associations or support the creative minds at the universities to strengthen African film industry? My guess is that this can be achieved but industry players should be willing and ready to work together to support this creativity for the sake of the industry.



### **International Students Film Festival**

To be able to encourage youth creativity and inject both business mind and entrepreneurship there is need to start a wholly owned international student's film festival probably to be rotational in all the universities that offer film education and training. This will encourage cross-cultural productions in film, television, animation and advertising creating a diversity that will become the heartbeat of the film industry. Many years down the line film students in this country have not at all interacted with their peers from other countries. Once the youth come together during film festivals they will create professional bridges and co-production engagements. Especially because as a country we shall benefit from the CILECT curriculum [International film and Television organization] through our friendship with Kenyatta University who are already regional representatives of this esteemed International organization, that has links with majority of the universities, film and television institutions in the world. In Africa the University enjoys professional contact with [CARA], Cilect Africa Region Association. Therefore with Kenyatta University being the Eastern African nerve centre on regional film curriculum, then the youth in this part of the world will be joining ranks with highly professional young minds in the world. The absence of an international film festival therefore remains a disservice to our youth. This is because the festival will act as a catalyst for making sure our local and international film business will be felt far and wide. As a country we shall also use profitably the current air flight links that the government has established with the United States of America, Europe, India, China, Russia and the Far East. Kenya finally is not only a regional hub but will become a global nerve centre for film and television activities. The youth are the best ambassadors to carry this professional challenge to spearhead the growth of the film industry. The International Students Film Festival is undoubtedly the best vehicle to provide the road map for this development.

### **Mashinani Studios**

It is a government of Kenya Initiative that presents itself as a supporting project to a number of youth programs in film and television. This project is remarkably one of the most brilliant ideas whose aim is to take care for youth by engaging them profitably. If it is handled with less government and allow the youth to exercise their creative talents on film and television broadcasting, the scenario that we anticipate to have majority of the youth engaged in this sector, will be realized in not a too distant future. It is remarkably important that private entrepreneurs who are supposed to create a vibrant film industry both at Mashinani (grassroots) and the upcoming cities in the country should take their rightful positions. A local and international business model approach that will commercially strengthen distribution of these programs by establishing marketing network ventures that are robust and economically dependable should be identified.

### **Conclusion**

On the foregoing discussion it is definitely clear our approach at independence lacked clarity on how film and television programs should be mainstreamed into the economy. Given the situation we find ourselves in, thinkers and entrepreneurs, ought to give this dynamic sector direction to create an industrial framework for our youth. Undoubtedly this forum is the best placed to address this need. While it should be appreciated government position in this field is still active, the film and television technocrats should move fast to create a viable independent film industry free from bureaucracy. This will definitely shape the future lives of our youth by creating platforms that will keep them busy and profitably engaged.

On a very special note, let me thank our hospitable Host, "The Technical University of Kenya" for taking time to think through on how our "Youth" can be accommodated in our creativity attributes of film and Television and propose that the second conference will be comfortable to find open doors again at this esteemed University.

## The Role of Public Art and Community Participation within University Setting

Otieno Jayne,

The Technical University of Kenya, [Jayne.avuor@gmail.com](mailto:Jayne.avuor@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Public art is a distinguishing part of public history and evolving culture. It reflects and reveals society, adds meaning to cities and uniqueness to communities. Public art humanizes the built environment and invigorates public spaces. It provides an intersection between past, present and future, between disciplines, and between ideas. Public art, as a marginalized practice within the already marginalized field of art, provides a vehicle for new ways of looking at art and art education in the context of social relevance. A community public art project in a University setting is a means to communicate ideas, develop and apply skills, work together as a team, and share in the final accomplishment. Public art adds enormous value to the cultural, aesthetic and economic vitality of a community and should play a vital role as a center for culture and community life. This paper aims to investigate the role of public art and community engagement within university setup. The literature specific to public art on universities is impoverished. Thus the purpose of this paper is to contribute to this field, in order to initiate a debate on possible future works focused on the role of public art on youth empowerment in universities. It is hoped that this study will assist in enhancing youth-inclusive participation in public art making in universities, education and opening a dialogue for further research.*

### The Study

#### Statement of the Problem

Best practice in public art is to consider the audience's acceptance of the form, subject matter, and content of the site-specific art work. Dependent on state legislative processes, some public higher educational institutions have little say regarding the "fit" of the work of art as it relates to the site. In worst case scenarios, some state-mandated public art projects end up on campuses against the better judgement of those who study on those campuses. Without appropriate procedures on public art on campuses, miscommunication, physical threat, monetary concerns, or inadequate education of the public often leads to opposition and social unrest. The literature specific to public art on campuses is impoverished. Even more rare are research studies discussing the role of public art on campuses. Thus the purpose of this paper is to contribute to this field in order to initiate a debate on possible future work focused on the role of public art and community participation within university setting.

#### Objective

To explore youth participation in the creative process of public art within Universities in Kenya.

### Introduction

Participation in arts education benefits youth, and similarly public art aids community awareness and cohesiveness (Haye, 2014). Therefore the driving question behind this research is: How can engagement in public art assist the youth in the creative process, design and empowerment within university?

The definition of public art is an amazingly complex question caught up in social, cultural, political, historical and economic considerations. The ambiguity of the term "public art" results in different definitions. Thus, defining public art within the context of this paper is a first priority.

The term 'public art' refers to works of art in any form that have been designed and performed with specific intention of being sited in physical public domain, usually external and accessible to all (Szostak, 2010).

According to Landi (2012), Public art encompasses both functional objects in the landscape and expressive, decorative forms which are either permanent or temporary that belong to any established classic or contemporary artistic disciplines, such as but not limited to sculpture, mural, and relief, installed with the intent to enhance, physically define, promote or establish identity in a space or a place.

#### Why public art?

Public art is not simply art placed outside. Many would argue that traditional gallery spaces are public in their openness to interested viewers, while, conversely, others would insist that the privatization of public spaces has meant that art placed in public space is not necessarily for all. Thus, public art is not which has as its goal a desire to engage with its audience and create spaces- whether material, virtual or imagined-within which people can identify themselves, perhaps by creating a

renewed reflection on community, on the uses of public spaces or on our behavior within them. Public art, then, does not have only to be expressed visually. It can be expressed in terms of soundscapes, media places such as Internet, or Television, as well as in material spaces of inhabited landscapes (Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2005). However, given the focus here on links between art and university community, the researcher chose to concentrate on the visual.

Public art adds enormous value to the cultural, aesthetic and economic vitality of a community and should play a vital role as a center for culture and community life (Palatinus, 2014). Many public art are part of our heritage. The question that arises is - what is the purpose of public art that involves the youth especially in the creative process that subsequently affects their surroundings and control of their future?

Haye (2014) defines the youth inclusivity as engaging young people with one another, their neighborhoods, and public resources in a manner that reserves traditional power dynamics and promotes critical, self-guided growth toward sustainable and empowering social connections

### Literature Review

When analysing this body of literature, it is clear that there is little framework which are specific to youth inclusive public art. For this reason, the researcher will pull from multiple researchers' themes to assess public art and arts education as they relate to the youth through empowerment.

Research tools to analyse the impact of an artwork on the community are lacking in rigorous results, especially those concerned to the university campuses (Pedrabissi, 2015). This view is shared by Hayes (2014) who observes that current literature notes the importance of community engagement in public arts to generate social cohesion in urban communities. Elements of analysis often omitted, however, include the perceptions of youth and their undervalued role in urban community cohesiveness and health. In order to reassess the worth of, and the need for, youth-inclusive public art initiative, this paper looks at the role of public art and community engagement in university setup.

In arts education, the closest parallel to youth-inclusive public art in North American literature place-based arts education and the environment is Inwood (2008) who suggests that arts education programs should be implemented to involve students in ecological literacy in their specific regions. This study displays "a way for art and the environmental educators to create powerful and memorable experiences for students by bringing self and community in dialogue with place". In many ways, this notion mirrors this study, the difference being the researcher will look at youth in community betterment in university rather than environmental literacy. Grodach (2011) seeks to link revitalization of urban centers with commercial cultural centers. This is an attempt to link art with the larger scheme of development within communities. Godach (2011) also seeks answers by creating surveys and conducting interviews to ask the artists and the spaces they displayed or worked with art how they perceive their role in the community. If youths are critically engaged, they can determine elements of their community which are beneficial or problematic. They then can implement projects aimed at highlighting youth concerns such as creativity and empowerment.

There is a number of overarching themes then, in analyzing youth-inclusive public arts, one of the most obvious is that current literature omits the youth perspective almost completely. There is no breakdown of what role youth play in the regenerative process. What are their perspectives and goals- what outcomes do they experience after being engaged and included in the various projects. These are essential questions. (Palatinus, 2014). This study, like the one performed by Inwood (2008) and Grodach (2011) focuses exclusively on youth who represent a significant segment of the community.

Several types of works erected in public spaces strive to create interaction, enable participation and communication. Whether they have, as goal, the creation of identity, the creation of a collective memory, the pointing out of various societal problems, public thinking, the expression of different opinions, or simply the experience of community, they generate meeting points whose primary objective is to enable the establishment of contact. According to Palatinus (2014), there is lack of research into the practice of community participation in making permanent public artwork, its meaning, outcomes. There is more to learn about how a university community participation could contribute to understanding of public art and what is learnt in public spaces.

How individuals i.e. the audience understands public art is in this sense of crucial importance. Artefacts of famous artists can be found anywhere in the world but not all of them are able to establish communication with the local environment and produce social, cultural, historical and special coherence. How various audiences integrate with public art can be described as a difference between the "visual landmark" and the "collective anchor-point" (Szostak, 2010). When analyzing the role of public art, it is important to stress that different audiences have different needs and different views towards how public art should be inserted in the urban space. In actuality, many examples of small scale permanent projects exist that involve community members as makers. These projects can be found in parks, schools and community centers, but rarely include university students in their making (Palatinus, 2014). There seems to be a lack of inclusivity of youth in participating in public art activities in universities.

Public art, an arena where art and community often collide. Public art, as marginalized within the already marginalized field of art, provides a vehicle for new ways of looking at art and art education in the context of social relevance (Palatinus, 2014). The best practices particular to public art on campuses require that the art's form, subject matter, and content align with the institution's specific needs, goals, and visions. Without appropriate procedures, miscommunication, physical threat, monetary concerns, or inadequate education of the public often leads to opposition and social unrest (Bock, 2006). Public art in university set up would empower and enhance knowledge among youth.

The keystone to the artistic climate is the collaboration amongst the artists themselves, starting from individuals taking action for community development, by creating opportunities for the youth. By providing a platform for the youth to meet, and to develop and express their talent, and passion with the implicit vision to encourage youth to choose the right path in life (Palatinus, 2014). Youths can be empowered and nurtured to be the creative thinkers for their community in the future. Such initiative and collaboration would help to transform young people's potential, creativity, talents, initiative and social responsibility, through the acquisition of related knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Establishing dynamically built environments is a means of building a sense of community, creating institutional identity, and defining place. Public art on campus is a component of these aims. Public art on campus can no longer be ignored or selected casually because of mandated funding, institutional diversity, and community interests. Art evokes a societal dialogue describing human experience and brings a sense of humanity to society. At their best, both art and higher education promote the free exchange of ideas, humanity, and innovation in that they operate as cultural beacons. The vernacular of college campuses must articulate the platonic principles of higher education (Greiner, 2009).

Even though a new web of virtual public spaces has emerged, architects, urban designers and artists still face the task of shaping public buildings and public spaces, and are therefore compelled to find links among the various forms and gradations of the public sphere that exists today. In this regard, public art is an essential field of investigation to understand the possibilities of how art can help to develop contemporary society. In particular because public art is defined by spaces in which both art and public art interact. The dynamics of the interactions between public, place, and aesthetic experience (art) are all critical to understanding what constitutes public art.

According to Ellen Dissanayake, art critique and author, art is as necessary to human as shelter, safety, and love (Dissanayake, 1988). In her book, *what is art for?* Dissanayake outlines the 10 psychological benefits of public art:

Enhancing a sense of identity, building community and reciprocity, increasing physical and psychological wellness through hand-built objects, exercise for the non-verbal parts of the mind, enhancing and enriching the natural and manmade environments, helping cope with anxiety, providing refreshment, pleasure, and enjoyment, connecting people to important life concerns, acknowledging the things people care about and allowing them to mark or celebrate caring, awakening a deeper self-understanding and a higher level of consciousness (McDonald, 2002).

## Findings

Greiner (2009) developed statistical surveys to analyse the benefits experienced by institutions that included public art on campus. Greiner's work is relevant here due to its large coverage of bibliographical research that focuses on community identity. Ernest Boyer's report *In search of community* (1990) serves as an investigatory framework for critically understanding the impact of public art on campus. Other researchers conclude that a low sense of community puts students' affective and cognitive development at risk (McDonald, 2002). All components of public art on campus, should articulate both form and function. The role of public art in university is to make places fertile for creativity, critical thinking, and the search for truth.

The aim of public art on campus is to enhance the aesthetics of that campus. A physically attractive, user-friendly and contemplative built environment can benefit those who work, study, visit and profit from higher education. Public art can embody and reflect the intellectual and creative missions of the institution. It can foster campus spirit and memorialize both key individuals and events of significance (Mankin, 2002). Art evokes a societal dialogue describing human experience and brings a sense of humanity to society. At their best, both art and higher education promotes the free exchange of ideas, humanity, and innovation in that they operate as cultural beacons (Greiner, 2009).

## Discussion

During the 1960s the ultra-leftist Situationist International avant-garde group experimented new art paradigms. Temporary installations, happenings and other different performances that implied the interaction of an audience with a public space, contributed to expand the role of art in the daily experience.

The 1960s period saw several pedagogical experiments in the field of architecture that played a decisive role in destabilizing the traditional modern thought in academies and institutions. Thus, a new concept of art that involved public participation entered academic institutions in order to find new challenging fields of application.

The key point here is the understanding of what public art can generate to a university environment. Public art can take many forms. It can be represented as a fixed sculptural work that is designed for a specific site or can be created as an ephemeral installation. The engagement of the audience with the artwork is of crucial importance to generate a creative environment. Thus an analysis of the relationship between the community and public art in terms of how that community engages with the surrounding public space is of critical importance.

Public art on campus is a process that develops public space for community interaction. Ernest Boyer's *In Search of Community* is a means of determining what just community question is in relation to the effects of a just community on students' outcomes (Boyer, 1990). Creating places for the community to interact, relate, and share promotes ways for students to connect.

Boyer's rubric of a just community is integral in describing the components deemed essential to creating a sense of community on campuses. Boyer describes the qualities of a just community via six dimensions as follows:

An open community where freedom of expression is promoted; a just community where diversity is aggressively pursued; a disciplined community where individuals behave for the common good; a caring community where services to others is encouraged; a celebrative community where heritage is remembered, and rituals are widely shared. Pedrabissi (2015).



Figure 1: Photo showing public art at Maseno University

### Conclusion

This paper sought to create an understanding of how public art can be a source of creativity and empowerment on community of youth on campus. The researcher hopes to inform university stakeholders on the importance of youth –inclusive participation and education in public art and additionally open a dialogue for further literature in creating a better visual environment. By giving the youth a chance to participate in public art could effectively amplify young people's voices and empower them to take charge of their lives.

Public artworks offer a collaborative attitude to making historical objects. These works are evidence of people working together, and agreeing on a communal voice, or presenting many different voices. They also offer the possibility of the choice to represent individual community members and their ideas in public space. These artworks place importance not only in the ideas and contributions in the meaning of the artwork, but also the exaltation of the youth whose creative efforts are of equal importance.

The quality of public space is an essential factor in determining the "good life" of a community. Public art contributes to enrich this quality of a space. Universities that decide to invest in public art, in order to enhance a sense of community on their campuses are an approach which could nurture the development of a creative environment that could improve the overall performance of students.

In order for the field of public art in university set up to stay relevant and thrive in the Kenya's rapidly changing environment, there is a need to actively shape its future and make case for the value and relevance of public art in universities.

There is sparse body of literature and the lack of empirical data pertaining to the benefits of art. Thus a more scientific approach to this field is needed, especially when considering the relationship between art and the university campus community.

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## Art Songs By African Composers Performed In Nairobi: Investigating idiomatic music expressions in performance practice

Sylvester Makobi,  
Indiana University, [smakobi@indiana.edu](mailto:smakobi@indiana.edu)

### Abstract

*The study investigates musical idiomatic expressions in the performance of art songs in Nairobi, written by African composers. The study found out that the African art song is a growing genre and is approached from different angles. Some composers and singers lean more towards Western classical music; others lean towards African traditional music while others are in between. The study also found that the African idiomatic expressions connected to African music include: the use of African languages, use of African rhythmic character, repetition, the simulation of African instruments, the use of performance practice borrowed from African traditional music, and the use of solo/ call and response. "The African Pianism Theory" by Akin Euba and "The Theory of Musical Competence and Interaction" by Benjamin Brinner guided the study. The study was based on qualitative research method. Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect primary data, from classical singers from Nairobi, composers of African art music, heads of music institutions and music educators. Secondary data was collected from library research and through content analysis of the selected African art songs performed during the recital. The sampling methods used include purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The purposive sampling method was used for sampling the music heads, after which the snowball sampling technique was used in the rest of the study. The responses from the questionnaires and interviews were coded and analysed for detection of similarities and differences. The findings of this study are useful to enhancing artist development since more younger composers can be recognized in the contribution to the genre and have their works performed and included in music curricula and festivals, as well as get more training opportunities. In addition, singers and pianists will have more art songs by African composers in their repertoire.*

### Introduction

#### Background to the Study

Several scholars have defined the Western art song as a piece composed or arranged for solo voice and piano accompaniment (Hoffer, 2009; Kimball, 2005; Ware, 2008). The art song can be traced to the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Kamien, 2008). However, it gained popularity in the nineteenth century (Ware, *ibid.*). It was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the art song started developing in different countries in Africa.

In Kenya, art songs are performed in various places and for various reasons, which include: festivals, in music institutions for the purposes of practical examinations, voice recitals and in concerts. Art songs are performed in various categories at the Kenya Music Festival (Hereafter referred to as KMF). Some of the singing examinations are administered through the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) and the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examination centres.

#### Statement of the Problem

The study was motivated by a voice recital held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at Kenyatta University. In the recital, the singer was dressed in a tuxedo, a white shirt, a bow tie, and black shoes (Kahuro, 2014). This was dressing fit for a standard recital in the Western classical music tradition (Hagberg, 2003; Emmons & Sonntag, 2002).

The recital repertoire included art songs spanning from the African to the European continents. Even with the differences in continents, there was no clear distinction between the performance of African and Western art songs. A cross section of the audience was in essence left wondering what could then define performance practice of an African art song. It is in the light of the above dilemma by the audience, that the study purposed to investigate what constitutes African musical idiomatic expressions in the performance practice of African art songs.

#### Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the characteristics of African art songs?
- ii. How does the piano part enhance African musical idiomatic expressions in African art songs?
- iii. What is the performance practice of African art songs?

## Research Objectives

The study set out to achieve the following research objectives:

- i. To identify the characteristics of African art songs.
- ii. To determine how the piano part enhances African musical idiomatic expressions in African art songs.
- iii. To find out the performance practices of African art songs.

## Review of Available Literature

### Brief History and the Development of Art Song in Kenya

As mentioned in the introduction, the Western art song tradition began spreading in Africa in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Euba, 1989). This was enhanced by composers travelling to different parts of the world to study and through interactions with Western art music.

Similarly, Kidula (2013) writes that the Ahalogooli community of Kenya, was “...introduced to Euro-American Christianity and Western hymnody from the beginning of the twentieth century...” (Kidula, 2013, p. 228). She continues that the interaction saw the translation of English hymns to local languages and the growth of other genres of music such as the spirit songs. She states that composers such as Arthur Kemoli started arranging the spirit songs and soon the songs were performed out of the church for festivals, entertainment and commercial purposes by solo artists and various groups.

She adds that as Kenyans began composing art music, composers were using percussive instruments such as drums and the *kayamba* for accompaniment, since guitars and pianos were expensive. This also led to the domination of choral music, part of the reason being that, “Apart from instruction for white students, music education in the 1960s was confined to training choir directors...” (Kidula, 2013, p. 187). However, she observes that pressure built up from five teachers and students, resulting in them taking Western music theory and performance exams (Kidula, 2013).

The exposure of Kenyans to Western art music through music theory and performance led to more compositions of art music, which started appearing often in the KMF and ultimately inclusion of art songs by Kenyan composers. Some of the Kenyan composers who are contributing to the genre include Timothy Njooora and Sylvester Otieno (Wambugu, 2012) “abstract”:

“The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate Kenyan choral art music’s role and establishing its importance in the national high school music curriculum. Kenyan art music has arguably contextual, cultural and musical elements beneficial to music students in high schools. The research is guided by the following questions: What is the current state of African (Kenyan). The study contacted the two composers mentioned above to participate in the study and sort more names of Kenyan composers.

### Performance Practice

During the initiation ceremonies of young men among the Tiriki of the Luyia community of Kenya, Kidula (2013) writes that the young men are usually in costumes and masks and as the initiates are singing and dancing, one finds some people joining in. This shows an example of the performance of African music which encourages participation. The study purposed to find out if the performance practices exist in African art song performances, including directions of costume.

On the other hand, Euba (ibid) argues that the emphasis on the performance of African art music is different since, “... the principal function of the music is aesthetic ... an audience ... is required to devote its whole attention to listening...” (Euba, 1975 p. 47). This suggests what was employed during the recital that motivated the study. The study purposed to confirm if indeed it applies to other performances of African art songs in Nairobi.

### Techniques Used in Analysis of Art Songs

The following suggestions were used in art song analysis:

- Presence of preludes, interludes and postludes of piano parts (Kamien, 2008).
- Art songs based on poems and folksongs being strophic, the rest being in ternary and through composed forms (Kamien, ibid.; Tunbridge, 2010).
- Presence of simulation especially on piano part (Hoffer, ibid.).
- Importance of text-setting analysis and rhythmic analysis (Higgins, 2010) for Benjamin Britten, text-setting analysis is analogous to song analysis; this dissertation cautions that non-engagement in text-setting is to approach song as if it were instrumental music; likewise, to consider inadequately the wide-ranging musical implications of music-text relations is to limit the interpretive possibilities of song. This research approaches the analysis of song through an engagement with songs composed by Britten in the 1930s from texts by W. H. Auden.



Blending insights from literary and linguistic studies with rhythmic analysis, this necessarily interdisciplinary research places song analysis in cultural context; text (poetic and musical).

**Theoretical Framework**

As observed earlier, the piano part is integral in an art song performance. With this in mind, the study is guided by the African Pianism theory by Akin Euba (Euba, 1989). Euba (ibid.) states that African Pianism is the adoption of the piano to performing African music, hence its Africanization (Euba (ibid.)). The tenets include,

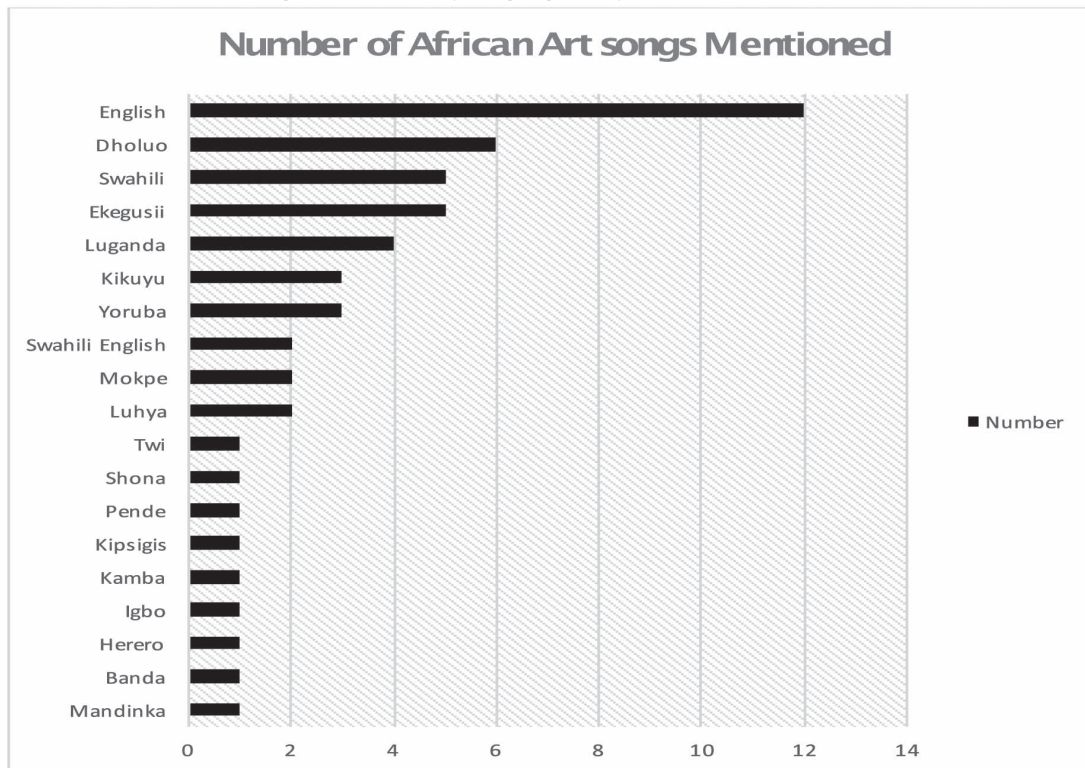
- (a) thematic repetition (b) direct borrowings of thematic material (rhythmic and/or tonal) from African traditional sources
- (c) the use of rhythmic and/or tonal motifs which, although not borrowed from specific traditional sources, are based on traditional idioms (d) percussive treatment of the piano (Euba, 1989, p. 152).

The theory mentions the borrowing of various elements from African music which was helpful to the study in identifying some of the musical idiomatic expressions of music from a particular ethnic community incorporated on the piano part. The study was also guided by the theory of musical competence and interaction by Benjamin Brinner (Brinner, 1995). According to the theory, “Whenever two or more people engage in manipulating sounds together, they affect each other by coordinating, directing, inspiring or disrupting each other’s performance...” (Brinner, 1995, p. 168). This theory purposed to assist the study in explaining how a singer and a pianist have to collaborate to present a song to the best of their knowledge as they represent the music of a particular people.

**Findings and Discussion of Main Points**

This study was conducted between 2016 and 2017. It focused on Kenyan classical singers represented as S, African art music composers represented as C, and Kenyan music educators represented as E. The three categories of informants mentioned above, were contacted to respond to a set of questions guided by the research objectives. The piece *While Justice Slumbered*, by Timothy Njooora was analysed for this study, using the techniques suggested in the literature review section. This section is in various themes informed by the research objectives. In addition, a brief discussion of the composers who participated in the study is undertaken.

Table 1: African Art Songs mentioned by language of lyrics



**Characteristics of African art songs**

**Language**

As observed in the graph below, most of the art songs listed by the respondents were in English. However, four of the composers who participated in the study argue that African art songs are composed in African languages. Still

commenting on language, C<sub>7</sub> and S<sub>5</sub> observe that the English songs are usually influenced by speech rhythms of the native languages of the composers.

Word painting is also common in art songs as observed in *While Justice Slumbered* on the words “our hero lay” in the art song, the composer uses minor intervals and chromatics to paint the sad mood.

### Rhythm and rhythmic character

The changing of metres and syncopated rhythms is a characteristic feature in *While Justice Slumbered*. C<sub>1</sub> also suggests the use of irregular time signatures such as 7/8, 5/8 and 5/4. C<sub>8</sub> sings two examples of rhythms that would be used in composing songs with influence and idioms from the Agikūyū and Iteso of Kenya, as shown below respectively.



Figure 1: Rhythmic Patterns

### Repetition

*While Justice Slumbered* includes various repeats, some with slight alterations. S<sub>1</sub>, S<sub>3</sub>, S<sub>6</sub>, S<sub>10</sub>, C<sub>7</sub> and C<sub>16</sub> also mentioned repetition as a characteristic feature in African art songs. This shows repetition as a common characteristic.

### Melody, harmony and scales

S<sub>4</sub> states that the melodies in African art songs are simple and therefore making them memorable. Also, most of the responses suggest that the harmonies of African art songs lean towards Western art music harmony. In connection, C<sub>4</sub> asserts that, harmonies are usually created to fit the diatonic scale which is also the case with *While Justice Slumbered*. In addition, C<sub>7</sub> and C<sub>8</sub> agree on the use of the pentatonic scale in African art songs.

### Original source and form of African art songs

The texts vary from political, religious to social economic themes, but they are all connected to Africa in a number of ways. The composer of *While Justice Slumbered* wrote the text to the song. It is about the struggle of freedom told through Nelson Mandela. The composer further talks about his admiration for Nelson Mandela. Similarly, S<sub>6</sub> states that, “Some, if not most African art songs, are about real-life experiences that were put down in song.” S<sub>6</sub> also suggests that African art songs are adapted from folk music.

As mentioned earlier, most art songs based on poems and folksongs are strophic in form while the rest are in ternary or through composed forms (Kamien, *ibid.*; Tunbridge, 2010). S<sub>5</sub> observes that most African art songs take the ABA form. S<sub>7</sub> states that some are in ABABA form while S<sub>6</sub> suggests that some are in binary form. C<sub>2</sub> states that they are usually in verse and chorus style. The sample of responses above shows that the composers have different approaches when deciding the form of an art song.

### Role of piano

#### Simulation

As mentioned earlier, simulation is a characteristic feature in art songs. C<sub>13</sub> talks about the use of the piano part to simulate a trotting of a horse in the arrangement of a folk song from the Otjiherero people of Namibia, *Itupuka kembeper* “the gently galloping horse.”

Also, to represent the various rhythms in African music the piano simulates both melodic and percussive African instruments. This can be used to represent a particular rhythmic motif of a percussive instrument. C<sub>5</sub> gives an example of the *Isukuti* rhythm found among the Isukha and Idakho sub-groups of the Abaluhya from Western Kenya (Shitandi, 2005). C<sub>5</sub> explains how the rhythms are simulated by the piano in a Luyia art song. C<sub>13</sub> also states the deliberate simulation of the *mbira* in the composition of a song *Aleluya* with text from the Shona from Zimbabwe.

In the fourth verse of the art song, *While Justice Slumbered*, the piano simulates the sounding of the trumpets below the words “the trumpet of freedom” with chords following the rhythm of a semiquaver followed by a dotted quaver repeated five times on the right hand starting from bar 101 as seen below.

The image shows a musical score for a voice and piano piece. It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (S) and a piano accompaniment (Pao.). The lyrics are: "free - - - dom for free - - - dom was his", "call - - - - - ing But lo - - - But lo the fu - ry of free - dom", "splashed But lo - - - But lo the - trum - pet of free - dom - trum - pet of free - dom", and "rang And our he - ro his loved - one's joined". The piano part features a rhythmic motif of eighth notes, which is highlighted in yellow in several places, including the first system and the second system. The tempo is marked as 'Moderato' and the mood as 'With determination'.

Figure 2: Triumphant motif in accompaniment

C<sub>7</sub> states that composers prepare the piano to represent an ethnic community in African art songs. For instance, in one of his works, Justin Tamusuza, gives directions on how the piano should be prepared to simulate two instruments, the *engoma* and the *mbira* (Onovwerosuke, 2007).

### Interaction of voice and piano

Three composers and two singers observed that the African art song adopts the solo – response style of performance which is also a feature in African vocal music (Akuno, 2005). Similarly, some respondents viewed the piano as a partner to the voice while others expressed that the piano only provides accompaniment. On the other hand, the style of the accompaniment of the piano is dependent on the composer.

The piano part in *While Justice Slumbered* includes preludes, interludes and postludes. Similarly, five of the interviewed singers agree with the presence of preludes, interludes and postludes. These views support Kamien (2008) who writes about the presence of these sections. He adds that these sections also set different moods in an art song. The inclusions of this sections also assist in setting the tempo and providing and maintaining the key of the song.

C<sub>11</sub> adds that the singer also gets performance directions on expression and climax from the piano part. In *While Justice Slumbered* the piano is used in guiding the singer through modulations which occurs three times. The excerpt below shows one of the modulations on bar 28 from G minor to G major. This also shows the piano not only providing a harmonic base but also playing some anchor notes to guide the vocal line, making it easier for the singer.

The image shows a musical score for a voice and piano piece. It consists of two systems, each with a vocal line (S) and a piano accompaniment (Pao.). The lyrics are: "For o-ur he-ro was pa - sio - nate for hu-man dig-ni - ty - - - While" and "jus - - - - - tice slum - - - - - bered our he - - - - - ro". The piano part features a rhythmic motif of eighth notes, which is highlighted in yellow in several places, including the first system and the second system. The tempo is marked as 'Moderato' and the mood as 'With determination'.

Figure 3: Piano-voice relationship in Njooa's *While Justice Slumbered*

### Performance Practice

Writing about the performance practice of pre-colonial traditional music of Africa, Euba (1975) states that music rarely exists alone and is fused with dance, poetry and dramatic expression. However, Euba (1975) also states that the emphasis on the performance of African art music is aesthetic and borrows a lot from performance practice of Western art music.

### Dance and Costume

S<sub>4</sub>, C<sub>6</sub>, and C<sub>16</sub> state that a little dance or movement can be incorporated in the performance of African art songs. This is especially due to the rhythmic drive of African art songs which are rooted in African traditional music. In addition, C<sub>7</sub> states that performers should include the use of costume and décor and props. This can be achieved by the singer and pianist dressing in traditional attire but still keeping it formal. However, due to the various dressing traditions in Kenya, it would be a choice of the performers.

### Performance technique

C<sub>2</sub> and S<sub>5</sub> also suggest the use of African vocal techniques which include folk-like singing, meaning with less or no vibrato. However, S<sub>9</sub>, C<sub>2</sub> and C<sub>5</sub> argue that African art songs are performed with Western art music vocal techniques such as the use of vibrato. Other influences that are mentioned from African music performance practices on the performance of African art songs include the use of improvisation on the piano and vocal parts, ornamentations like ululation and yodelling. The comments above show the various performing techniques a singer can use unless stated otherwise by the composer.

### African art song audience

C<sub>3</sub> suggests that the audience is allowed to join the performer. The comment by C<sub>3</sub> resonates with the performance of traditional African vocal songs, where the audience is involved through: joining the singers in the song, solo and response, dancing and clapping (Agak, 2005 and Akuno, 2005). However Euba (1975) and C<sub>15</sub> argue that the audience should not participate but give undivided attention and applaud when necessary.

### Composers who Participated in the Study

As observed in the chart below, the highest percentage of the composers who participated in the study are composers with fewer years of composition experience or younger composers (43%).

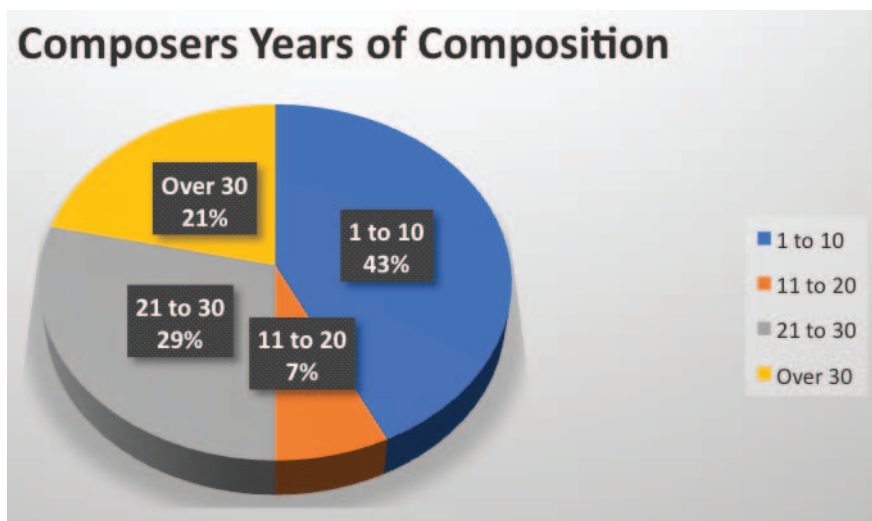


Figure 4: Composers' years of experience

participated in the study indicated that they studied at a Kenyan University. This also represents the highest number of respondents. In addition, most of the composers indicated that they have studied in two institutions or one institution plus taking ABRSM exams or attending workshops.

The information above shows how important it is to offer some formal training and workshops to art music composers for the continued growth of the genre especially with the younger composers. This paper includes a list of young Kenyan composers mentioned in the study, with some of their art songs as an appendix. In addition, not many female composers participated in the study which is evident with the list which only has one young female composer appearing.

It could be argued that most of the composers with more than 10 years of work experience have also gained experience through attending workshops and working as apprentices. By the time of this study, three of the composers had been composing for more than 10 years and they indicated that they studied at Kenyatta College. According to Akuno et al. (2017), Kenyatta College was established in 1965 and renamed to Kenyatta University in 1985. This shows that there has been a considerable time for the country to train composers.

In reference to the graph below,

most of the composers who

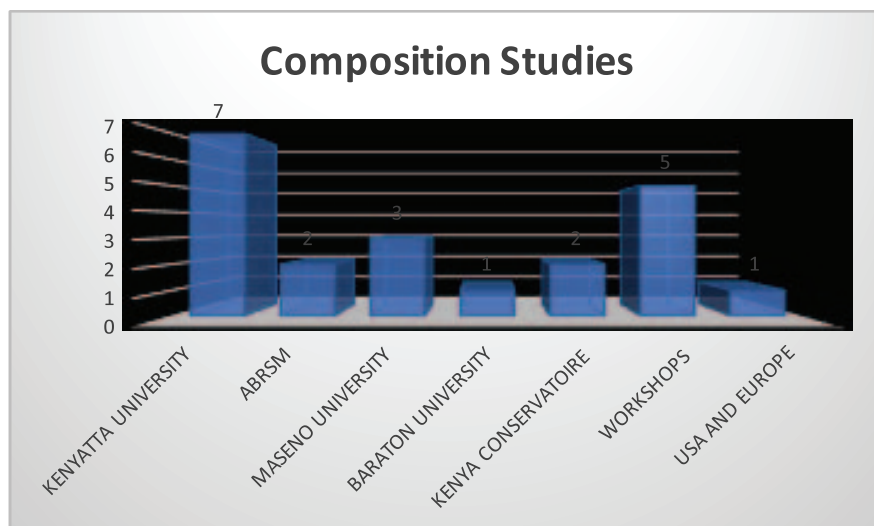


Figure 5: Context of Composition Skills Development

## Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

### Summary and Conclusions

African art songs are in languages spoken in Africa. These include the ethnic languages, Swahili and English which incorporate speech patterns of local languages. In connection, composers arrange African folk songs and use African stories for the text. By adapting the rhythmic patterns of languages and African folk songs, the art songs have a unique rhythmic character which includes: the changing of metres within a piece, the use of irregular time signature, use of complex rhythmic patterns, use of

polyrhythms, use of syncopation and crossings of rhythms.

Repetition is a major characteristic in African art songs. The repetition makes the art songs easy to remember and good for beginning students. In connection, the melodies are simple and folk-like. However, most of the harmonies discussed in the findings of this study are similar to those in Western art music.

Simulation appears through the piano to create a context, for instance the trumpet calls in *While Justice Slumbered*. In addition, a composer can go as far as instructing performers to prepare the piano in a certain way, for the piano to sound as close as possible to a particular African instrument. Similarly, composers also incorporate word painting in African art songs.

In addition to providing harmony, composers view the piano as a partner to the voice. The piano also plays preludes, interludes and postludes for the singer, just like African traditional music. In connection, the main African musical idiomatic expression was the use of solo and response adopted from solo and response style of African folk music.

Many respondents indicated that African art songs are performed like Western art songs in terms of singing style, posture and dressing. However, the differences mentioned would assist in showing African musical idiomatic expressions which include: addition of dance, improvisation by the singer, wearing African ornaments, make up schemes, décor, props, African traditional costumes and vocal techniques peculiar to the African folk music.

### Recommendations

The study has a number of recommendations which came from the data collected and areas that need more information.

- More workshops, masterclasses and training opportunities for young composers specifically for African art songs composition for them to learn and share ideas on how to develop the genre.
- African art songs should be documented and published as a resource material for performance, teaching, learning.
- Music Educators should encourage more lecture recitals for students and the public to get acquainted to the genre, which will advise on the performance practice.
- Since rhythm was one of the most popular characteristics, the study recommends further investigation on how to transcribe the intricate rhythms of African art songs given the fact that Western notation systems cannot adequately capture all the features of African musical expressions such as ululations, yodelling and incantations.
- More research should be done in other African countries on the performance of African art songs which would show a different perspective, similarities or differences.
- With the vast languages spoken in Kenya, it would be ideal for young composers to take advantage of the language resource.
- More research on vocal techniques used in performance of African art songs.
- A website featuring Kenyan art music composers and their works.
- More research on African female art music composers.

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## APPENDIX

### Sample List of African art

Art Song Title	Composer/ Arranger	Language
Koth Biro	Andrew Tumbo	Dholuo
Kulu Kulu	Andrew Tumbo	Bukusu
Gor Obedo Misango	Andrew Tumbo	Dholuo
Muno Muno	Andrew Tumbo	Luganda
Brighter Days	Barbra Akombo	English
Sindigisa	Dan Abissi	Ekegusii
Niwara Nono	Dan Abissi	Dholuo
Entabanana	Dan Abissi	Ekegusii
Zaburi 23	Dan Abissi	Swahili/English
Enigma	Dan Abissi	Ekegusii
My Maiden	Elijah Adongo	English
Lwanda Aria	Elijah Adongo	English
Mwana wa Kahii	John Njuguna Maina	Kikuyu
Ii Nyumba Ya	John Njuguna Maina	Kikuyu
Mwene Nyaga	John Njuguna Maina	Kikuyu
Lemna	Philip Tuju	Dholuo

**III**

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# **Research Agenda**

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## Cultural Globalisation as a Means of Sustainable Community Development

Dorothy Muchere Bulinda,

Technical University of Kenya, Graduate Student, Department of Music and Performing Arts, [dmuchere1@gmail.com](mailto:dmuchere1@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*This paper seeks to discuss the mobilisation of cultural material and resources within the 21<sup>st</sup> century globalisation phenomenon. A preliminary survey indicates that music resources from indigenous communities are diminishing significantly within the realm of globalisation. In the world of globalisation with the course of economic flexibility and advancement of technology, society underwent visible phases of change (Vedabala, 2016). This indicates an ongoing underutilization of certain resources, especially those that are in the opposite course of the changes. This paper will highlight the significance of such resources. The objective is to identify specific resources and to establish ways of application. This paper will be guided by the theory of sustainability. Sustainable development concerns not only environmental targets but also economic, social and cultural ones (Mergos and Mouratidou, 2017). The study will further interrogate the significance of music resources within their indigenous setting yet as elements of the globalised world. This study intends to shed light on aspects of music and its contexts that influence sustainability (Harrison and Petten, 2010). The paper hopes to inform policy on how to promote social entrepreneurship skills for employment and wealth creation in urban and local communities (Education for Sustainable Development Policy for the Education Sector, 2015).*

### Introduction

The 21<sup>st</sup> century globalisation phenomenon has been observed to contribute to exchange of cultural values (Raikhan, Moldakhmet, Ryskeldy and Alua, 2013). Cultural globalisation is a process that involves the permeation of a people's way of life into other peoples', with the latter embracing aspects of the new while retaining their own. Human beings have the potential of preventing the extermination of cultural heritage. "...many deep-seated community bonds are forged through the senses. They are created and renewed by experiencing sights, aromas, tastes, tactile sensations and sounds" (Seeger, 1996, pp.20). The dynamic nature of human culture gives them the capability of actively preserving heritage despite the various practices that they get exposed to. Experiences presented in different environment create an opportunity for learning while maintaining a positive outlook on life and retaining the previous knowledges. It is such experiences that hold the means of sustainability within the community.

Music is an embodiment of people's culture (Akuno, 2013). It is essential that each person plays their role as a culture bearer. A precursory survey reveals that there is a tendency of people alienating themselves from their own indigenous community and culture's viable heritage resources. In the case of music, a majority of artists opt to perform the eurogenic kind. A consistency in such predispositions has left the musicians, musician-educators and other related resource persons based at the indigenous areas, with useful skills and materials. There is glaring extinction of that entire cultural heritage. The world is currently experiencing the 21<sup>st</sup> century globalisation phenomenon. With these factors in mind, there is a need for inclusion of the musicians and musician-educators from the indigenous areas into regular events. They ought to be encouraged to participate both within and outside their locale. Doing so could result in community development while activating a cultural globalisation phenomenon.

The 'Hope Raisers Initiative' based in Nairobi's Korogocho slum runs different arts' programmes with the aim of nurturing youth talents as well as achieving community development. Among the arts' programmes is one that is concerned with education and performance of Kenya's folk music. The 'Hope Raisers Initiative' has been observed to involve both the culture bearers and their students in the tasks involved. Other individual artists have been observed to take part in similar activities, with a keen interest in preserving culture as well as equipping the youth with folk music performance skills. With such initiatives taking shape in the society, it is vital that stakeholders of societal organs that contribute to community development pay attention to music resources from indigenous areas of Kenya.

### Literature review

Music in the African community has been viewed as a tool that accompanies daily activities. As a cultural component, music dictates the societal order. For instance, the musical culture of societies in the savannah region of Ghana displays uniformity particularly in social organization, role and status of musicians, types of instruments and styles of performance (Stone, 2008). A society's traditions and norms are usually freely passed on to younger generations within their indigenous setting. This is a learning culture which allows the musician and musician-educator to play their role of active preservation of intangible heritage. These resource persons make use of available resources such as songs, dances, music instruments and costumes to



achieve their goals while ensuring harmonious coexistence in the society at large. In such a scenario, the dynamics of cultural change are limited to the local thus affirming the identity of the people's culture.

The function of music within its indigenous cultural context has continuously been emphasized even with the 21<sup>st</sup> century globalisation phenomenon. The interaction of the local and the global due to permeation of cultures has resulted in a variety of means of musical expression among the concerned creative artists. Of concern is whether the cultures of the indigenous are being eroded or whether their activities are being presented as masquerades. The 21<sup>st</sup> century globalisation phenomenon is a symbol of emergent cultures. Various sources reveal concerns on the role of music in culture and how the culture at the convergence should inform the music (Letts, 2003; Kuruoglu, 2004; Wiggins, 2005; Lam, 2008).

Nonetheless, there is need for practical reinforcement of support of folk music in order to allow it to provide sustainable development in the society. Such music comprises the people's ethos. The philosophies of indigenous people do have relevance within the globalisation phenomenon because they contribute to a whole while adding a variety. A practical definition of sustainable development should contextually take into consideration issues of cooperation, stakeholder participation, commitment, long, medium and short-term effects of current actions, common concerns, inter and intra generational equity, justice, and moderate production and consumption habits (Eyong, 2007).

The performance arts scenery in Kenya comprises curious and enthusiastic persons who participate in a variety of activities as a means of expression. Majority of the time, the artists start by engaging their local audiences and clientele in order to gain popularity. A musician may for instance have their work performed within their community before spreading out to other audiences. Further observations indicate that musicians thrive in making use of local resources to create their masterworks (Maina, 2012). The availability of basic home-studio technologies has been seen to be a factor that helps musicians to promote their works to larger audiences.

A peek into the folk music performance scene indicates that it is staged in different forms in urban centres. Moreover, the people in the indigenous communities endeavour to continue performing in a contextualized setting. "... Africans are music lovers and that music features as an indispensable handmaid of any meaningful behaviour and sustainability of the being of any African person whether young or old." (Mbaegbu, 2015, pp 176-183). Folk music performers based at their authentic locales are skilled in various ways. Moreover, they are a resource of knowledge in matters to do with their cultural heritage. That they should use their skills for community development, is an essential factor.

Akuno (2016) posits that music is a global phenomenon, and since no culture is without music, the study of a community's music gives insight into the community's ways and beliefs. It is the human resource persons from the various communities who are the bridge to facilitation of cultural globalisation. The efforts of the culture bearers in preservation of their heritage are thus significant in achievement of sustainable development of the community. For sustainable development to be attained through culture, it is vital that stakeholders acknowledge the place of the culture bearer.

### Theoretical underpinnings

Sustainable development concerns not only environmental targets but also economic, social and cultural ones (Mergos and Mouratidou, 2017). For sustainable development to be achieved, stakeholders of organs of the society ought to consider involving the culture bearers. This connection will facilitate social inclusion, into the world of globalisation, and needs to receive adequate economic support.

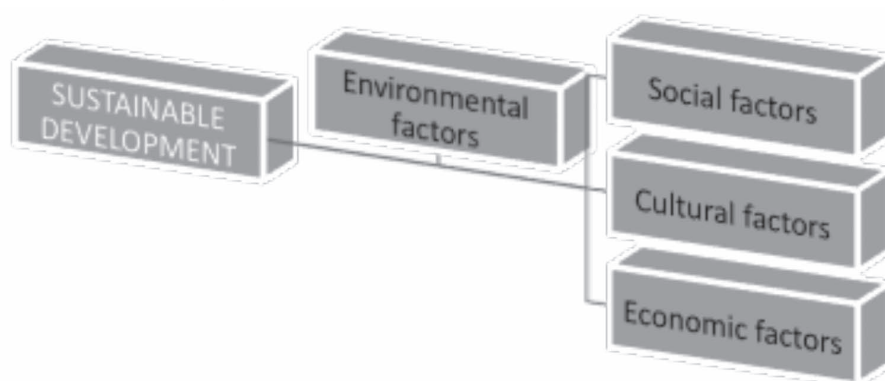


Figure 1: Theory of Sustainability (Mergos and Mouratidou, 2017): Stakeholders' Quest for Sustainable Development

### Research Problem

Music is an aspect of culture (Nzewi, 2007; Kidula, 2013; Casimir, Nwakego, & Umezina 2015). The government of Kenya is committed to supporting and promoting the use, teaching and examining of music and dance in all learning

institutions as a means of transmitting and promoting culture and inspiring creativity among Kenyans (National Policy on Culture and Heritage, 2009). Resources of music from indigenous people of Kenya have however been observed to reduce significantly over the years. Stakeholders in the education sector have persistently been keen on focussing on music resources from other cultures while paying minimal attention to those from indigenous communities in the country (National Music Policy, 2015). Accessibility of technologies that encourage globalisation has resulted in music practitioners instinctively imitating cultures outside Kenya and the African continent at large (Oyugi, 2012). This background has resulted in the continuous dwindling of use of the music resources from indigenous regions of Kenya. This spectacle is occurring amid yet the unrelenting concerns surrounding unemployment. There is need for means of sustainable development among members of the society in Kenya. This paper seeks to identify specific music resources and establish ways that they could serve as means of sustainable development in Kenya, despite the rapid 21<sup>st</sup> century globalisation phenomenon.

## **Objectives**

This paper investigates the viability of folk music's resources within the 21<sup>st</sup> century globalisation phenomenon, for sustainable development. The primary objective is to identify the music resources in order to establish ways of application with regards to providing channels of community development.

## **Findings/Discussion of Main Points**

This paper used qualitative research design to investigate the resources of folk music. It looked into the resources in terms of their origin and how they are being used at their current locale. The population consists musicians and musician-educators who perform and teach folk music of Kenya in Nairobi as well as globally. Purposive sampling was used to identify the persons who engage with folk music within Nairobi. The paper used both primary and secondary data. An interview schedule was used for collecting primary data. The interviews conducted were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The findings revealed that there are a variety of music resources from indigenous areas of Kenya. The resources identified by the respondents ranged from music instruments to persons who have the knowledge about them. The respondents revealed that they relied on the culture bearers to know about the instruments. It was noted that the culture bearers were known to be attached to their instruments and they performed during certain occasions within their communities. Stone (2008) alludes to music instruments being part of the persons who play them. This aspect helps them pass on traditional knowledge to young generations.

The respondents interviewed strongly agreed that the music resources could serve as means of community development. This, according to the respondents, calls for positive attitudes of upholding and embracing Kenya's own indigenous yet constructive cultural practices. The respondents further stated that it is within the practices that the significance of the music resources could be appreciated.

On the concept of globalisation and retaining the musical cultures, the respondents reiterated the aspect of the community welcoming other cultures but not discarding their own. The respondents noted that despite there being various local music resources, majority of the people expressed zeal in learning about music from foreign cultures. However, some of the respondents noted keen interest among children and the youth who undertake lessons on the music instruments, dancing and singing.

The findings further revealed that music resources have the potential of enabling community development. The channels of cultural globalisation could provide links for social entrepreneurship. This was exemplified by the 'Hope Raisers' initiative as well as the other respondents.

The findings of this study affirm the theory of sustainability (Mergos and Mouratidou, 2017).

## **Conclusions & Recommendations**

Cultural globalisation is a necessity for sustainable community development. That phenomenon may be viewed as a tool that will encourage the society to be independent while making use of both indigenous and foreign music resources.

In light of the above findings, this paper calls for stakeholders to support the use of indigenous music resources in order to form channels that will be inclusive and lead to sustainable community development.

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## Leveraging Self-Assessment as a Tool to Enhance Creativity in Music and Visual Art

Benjamin Bolden<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Ernst Wagner<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, Queen's University, Canada, [ben.bolden@queensu.ca](mailto:ben.bolden@queensu.ca)

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany, [ernst@wagner-mcbn.de](mailto:ernst@wagner-mcbn.de)

### Abstract

*In this paper we explore how self-assessment, a core AFL strategy (Black & William, 2006), can be leveraged to support the development of student creativity in visual art and music education. In carrying out this exploration we begin by considering how creativity is represented and conceptualized in arts curricula. We then examine the work of (a) Groenendijk, Kárpáti, and Haanstra (2018), who developed visual rubrics to support self-assessment of visual art competencies; (b) DeLuca and Bolden (2014) who propose principles for rubric use in music education; and (c) ongoing research by Bolden and DeLuca who identify informal strategies to support self-assessment of and for creativity in arts education. We then compare and contrast strategies for leveraging self-assessment for creativity in music and visual arts contexts. In addition, we reflect on the question of how creativity in the arts may be transferred to creative work in other domains.*

### Introduction

Across the globe creativity has been recognized as a crucial educational outcome. How schools and teachers can nurture students' creativity remains a critical question (Tan et al., 2016). Convincing evidence has demonstrated the powerful effects of assessment for learning (AFL)—also known as formative assessment—on student achievement (Black & William, 1998). A recent meta-analysis of pedagogical strategies found that AFL is among the most statistically significant approaches for improving student learning (Hattie, 2009).

However, although research has extensively examined AFL as a means of supporting learning in science, numeracy, and language and literacy education, very little research has specifically examined how AFL can be applied to the development of students' creativity (Collard & Looney, 2014; Lucas, 2016). Recognizing that the arts have long been promoted for their potential to develop creativity (Harris, 2016), the first author is currently engaged in research to explore AFL as a pedagogical strategy to nurture students' creativity within the context of arts education. The second author led the European research project "Development of a Common European Framework of Reference for Visual Literacy" 2012-2016 that included research about different ways to assess visual literacy and the intended outcome of (visual) art education (Wagner & Schönau, 2016).

### Creativity in Arts Curricula

According to the New Zealand curriculum, key concepts in visual arts are:

- **Creativity and connection:** . . . The visual arts are about giving form to ideas and expressions
- **Inquiry and production:** The process of inquiry is founded on the formation of a problem or question. It is reliant on a responsive process of investigation, critique, evaluation, and synthesis
- **Challenge and invention:** The visual arts aim to create contexts where students take risks with their ideas and concepts . . . They are premised on the notion that instability in terms of knowing or knowledge is a productive space for invention or the creation of the 'new'.
- **Transformation and empowerment:** Creation is a process of transformation . . . realised through expression and production. (New Zealand Curriculum Guides)

The section about music is structured in a similar way, with interesting deviations.

- **Imagination and connection:** . . . Visions of sound are constructed, co-constructed, and re-constructed, creating new sounds and combinations through the use of musical conventions and technologies.
- **Production and transformation:** . . . living worlds of sound are created and re-created.
- Risk-taking and experimentation develop self-expression and personal identity. (New Zealand Curriculum Guides)

This example is representative for a specific approach (and jargon) in art and music education curricula we can find all over the world, a (not very clear) compilation of different aspects that we can describe altogether as indicators for creative processes.

### Understanding Creativity

There are three main different rationales for such formulations. They are based on beliefs that art education helps (or is essential) for the development of a whole person.

- **The person *can* be creative** because we know this from children: We love to observe children when they play with sand, full of imagination: A leaf becomes a ship, sand turns into sea, a stone is a harbor, stories are told that reflect the child's experiences, thoughts, emotions. We love this because it reminds us that we were children once and we felt happiness playing in this way. Art education connects to this "lost childhood" and we, as art educators, want to offer this space of happiness to our students, our children. So, we know that creativity exists and can take place—under specific conditions. This is the nice side of the coin.
- There is another side that art educators don't like in the same way. But, they accept it in general because it helps to legitimize the field of art education in political discourses when it comes to resources. This argument says that **a person *must* be creative**. This is because we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and creativity is a key concept that is needed to solve today's problems (e.g., national economic success [competition between countries], global challenges like environment issues, etcetera). Innovation is the buzz-word in this context.
- Additionally, our students ***must* be creative** also for their own career success after school as they are going to live and work in this 21<sup>st</sup> century where the skill of creativity is essential for employment.

These beliefs are based on reflected experience. History can teach us that there have always been "successful" (whatever success means) individuals (e.g., Columbus' egg) or collectives (e.g., the success of Silicon Valley). Their respective success is always based on creative solutions based on a specific habit of mind (and not on, for example, military dominance, economic power, wealth, etc.).<sup>6</sup> These are powerful narratives.

The dominant factors of creativity have been identified as "the four Ps" — process, product, person, and place (Rhodes, 1961). In respect to these four Ps, art educators aim to educate creative "persons." The "place" is arts education.<sup>7</sup> Art education creates the conditions to reach this goal. The methods used by art educators are to establish creative "processes" in learning. Finally, creative "products" are possible indicators for the teacher to assess the outcome.

### Self-assessment as a tool to enhance creativity in arts education

The following example leaves this classical distinction by addressing metacognitive approaches and using a competence model in visual literacy as a point of reference. It is based on the idea that self-assessment is the base for meta cognitive learning processes that ensure sustainable learning outcomes, developed at Project Zero in the 1980s.

It is not simply the finished product that is assessed, but consideration is given to the work process and the students' ability to make more subtle observations and reflect on what they have done in a wider context. Assessment has an important part to play in the learning process. It should not simply be a matter between teacher and student; it is at least as important that students are given the opportunity to assess what they themselves and their peers achieve. (Lindström, 2006, p. 64)

Self-assessment is important for learning as it is related to self-regulation (Nicol & MacFarlane-Dick, 2006). Self-regulation enables students to direct their own learning by using metacognitive strategies (Wagner & Schönau 2016). To support self-assessment, teachers can provide tools such as formalized criteria and assessment rubrics. As Lindström points out, "Criteria and scoring rubrics can serve to focus students' attention on qualities of performance that are otherwise easily neglected; they give them instruments with which to reflect on and communicate about their learning" (2006, p. 64).

### Visual Rubrics for Assessing Visual Art

Recognizing the current popularity of the rubric for assessment in art education (Haanstra, Damen, Groenendijk, & Van Boxtel, 2015), but also that the textual character of the rubric is not always appropriate for students (Maarleveld & Kortland, 2013), the European team of researchers Groenendijk, Kárpáti, and Haanstra (2018) recently developed visual rubrics as a tool for self-assessment in secondary visual art education and tested the tool in several countries. The visual rubric tool was developed to measure core visual art competencies as identified by Wagner and Schönau (2016). Development of the tool involved a process of asking teachers to test the rubrics with students, interviewing the teachers about the tool's efficacy, and then revising the tool until the final, current version was achieved.

This tool, a self-assessment instrument, addresses certain sub-competences in the field of artistic creation (amongst others). Artistic creation is most likely associated with creativity and should therefore be presented here as a matter of

6 It is a kind of David against Goliath play. (The USA teach us that a creative Goliath can develop a hegemonic order in the world.)

7 One can doubt this assumption. Taking the (creative) artist (e.g., van Gogh) as the blueprint, we find conditions that are not at all comparable to the conditions school systems provide (e.g., the studio as hermetically sealed space, long phases of incubation when nothing happens, phases of desperation, no observation from the outside...).

priority, even though creativity is of course equally relevant in the other competence areas of reception, judgement and communication (Wagner & Schönau 2016).

To this end, it is first necessary to define creativity more precisely in artistic creation. All current creativity theories assume that creative processes oscillate primarily between two poles:

1. a divergent pole (fluent thinking, surprising association, experimentation in the unknown, openness to great complexity, free combinatorics, unlimited imagination, high flexibility, curiosity, sensitivity and impressiveness, multi-perspectivity, visionary thinking, etc.)
2. a convergent pole (determination, endurance and perseverance, frustration tolerance, stubbornness, patience, ability to elaborate, systematic development of strategies, discovery of relevant problems, goal orientation, consistent development of solutions, etc.)

Referring to this general understanding of creativity, we can assign two partial competences to the each of these poles in artistic creation.

- a. Researching and Experimenting (see figure1) cover the area of divergent design. The two visualizations show that these partial competences involve a loss of control (immersion into the unknown and explosion of mixed substances), characteristics of divergent work.
- b. Using materials and techniques and using visual elements are assigned to the second pole—now in the area of realization. The visualization shows that the conscious control of quantities is now at the centre.

This tool consists of a self-evaluation table that is handed out to students at the beginning of the work process and discussed with them. The visual representations are particularly important because our experience (empirically verified—see Groenendijk, Kárpáti, & Haanstra, 2018) shows that students need such visualizations to understand the concepts and remember them during the work process. However, the visuals are also accompanied by text providing more precise definitions of the four levels of competence. The distribution and discussion of the visual rubrics at the beginning of the assignment allows the students to think about the expectations for the solution of the task, already before starting. This enables them to perceive the assignment more consciously and to develop solution strategies more meaningfully. (In addition—but this is a side effect at first—they get an idea of what creativity is.)

These visual rubrics can then be used again in intermediate discussions (in the sense of formative evaluation) and in the final assessment of the work (summative evaluation). A survey on this tool in four countries (Germany, Hungary, Austria, the Netherlands) has shown that students' self-assessments and teachers' assessments enter into interesting constellations here, which in turn can become the starting point for important learning processes (on both sides).

### **Discussion: What are the specific potentials of this tool?**

We identify three potentials of this tool:

1. **Transparency leads to an improvement of the learning process.** In formal learning, at school, the respective results in artistic creation are usually evaluated and graded. But, it is often difficult to distinguish between random results (which can reach a high level) and achievements that are based on actual abilities. This tool now allows a focus primarily on the process (and thus the skills needed for creative work). In the interaction between student and teacher in formative assessment, the learning process is thus improved.
2. **The improvement of the learning process leads to greater sustainability.** In addition, learning becomes more sustainable, as the students develop an awareness of what the expected gain in competence is and how it is structured. This means that (ideally) they repeatedly jump out of the actual, immediate creative process to observe and reflect on their own activities. In this way, a metacognitive learning process takes place which has a positive effect on the quality of the (reflected) creation process and the strategies applied.
3. **Sustainability creates the conditions for transfer learning.** The existence of excellent creative abilities in the artistic field does not mean that students have this creativity also in other areas, or that they can apply it there. The transfer of what has been learnt in one domain to another requires a clear awareness of what constitutes creativity, what its specific structure is and how it can be applied to non-artistic areas.



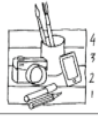

Table 1. Rubric demonstrating descriptive vs. less-descriptive criteria  
(DeLuca & Bolden, 2014, p. 73).

Criteria	Performance Component	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Descriptive criteria	Dynamics (i.e., volume and shape)	• Notes are at the same volume	• Notes have varying volumes and melodic lines have overarching shape	• Melodic lines are shaped to work together to provide overarching shape across lines of music
Less-descriptive criteria	Dynamics (i.e., volume and shape)	• Little dynamics used	• Some dynamics used	• Full dynamics used

Table 2. Visual rubric to support self-assessment of visual art products and processes.

### Creating and Making: images, products and videos

This rubric is meant to help with the assessment of your visual products along with the working process. Visual products are for example paintings, drawings, sculptures, videos, design, fashion, posters, etc.

	Criteria	Explanation	Levels			
			1	2	3	4
Designing	<b>Researching</b> 		You did not collect sources of inspiration or you did not study a theme in depth to discover a new point of view.	You either collected a few sources of inspiration or you did not study these deeply enough to find topics to work on.	You collected enough sources of inspiration and you studied 1 or more themes well (for example by sketching), because you discovered topics to work on.	You collected enough sources of inspiration and you studied 1 or more themes thoroughly (for example by sketching), because you discovered interesting/ surprising topics to work on.
	<b>Experimenting</b> 		You started directly to produce your final product. You did not try out other things.	You spent some time experimenting. You tried out some media, techniques, methods or applications.	You spent time experimenting. You tried out several media, techniques, methods or applications.	You used quite some time to experiment. You tried many different media, techniques, methods or applications, as well as unusual possibilities. The experimentation resulted in discoveries which you used.
Realising	<b>Using materials and techniques</b> 	Examples of materials and techniques are: paint, clay, photo editing	In your work, you did not demonstrate in that you have skills in using materials and techniques. Materials and techniques were chosen at random.	In your work, you demonstrated that you have some skill in using materials and techniques. Materials and techniques were predominantly chosen at random.	In your work, you demonstrated that you have skills in using materials and techniques. You consciously selected and used materials and techniques.	In your work, you demonstrated that you have special skills in using materials and techniques. You selected and used materials and techniques consciously and intentionally to depict your ideas. This resulted in an effective and powerful product.
	<b>Using visual elements (and representation)</b> 	Examples of visual elements are: composition, colour, line.	In your work, you did not demonstrate that you have skills in using the visual elements and representation. The visual elements (and representations) were chosen at random.	In your work, you demonstrated that you have some skill in using the visual elements and representation. Visual elements (and representations) were predominantly chosen at random.	In your work, you demonstrated that you have skills in using visual elements and representation. You used visual elements and representations consciously.	In your work, you demonstrated that you have special skills in using visual elements and representation. You used visual elements and representations consciously and intentionally to depict your ideas. This resulted in an effective and powerful product.

### Assessment Rubrics in Music Education

In a 2014 article, DeLuca and Bolden addressed approaches to rubric construction in a music education context. They identified how to construct assessment criteria that are sufficiently descriptive to accurately measure achievement and provide helpful feedback to learners, offering the example reproduced above in Table 1.

The authors suggest that rubrics designed with such criteria, ideally in collaboration with students can be used to support self-assessment, and so help students target areas for improvement. They highlight that criteria should be designed with the principle of “enabling constraints” in mind, i.e., criteria that balance possibilities and prescription, recognizing that too much choice does not enable focus on specific learning goals, while “criteria that are too prescriptive limit creative possibilities and restrict artistic learning” (p. 72). In the Table 1 example, the criteria focus students on using volume to shape melodic lines, but do not specify a particular shape, leaving that creative decision to the student.

In addition to suggesting the use of rubrics to identify performance goals and achievement, DeLuca and Bolden also suggest using a rubric to promote, support and assess students’ practice of self-assessment (see Table 3). The authors present this rubric not as a tool to externally assess students, but as a framework to help students develop self-assessment competency. The continuum of criteria describes a developmental progression in the use of self-assessment from an

external activity—applying criteria to others’ performances—to a self-directed activity designed to enhance personal performance. At level 1, students might assess a professional musician’s or a peer’s performance with a teacher-designed rubric. At level 2, students would use the teacher-designed rubric to assess a recording of their own performance. At level 3, students would design their *own* rubric, focusing on target areas for improvement particularly important to themselves, and use it to self-assess.

Performance Category	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Self-reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student accurately applies performance criteria to others’ performances but does not use performance criteria to self-assess personal performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student engages in teacher-structured self-reflection during practice sessions that leads to changes in performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student engages in self-directed reflection during practice sessions that leads to changes in performance (i.e., progress in practice through self-assessment and planning for learning)</li> </ul>

Table 3. Example of a rubric to promote, support and assess students’ practice of self-assessment (DeLuca & Bolden, 2014, p. 75).

## Discussion

As with the visual art rubric presented above, the music rubrics have the potential to support assessment transparency leading to an improvement of the learning process. Similarly, these rubrics also have the potential to improve the learning process in a way that leads to greater sustainability, as they support the capacity of students to recognize how to structure their own learning. Theoretically, as in the visual art context, the rubrics have the potential to render the processes of learning overt, so that students may understand and transfer those processes to other domains.

However, in contrast to the visual art rubric presented above, the rubrics presented by DeLuca and Bolden for use in music education contexts are not as directly targeted at students’ creative development. In keeping with the performance emphasis common in North American music education, the example rubrics do not focus on inherently creative tasks, such as improvising and composing. Nevertheless, the principles behind the construction of these examples *could* certainly also be applied to the assessment and formative support of composition, for example. Such rubrics could then be used by students to self-assess their products and processes in a context where they could more fully exercise creativity, and so develop creative capacity.

## Informal Strategies to Support Self-Assessment in Music and Visual Art Contexts

Without diminishing the potential of rubrics, it is essential to recognize that teachers in the visual arts and music have long employed other powerfully effective formative assessment strategies.

Black and Wiliam (2006) have identified activating students as owners of their own learning as a core formative assessment strategy. In ongoing research Bolden and DeLuca have identified informal strategies used by teachers to leverage self-assessment as a means to enhance students’ creativity. This research identified that teachers often activated self-assessment through questioning, e.g., by questioning intent and artistic choices or through questions to offer alternative possibilities. A music teacher, for example, reported that he activates self-assessment by asking students to explain certain creative choices.

*“Why have you chosen this chord here?”*

*“Why have you highlighted this lyric in this way?”*

*“Why are you using three singers instead of two?” . . .*

Just getting them to look a little deeper at what they’ve done and be critical about why they made those choices.

A visual art teacher explained how he activates student self-assessment in the context of a mask-making task, by suggesting possibilities, letting students explore them, and then encouraging them to assess the result in the context of their own artistic vision: I say,

*“well, if we fold it like this, it’ll be a long horn or if we fold it slightly differently, it’ll be a short horn. Which do you think is better? Which one would fit with your idea best?”*

*. . . if it goes this way, then what will the effect be?”*

That’s sort of getting them to focus on the different decisions.

Another visual art teacher described activating a student to self-assess in this way:

One of my students was struggling with a drawing where she just wasn’t happy with how it was turning out. I asked: “What are the areas that you’re happy with and what are the areas that are causing you grievances?” And then, “Let’s capitalize on



the areas that you were able to succeed with and see if maybe we can apply those techniques elsewhere or infuse maybe a new technique to help you address the areas you are less satisfied with.”

Informal formative assessment strategies such as these invite students to self-assess their creative work and so identify how they can move it forward. By identifying for students which aspects of their work to focus on, teachers help them understand the creative processes they can use to realize their creative intentions.

### Final Words

In this paper we have described and discussed tools and strategies that music and visual art teachers can use to activate student self-assessment in support of creative work. By leveraging self-assessment in this way, educators can not only help students to enhance their classroom creations, but also help them develop understanding of how creative processes work. Self-assessment promotes conscious awareness of the students’ own creative processes. With this awareness in place, students have the potential to transfer their creativity beyond the classroom context and into their future lives and careers.

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## Enhancing Design Practice and Planning in the Jua Kali Sector through a Competency-Based Design Training Framework

Mary Clare Akinyi Kidenda, PhD,

The Technical University of Kenya, Department of Design and Creative Media. [kidendam@gmail.com](mailto:kidendam@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Interactions with artisans in the Kenyan informal sector – also known as the Jua Kali (JK) sector, indicates that they are basically young creatives who share knowledge, skills, tools and equipment in their craft trades. The JK sector accounts for 85% of the national labour force, with the artisans producing affordable goods and services for a majority of Kenyans. The main mode of artisanal training is traditional apprenticeship, whose weaknesses undermines proficiency in design practice and planning. The low education level in the sector is due to the fact that most artisans cannot afford the further education and vocational training with which to upgrade their skills and knowledge. This paper champions a research agenda on design practice and planning by establishing the related skills gap among the JK artisans, and subsequently develops and tests an appropriate remedial competency-based design training framework.*

### Introduction

The Kenyan informal sector – or Jua Kali (JK) sector is made up of micro and small enterprise (MSE). The enterprises are semi-organized, with unconventional operations; they are often unregistered; thus unregulated. They use very basic technologies, and have few employees (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). The working definition of the Jua Kali sector in this was a community of practice that comprises of artisans running micro and small enterprises that produce a variety of products and services using skills acquired mainly through traditional apprenticeships.

They (Jua Kali Sector) enterprises are characterised by poor access to credit, training, property rights, and unconventional operation (Miyandazi, 2013). The JK sector has evolved into four sub-sectors: manufacturing; services; trade; and agribusiness (Adams, Silva, & Razmara, 2013). This paper focuses on the manufacturing sub-sector, whose entrepreneurs acquire skills through traditional apprenticeship (TA), thereby producing a wide range of products and services.

The sector employs 14.9 million out of the 19 million Kenyan workforce (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Most of the JK workforces are in the manufacturing subsector. However, in spite of the sector being a source of livelihood for many it is limited by the lack of business and technical skills, particularly in design planning and practice. They therefore, have to contend with the TA, which is largely based on the inter-generational universe of master craftsman/apprentice touch-points or skills that are insufficient for producing competitive products. TA is characterised by inefficient trial and error approaches that constrain opportunities, stretch production times, and costly wastage, leading to poor designs and finishing, in contexts of weak management and marketing skills. Artisans are thus often unable to meet client over quality products that are accessible, affordable and sustainable.

Academic research on skill and knowledge acquisition among Kenyan JK artisans as communities of practice (COP) and communities of learners (CoL) is limited, despite the sector's creative and design innovation potential, and on-the-job training and entrepreneurship. The sector's long-term contribution to the Kenyan economy is likely to grow with the country's newly launched education curriculum reform to emphasise skills development for self-employment (Namusonge & Karanja, 2013). The lack of such an emphasis has hitherto caused an extensive skills mismatch between the academically inclined education system graduates and the more technical job market needs.

The government has undertaken multiple initiatives to increase skills acquisition with skills development for self-employment as evidenced in Kenya Vision 2030, and the Big Four Agenda. The government acknowledge the need for improving technical and vocational education and training (TVET), which motivated this study's focus on developing a framework on design practice and planning for the JK manufacturing sub-sector.

### Objectives

This study was therefore based on the following objectives:

1. To identify existing skills and skills gap in design practice and planning the JK manufacturing sub-sector;
2. To develop a Design Training Framework (DTF) for capacity building for the JK artisans; and
3. To test the relevance and feasibility of DTF with the JK artisans.

### Methodology

The objectives were realized through action research, which facilitated the exploration of the existing artisanal skills. The study employed functional analysis in developing the General Areas of Competencies of the CBET curriculum. This structured the key design practice and planning tasks being structured into four modules. The resulting DTF was then tested for relevance and feasibility in terms of enabling artisans to access design education progressively by accomplishing specific design knowledge and build strong intellectual connections through dialogue between the artisans as learners and trainers.

### Review of Available Literature

#### Importance of the Informal Sector

The informal sector is essential for economic growth particularly in the developing countries. Khan & Khaliq, (2014) concur that most developing economies have focused on developing the sector due to its potential to spur economic growth. The sector accounts for over 98% of the total enterprises and contributes over 50% of the GDP for the developing economies. Table 1.1 illustrates the importance of the informal sector across five African countries as at 2013, with shares above 70% except for Tanzania. For Kenya, non-farm employment accounted for 50% of all employment, with the informal sector accounting for 71% of the non-farm employment.

Table 1.1: Employment in the informal sector ('000)

Sector	Ghana	Nigeria	Rwanda	Tanzania	Kenya
Total employment	6 900	53 697	3 971	18 780	9 737
Farm	3 408	31 818	3 048	13 991	4 856
Non-farm	3 492	21 879	923	4 789	4 881
Formal	985	6 172	190	2 550	1 404
Informal	2 507	15 707	733	2 239	3 477
Non-farm employment as percentage of total employment	51	50	23	26	50
Informal employment as percentage of non-farm employment	72	71	79	47	71

Source: (Adams et al., 2013)

The entrance into the sector is mainly through friendship and family ties. The recruits are trained through traditional apprenticeship, which mainly targets modestly educated youths from poor households. Figure 1.1 underscores the low education levels in the sector with 71% and 23% of owners or operators of the unlicensed and licensed businesses respectively, attaining at best eight years of basic primary education. The chart also shows higher education attainments among the owners of licensed compared to unlicensed businesses. The statistics indicate a positive correlation between education and enterprise sizes.

### Education Qualification of Business Owners/Operators

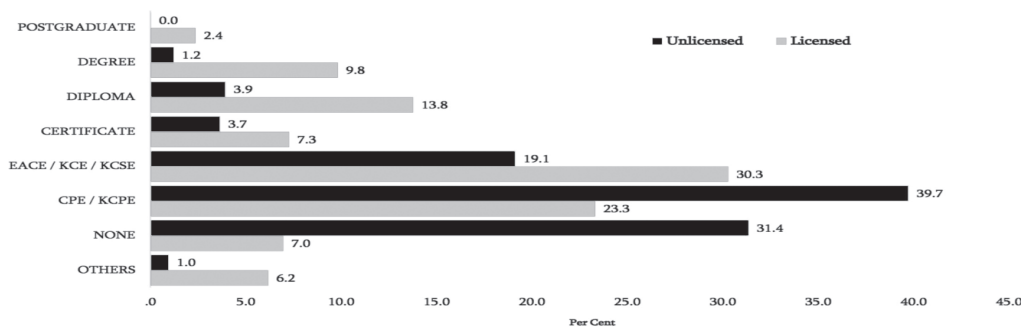


Fig. 1.1: Highest Education Qualification Attained by Business Owners/Operators

Source: (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2016)

As the dominant system of skills acquisition in the informal sector (A. V. Adams et al., 2013; Onwe, 2013), traditional apprenticeship account for over 70% of all pre-employment training in the JKS (Adams et al., 2013). However, the training approach is far removed from the best practices of best apprenticeship that emphasises career development through imparting knowledge and skills (Ofsted, 2015).

The introverted nature of the JKS industries is such that many are rapidly approaching saturation with competition

so intense that it is difficult to make substantive profits (Adams et al., 2013). The proliferation of product similarity amongst the JKS enterprises is due to the fact that they copy product ideas from one another, which have in turn, led to intensified competition. The resulting disincentive to invent and innovate creates a knowledge gap, undermining the artisans' ability to satisfy customer needs in profitable ways.

Well-managed design enterprises promote successful design processes by harnessing inter-disciplinary relationships, such as design, business analysis, marketing, procurement procedures, finance and legal and regulatory requirements. It also involves the management of various roles, such as the designers, customers, project teams and the stakeholders. Such a transformation would curtail the current high mortality rates among start-ups (Maina, Irura, & Kyalo, 2014). Notably, the self-employed artisans are in the sector to basically make a living; they are thus not interested in transforming their enterprises into large enterprises that can leverage on economies of scale. With proper training, the *Jua Kali* artisans could master the design practice and planning skills, including managing finances, strategic planning, and operational activities, thus reducing start-up failure rates.

In sum, this review of literature has highlighted the extents to which the TA-based system presents challenges regarding design skills and practices. The TA system does lead to JKS employment and livelihood and contribute to Kenyan social and economic development. However, while it has led to quick horizontal expansion in jobs, there has been no corresponding vertical expansion reflecting economic expansion. Consequently, skills development beyond basic education has recently received significant attention in Kenya with the realization of the importance of skills training for economic growth.

### **The Competency Based Education and Training Approach**

The Social Pillar of Kenya Vision 2030 seeks to achieve a cohesive and just society. One of its focus is education and training. It also tackles issues to do with gender, youth, and vulnerable groups. The pillar is relevant for JKS based on its emphasis on education and training as undertaken by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST). The MOEST promotes social, economic, technological and industrial needs for national development by preparing the learners to play effective and productive roles in national building. The Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2015 on Reforming Education and Training in Kenya recommended placing education at the country's centre of human and economic development. The paper also recommended a competency-based training framework to provide opportunities for the learners to develop to their fullest potential through developing their interests, talents, and character for positive contributions to the society. These recommendations sought to rectify deficiencies in the previous education system that did not provide flexible education pathways for identifying and nurturing aptitude, talents and learner interests early enough for preparation for the world of work, career progression and sustainable development (Republic of Kenya, 2015).

This system of education contributes to the challenges in the design practice and planning in JKS, which have been worsened by the weaknesses of TA. The artisans neither advance their learning in vocational training institutions because the demands of their work on their time. CBET provides a remedial opportunity for training the artisans because it provides relevant learning opportunities through an appropriately designed curriculum targeting expected competencies. CBET is increasingly gaining currency as the preferred approach of imparting knowledge and skills to learners. The philosophy underlying CBET is that all learners can learn skills equally if they are provided with customized instructions to help them grasp concepts and principles, and consequently, demonstrate them practically (Haralambie, 2016; Muoka, Mursal, & Kyalo, 2013). In this case, competency indicates the specific level of performance that the learner is expected to master (Klein-Collins, 2013); its similarity to work placed learning is based on the fact that it begins with the identification of the knowledge gap, which makes it effective for remedying the artisans knowledge gaps due to the deficiencies of TA. In particular, CBET will liberate the learners from the imposed by traditional teacher-centred learning approaches in T.A. (Muoka et al., 2013).

The CBET requires the demonstration of the learning process and the application of acquired competencies in the work-related situations. It also structures the learning activities in such a way that the individual learner can meet their set of pre-determined competencies, with the system ensuring training relevance through collaboration with the relevant informal sectors. It develops the learner's ability to choose and apply skills, knowledge, and attitudes in realising a task or work function within a particular domain (Weise, 2014)

The teaching process presumes all learners can master the required competencies provided they are given sufficient time, and the appropriate training methods are applied (Ayonmike, Okwelle, & Okeke, 2014). It includes the use of tools, techniques and methods required for the special tasks and duties to acquire the skills. A variety of support material, including printed literature, audio-visual and simulation models, can be used in mastering the required competencies. CBET can therefore, promote the MC's role as a collaborative partner in the learning process. In the JKS context it would yield a more authentic CoP and CoL by facilitating a student-centred learning.

CBET is practically-oriented learning conducted through actual performance rather than just observing (Weise, 2014). It

will enhance the hands-on TA through providing learners with the underpinning knowledge to supplement the practical design knowledge and competencies. Besides, with the self-paced CBET programmes the learners acquire measurable competencies built on their existing knowledge and skills, before progressing to the next module, the time taken depending on individual efficiency and motivation (Porter & Reilly, 2014; Weise, 2014). The learning process focuses on “what” the learner acquires rather than “how” the learner acquires it; or the duration of learning.

The measurable learning objectives in CBET guides the facilitators to improve on their teaching by connecting learners to new knowledge. CBET also provides second-chance education opportunities for artisans with limited schooling and poor business practices, by enabling them to pursue studies they deem relevant (Oandasan & Saucier, 2013). However, this study did not include the testing of the competencies, and instead recommended further research on the subject.

This study investigated and identified skills and skill gaps in JKS design practice and planning with regard to TA. This further guided the development of the proposed Design Training Framework (DTF) with tailored content for design education. The developed DTF has General Areas of Competencies (GAC) or modules that are learner-centred, simplified, and modularized. Its well-structured content supports training through tactile performance. The DTF was developed through an iterative process that focused on developing the artisans’ existing design competencies. The DTF propose assessments that validates learning and advocates a practical-oriented learning process through mobile technology. The DTF’s self-paced learning is in consideration of the artisans’ work schedules that don’t allow them to take up time-bound formal courses. Integrating CBET into the DTF embraced the assumption that given autonomy, sufficient time and the appropriate training methods all learners can master the required competencies.

### Theoretical Underpinnings

The learning theories used in the study explain how design knowledge and skills in the sector are learned and how the acquisition of new design knowledge could build on their existing tacit skills. The behaviourist learning theory (BLT) and work-related learning (WRL) were adopted to help understand the informal mode of training in the sector. The theories informed the situational analysis that was conducted in terms of bringing out the characteristics of TA. The learning theories, in this study encompassed mixed methods and action research design.

TA and BLT are similar to work-related learning (WRL) in that the MC teaches the apprentice to learn about work, learn through work, and learn for work (Huddleston & Stanley, 2013). But unlike TA that has no academic content, WRL attempts to relate an academic curriculum to the real work context, while also providing hands-on learning. Like in BLT the apprentice is a passive learner who is fully dependent on the MC to learn skill with no reference to a curriculum. WRL on the other hand focuses on learning at work, and in work (Mann, Stanley & Archer, 2014). That is why opportunities are determined by the characteristics of the trade, for example breadth, variety of tasks, degree of problem-solving and innovation. It also focuses the information and the social environment like task groups, cooperation, guidance, and feedback from colleagues and supervisors. TA on the other hand is based on skill development for employment, with the entry to TA based on their social connection and not on identified skill requirements. TA like BLT does not encourage innovation and the apprentice skill will be developed based on and limited to the masters’ competencies with limited structured theoretical explanations of the process.

The acquisition of knowledge and skills under the BLT is similar to that under TA, as they both involve rote learning where knowledge is acquired only when there is evidence of an observable change in behaviour (Argote, 2013). BLT regards motivation in terms of schedules of positive and negative reinforcements: their teaching methods have worked in environments where there is a correct response, or the learning material can be memorised easily (Elena, Walker, Elçi, Jackson, & IGI Global, 2015).

The TA teaching process consists of learning the particular skills that are demonstrated by the MC to facilitate learning outside the formal school sector that is not interactive like WPL. It puts premium on the learning environment, with a focus on how it particularly influences behaviour (Argote, 2013). The theory argues that behaviours are learned through the influence of the environment, meaning that learning is basically achieved through the senses. Therefore, learning takes place as a response to external stimuli. As a result, behaviourism advocates for educators to focus on modifying human behaviour through availing the appropriate environment, external stimuli, and conditioning.

Similarly, WRL like TA and BLT places emphasis on the application of the tacit knowledge and skills gained in the work environment. It is explicitly concerned with teaching and learning in context (Huddleston & Stanley, 2013). Like TA, the BLT is teacher-centred (Geduld, 2014; Kantar, 2013). The teacher is the authority and knowledge expert who controls the learning environment and content the students learn. He determines the behavioural objectives the learning must achieve before it is considered successful (Kantar, 2013).

Figure 1.2 shows how objective epistemology was applied to BLT and WRL to guide in the establishment of the skills and skill gaps of TA as the basis of JKS training.

# ALIGNMENT OF EPISTEMOLOGIES AND LEARNING THEORIES

**Aim:** To create a Design Training Framework that will enhance the *Jua Kali* artisans' knowledge and skills of design

**Objective:** Identify existing skills and skill gaps of design capability facing the *Jua Kali* artisans in Kenya

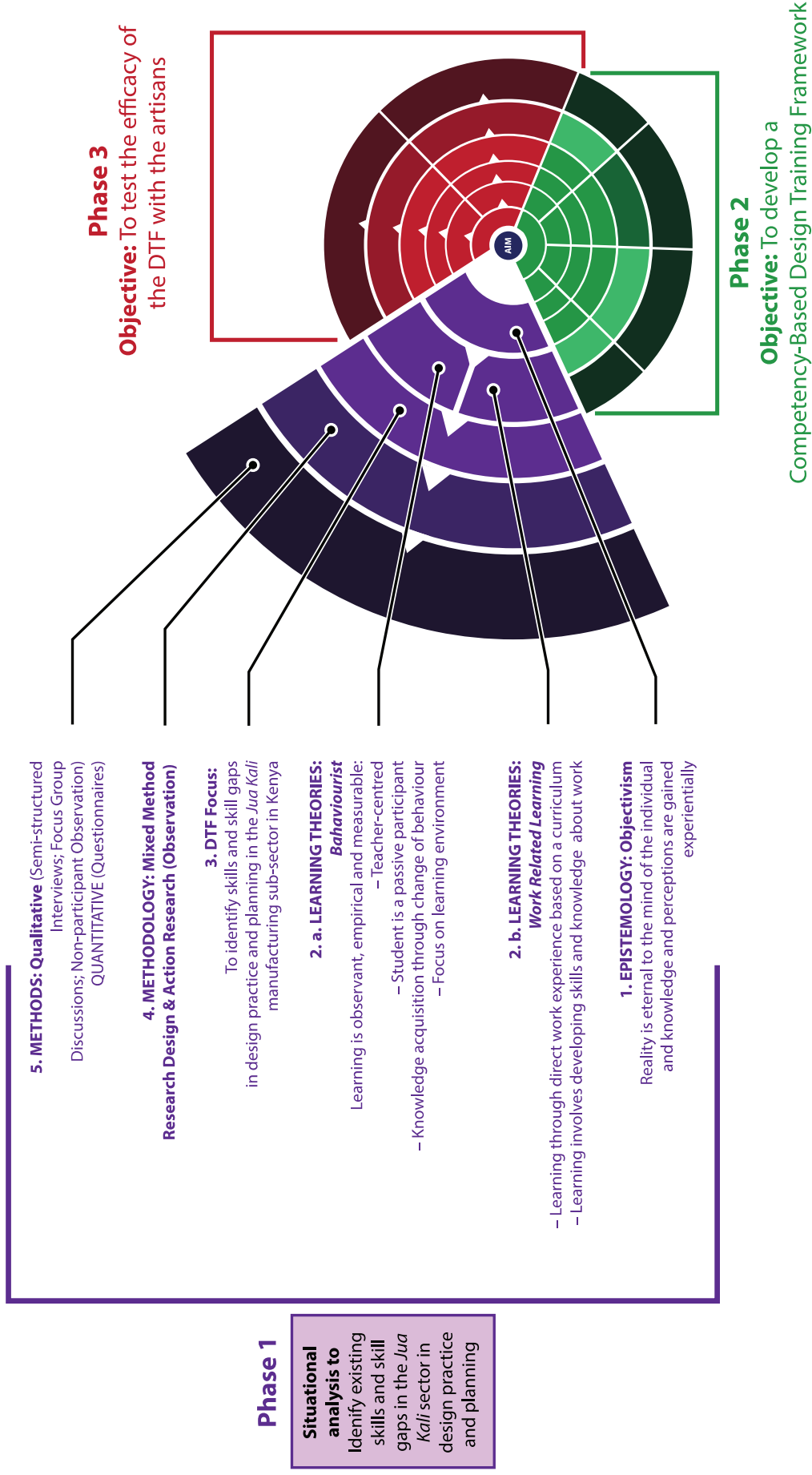


Figure 1.2: Alignment of Epistemologies and Behaviourist Learning Theory and Work-Related Learning

Situational analysis to identify the skills and skill gaps in Traditional Apprenticeship in the Jua Kali Manufacturing sub-sector

The situational analysis was aimed at identifying the skills and skills gaps amongst the artisans in the sector. The snowballing technique was used to sample the artisan who were accessed through the Enterprise Development Officers (EDO). The analysis covered 5 counties and 18 Jua Kali associations (JKAs) (See Table 1.3)

Table 1.3: A list of Jua Kali Associations, the counties and their products

No.	Jua Kali Association	County	Clusters & Products
1	Kamukunji Jua Kali Association	Nairobi	Metalwork
2	Nairobi Handicraft Industrial Co-op Society	Nairobi	Woodwork sculptures and artefacts
3	Shauri Moyo ??	Nairobi	Auto repair
4	Kariokor Kiondo Women	Nairobi	Beadwork; basketry; handbags; leather work; jewellery,
5	Shauri Moyo Furniture Makers	Nairobi	Woodwork
6	Kibuye Jua Kali Association	Kisumu	Woodwork; metalwork; textiles
7	Ber Neno Creations	Kisumu	Woodwork; hyacinth
8	Ong'ayo Women Group	Kisumu	Pottery
9	Nyakach Thur Gem	Kisumu	Basketry; jewellery
10	Nyakach Kano Jua Kali Women Association	Kisumu	Basketry
11	Katito Nyakach SDA	Kisumu	Floor mats
12	Homa Bay Farmers Co-operative Society	Homa Bay	Bamboo furniture and ornaments
13	Oriang' Women	Homa Bay	Pottery
14	Shirikiana Women Group	Kisii	Stone sculptures and artefacts
15	Tabaka	Kisii	Sculptures; ornaments
16	Siaya County Women MSE	Siaya	Basketry; handicrafts; jewellery
17	ARO Development Centre	Siaya	Beadwork; jewellery; sculptures
18	Amkeni Young Women Group	Siaya	Beadwork; tapestry

Table 1.4: Distribution of Data Collection tools and Respondents

Data collection tool	Category of respondents	No. of respondents/groups
Semi-structured interviews	Artisans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nairobi City County (29)</li> <li>▪ Kisumu County (35)</li> <li>▪ Siaya County (10)</li> <li>▪ Homa Bay County (14)</li> <li>▪ Kisii County (5)</li> <li>▪ Total: 86 respondents</li> <li>▪ From 18 Jua Kali Associations</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Handicraft (28)</li> <li>▪ Woodwork (14)</li> <li>▪ Metalwork (22)</li> <li>▪ Ceramics (8)</li> </ul>	
Focus group discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Artisans</li> <li>▪ Woodwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kibuye Jua Kali Association (12)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Handicraft</li> <li>▪ Metalwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nairobi Handicraft (8)</li> <li>▪ Kamkunji Jua Kali Association (7).</li> </ul>
Non-participants Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recorded all artisans in their workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All</li> </ul>

The data were collected using the mixed method design and ethical concerns were addressed based on the Medium-High Risk Ethics Approval Checklists. The semi-structured interview, non-participant observation and focused group discussions were used to identify the existing skills and skill gaps in the JK manufacturing sub-sector's. This consisted of the observation stage of Action Research (AR) design employed. AR is an interactive and collaborative problem-solving relationship between the researcher and client, iteratively building on each cycle (Townsend 2013).

The findings indicated inadequate training of the artisans on DPP due to low education and lack of time and resources to pursue training. Based on the situational analysis the study developed the competency-based, Design Training Framework (DTF) for DPP information and skills, which would partially bridge the gap between the JK sector and academia, through sharing and transferring knowledge on Kenyan JK design processes and management. The self-paced DTF approach would also strike a balance between learning and generating income.

### Development of the Design Training Framework

The DTF content development appreciated the pre-existing TA background, but targeted alleviation of the TA's trial and error approach, to enhance the control and structure

of the artisan's design process. It was also based on the CBET framework to broaden the scope of accessible design training for enhancing apprenticeship efficiency and improving the artisans' products value. The DTF incorporated the CBET's functional analysis methodology, which is target-oriented and deductive, identifying key tasks and related complex functions broken down into smaller components and functions (Haralambie, 2016). The nine-step, functional analysis methodology was modified to suit the DDTI development, as shown in Table 1.6.

Table 1.5: The findings of the situational analysis

Method	Analysis	Results	Triangulation
Qualitative	Transcription Coding Themes Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 90% of artisans do not conduct market research</li> <li>▪ 94% of artisans products are customer driven</li> <li>▪ 40% of artisans copy product</li> <li>▪ 40% make products from magazines or photo albums</li> <li>▪ 90% do not document briefs</li> <li>▪ 80 % do not follow a structured production process</li> <li>▪ 90% do not make prototypes</li> <li>▪ 85% have acquired skills through TA</li> <li>▪ 76% have hereditary skills</li> <li>▪ 11% have vocational training</li> <li>▪ 76% market through word-of-mouth</li> <li>▪ 73% market at trade fairs and exhibitions</li> <li>▪ 59% sell products at the local market</li> <li>▪ 90% of the enterprises have no organizational structure</li> <li>▪ 87% do not partner with formal institutions</li> <li>▪ 13% partner with formal institutions</li> <li>▪ 72% of enterprises do not own websites</li> <li>▪ 13% have inactive websites</li> <li>▪ 15% have active websites</li> <li>▪ 97% of artisans own mobile phones</li> <li>▪ 85% cannot access internet through their phone</li> <li>▪ 15 % can access internet on their phones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most artisans do not conduct market research due to lack of skills and resources</li> <li>▪ Most products in the sector are customer-driven, specified by consumers</li> <li>▪ They duplicate existing product; copy ideas from catalogues photo albums and magazines</li> <li>▪ They lack technical and drawing skills to document their briefs and sketch their ideas.</li> <li>▪ Few artisans document briefs to ensure the intended product fits the market's specification</li> <li>▪ Most artisans have acquired their skills through TA</li> <li>▪ Most artisans do not make prototypes as they consider them a waste of time and resources</li> <li>▪ The hereditary skills such as curving that they acquired from their parents</li> <li>▪ Majority of the artisans lack time and resources to further their studies or join the vocational and training institutions</li> <li>▪ Most of the artisans market their product through word-of-mouth since they rely on walk-in customers</li> <li>▪ The artisans working under associations market their products through trade fairs and exhibitions and on market days</li> <li>▪ Most of the enterprises are started to help the artisans make a living rather than expand the business</li> <li>▪ Many of the JKS enterprises do not have a website because of the type of phones they have and low ICT literacy level in the sector</li> <li>▪ Most of the artisans own mobile phones that they use to communicate and for money transfer</li> <li>▪ Majority cannot access internet on their phones and therefore cannot use them to access knowledge and market their products</li> </ul>
Quantitative	SPSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Artisans lack skills and resources to conduct market research, those who have lack resources</li> <li>▪ The customer driven products are based on the markets specifications</li> <li>▪ The artisans copy and replicate popular products</li> <li>▪ They do no brief documentation briefs because of lack of drawing skills</li> <li>▪ The lack of prototyping is due to the cost of producing models; they make prototypes when handling large orders</li> <li>▪ After TA the apprentices are accepted as artisans in the clusters</li> <li>▪ The hereditary skills are learnt majorly from parents and relatives</li> <li>▪ The artisans market their products through word of mouth, trade fares, exhibition and their local market</li> <li>▪ The lack of organizational structure is characterised by lack of planning and keeping records on how they operate their enterprises</li> <li>▪ The artisans own mobile phones most of which are low-end and cannot access the Internet</li> </ul>	

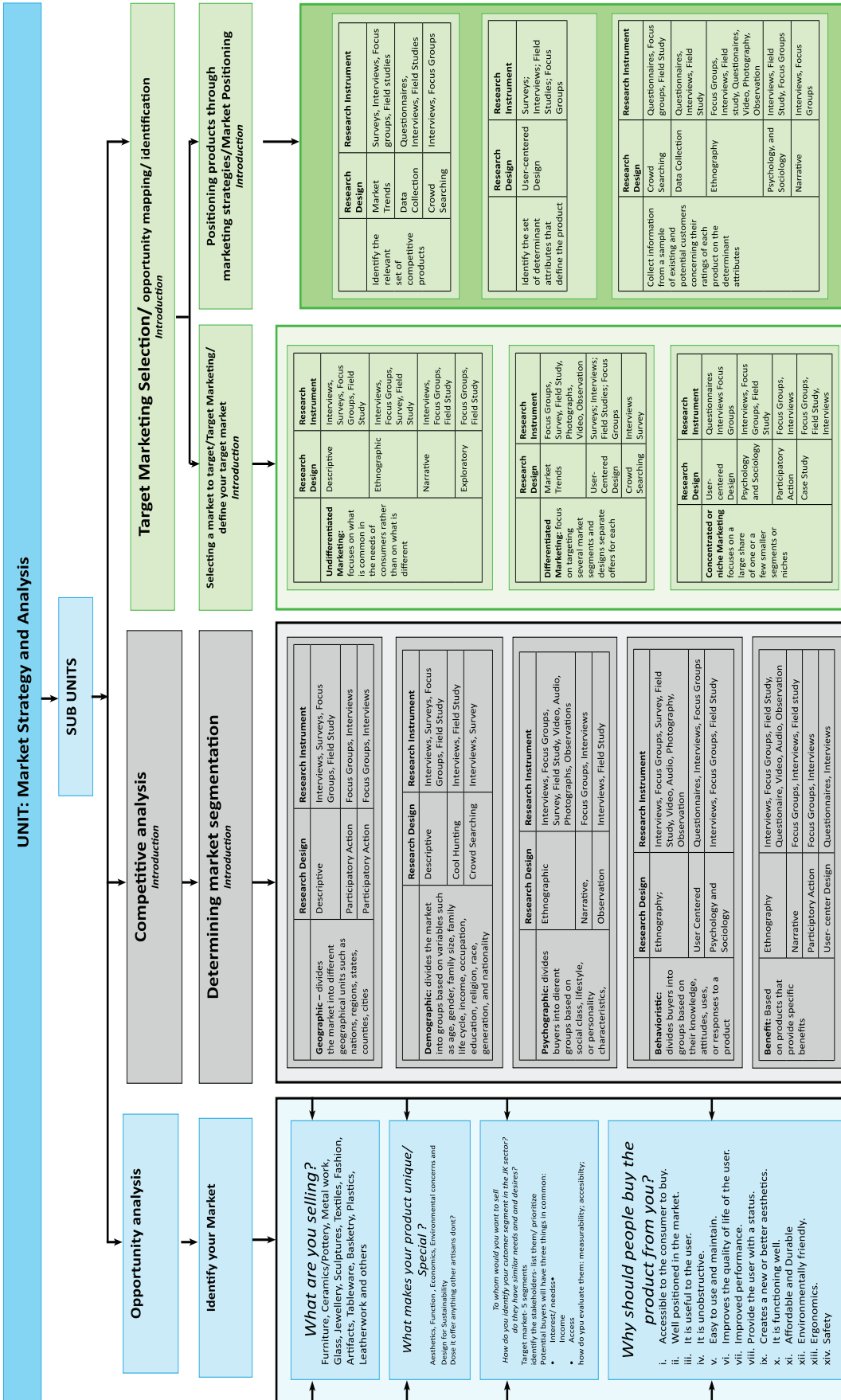


Table 1.6: Modified Functional Analysis to Develop Occupational Standards for the Design Training Framework

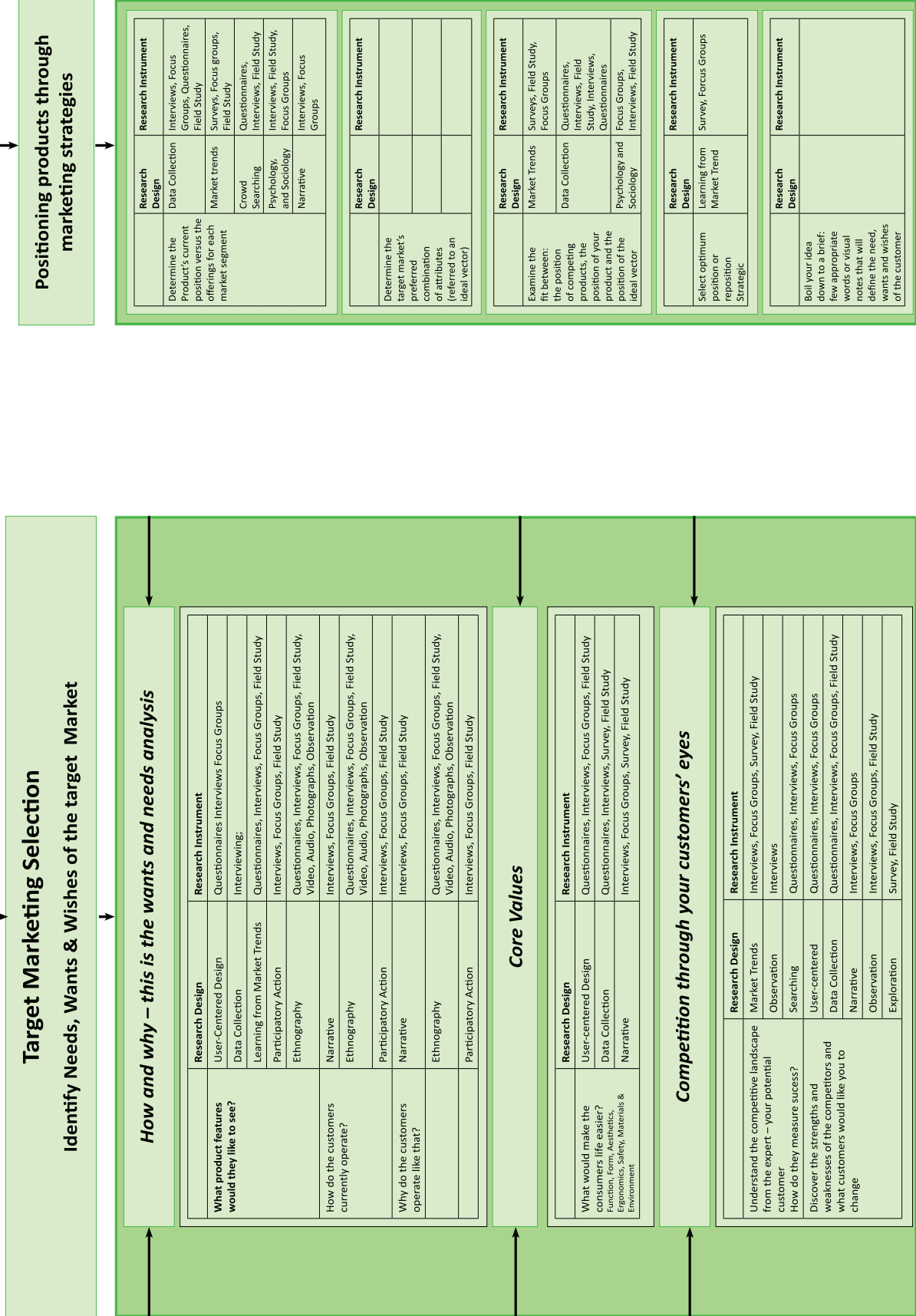
No	Steps of a Functional Analysis	Steps for Developing a Competency-based DTF
1	Oriente panel of experts	Develop a flow chart based on the challenges, needs, wants and wishes of the artisans identified
2	Determine key purpose (Key task)	Develop a framework for a competency-based DTF for enhancing JKA knowledge and skills of design through m learning
3	Determine key areas by generating GACs or modules (Complex functions)	Design-concept development; Production; Marketing; and Management
4	Determine key roles	To identify, define and meet the needs of the market; make competitive products; persuade and satisfy their customers; manage their business well
5	Determine functional units of competencies (Basic or simple tasks)	Skills or units:
6	Determine elements of competencies	Sub skills or Learning Outcomes
7	Determine performance criteria	Recommended for further research
8	Validate functional map	Recommended for further research
9	Develop standards	Recommended for further research

(Source: Haralambie, 2016)

- The first step of functional analysis involved orienting the panel of experts through brainstorming techniques to develop the functional map (Haralambie, 2016). This step resulted in the flowchart (see Figure 1.3), highlighting the design challenges of the artisans. The DTF was later developed from the flowchart.



SUB UNITS



The second step of functional analysis involves determining the key purpose, which should describe the characteristics of the specific learners that are targeted (Gould & Roffey-Barentsen, 2014; Haralambie, 2016). The framework of the competency based DTF was developed for enhancing JKA knowledge and skills.

- The third step involve the determination of the key areas (Gould & Roffey-Barentsen, 2014; Haralambie, 2016), referred to as the General Areas of Competencies (GAC) or modules. The generated DTF modules included: Design; Production; Marketing and Management.
- The fourth step involves the determination of the key roles (Gould & Roffey-Barentsen, 2014; Haralambie, 2016), further breaking down each of the key areas into the activities to be undertaken to achieve the key areas or modules
- The fifth step involves the determination of the functional units of competencies (Gould & Roffey-Barentsen, 2014; Haralambie, 2016). The functional analysis determined the thresholds of the units that were divided into several sub-units. Each of the sub-units aimed at taking the artisans to a liminal space. It provided the fundamental details of the expected outcomes of each of the functional units or skills under GACs. For example, the functional units in the design module are market strategy and analysis, creating a brief, and generation of ideas as shown in Table1.8 below

The convergent mixed methods research design was used in collecting data from 109 artisans (See Table 1.7). Ethical considerations were the first step in data collection.

Table 1.7: Data Collection Tools and Respondents

Data Collection Tools	Category of Respondents	No. of Respondents/ Groups	Key Issues Addressed about the DTF
Questionnaires	Artisans from: •Donholm •Outer Ring Road •Shauri Moyo Furniture •Kamkunji Jua Kali Association •Nairobi Handicraft	109 participants from Nairobi County	Relevance of content in the DTF: Design; Production; Marketing; Management
Focus Group Discussions	Artisans from: •Shauri Moyo Furniture •Kamkunji Jua Kali Association •Nairobi Handicraft	7 8 6	Relevance of content in the Design Training Framework: Design; Production; Marketing; Management

Table 1.8.: Framework with General Areas of Competencies for the Design Training Framework

NO	General Areas of Competencies (GAC)	Functional Skills or Units	Sub-Skill or Elements of Competencies (Learning Outcomes)
1.0	Design	1.1 Market Strategy and Analysis	1.1.1.Opportunity Analysis – Finding your market
			1.1.2 Competitive Analysis - Identify your customers
			1.1.3 Target market selection- Target those customers
		1.2 Creation of Briefs	1.2.1 Functionality
			1.2.2 Aesthetic Consideration
			1.2.3 Economic Viability of the Product
			1.2.4 Product Effects on the Environment
			1.2.5 Understand Current Market Trends
			1.2.6 Product Requirements
		1.3 Generation of Ideas	1.3.1 Design Solution
			1.3.2 Concept Development
			1.3.3 Functionality- chose right materials
2.0	Production	2.1 Product Design Specifications	2.1.1 Choose material
			2.1.2 Machines for manufacture
			2.1.3 Transportation
		2.2 Prototyping	2.2.1 Visual notes / sketches / models
			2.2.2 Functionality
			2.2.3 Aesthetics
			2.2.4 Materials
			2.2.5 Safe for use
			2.2.6.Economics
			2.2.7 Environment
		2.3Manufacturing/Production	2.3.1 Occupational Health & Safety Act
			2.3.2 Machinery & tools
			2.3.3 Workshop
		2.4 Finishing	2.4.1 Aesthetics
			2.4.2 Packaging & Branding
2.5 Operations/Working condition	2.5.1 Skilled workers		
	2.5.2 Environment		
3.0	Marketing	3.1 Packaging and Branding	3.1.1 Define product identity
			3.1.2 Provide product information
			3.1.3 Express product benefits & features
			3.1.4 Ensure product safe for use

NO	General Areas of Competencies (GAC)	Functional Skills or Units	Sub-Skill or Elements of Competencies (Learning Outcomes)		
		3.2 Influencing the demand for the product. The Marketing Mix:	3.2.1 Product variety 3.2.2 Product price 3.2.3 Place – good advertising 3.2.4 Promotions- distribution of the product		
		3.3 Sales and Marketing	3.3.1 Know your market 3.3.2 Know your competition 3.3.3 Distribution and supply chains		
		3.4 Customer Care	3.4.1 Accessibility 3.4.2 Effective Communication 3.4.3 Assurance		
		4.0	Management	4.1 Management	4.1.1 Planning 4.1.2 Organization 4.1.3.Directing/Controlling 4.1.4 Monitoring
				4.2 Planning Finances	4.2.1 Setting Financial Goals 4.2.2 Budgeting 4.2.3 Investing 4.2.4 Insurance Cover 4.2.5 Income Tax Consideration 4.2.6 Estate Planning
				4.3 Business Analysis	4.3.1 People 4.3.2 Processes
				4.4 Entrepreneurship Skills	4.4.1 Capital 4.4.2 Labour 4.4.3 Resources
				4.5 Procurement Processes	4.5.1 Buying through Imprest 4.5.2 Buying through Quotation 4.5.3 Buying through Tenders 4.5.4 Financial Limits
				4.6 Legal and Regulatory Requirements	4.6.1 Procedures and Requirements for Establishing a Business

## Results and Findings

### The Relevance of the DTF to the Jua Kali Artisans' craft businesses

The findings indicated that most of the artisans (95%) agreed that the DTF would enhance the artisan's businesses through addressing their challenges regarding identification of customer's needs through helping them conduct market research; developing and documenting briefs; generating design solutions through sketches and models; enable them learn marketing skills, thereby be able to access markets and also learn effective management of their enterprises.

### Relevance of Content of the Design Training Framework

While 50% of the artisans indicated that the content of the DTF was very good, 20% claimed it was good. The approval of the DTF contents was based on aspects such as its relevance, ease of understanding and good organization. The artisans also claimed that the contents reflected the design challenges that they experience in their craft and would thus improve on their production processes and marketing. While 20% rated the DTF content as average, 5% rated it fair and 1% rated it poor. The average rating was because the artisans were uncertain if the content would improve their design knowledge and business skills.

### Relevance of the content of the Design Module

About 95% claimed the design module was relevant; it would help them generate viable design solutions for their craft trade. This is because the module would teach them sketching, modelling and brainstorming, which would help them

generate creative briefs. The module would also teach them to conduct market research, this enable them define the design problems and the target audience. Through the module they would also learn to document design concepts and solutions. However, 3 % of the artisans did not find the design content relevant, while 2 % were not sure if it was relevant, claiming that they did not understand the module.

#### **Relevance of the content on the Production Module**

90% of the artisans claimed that the DFT's production module was relevant because it helped them appreciate how the general design concepts can be refined, presented, articulated and implemented, thereby resulting into improved production processes. More importantly, they would learn how to cost their products competitively, source raw material and apply effective production methods; it would also improve on the quality of their finishing. The 5% who discounted the module's relevance claimed it was difficult to understand and were therefore not sure it would be helpful in improving their production skills.

#### **Relevance of content of the Marketing Module**

About 90% of the artisans agreed that the marketing module was relevant for their craft trade. They claimed its content would be instructive in developing sound connections with their markets through approaches such as customer care, packaging and branding; it would also enable them to create markets both online and offline, thereby increase their sales and revenue.

#### **Relevance of content of the Management Module**

While 20% indicated the Management module as being very good, 40% rated it as good. They indicated that it would help them to effectively analyse their businesses, incorporate regulatory and legal requirements, enhancing their planning and accounting. This would make them better managers and improve on their profitability. About 25 % rated the content average, claiming that the module processes a lengthy management process that is difficult to apply. While 10 % rated the module as fair, 2% indicated that it was poor.

#### **Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to enhance DPP in the manufacturing sub-sector through a competency-based DTF. The situation analysis helped develop the DTF based on identified existing JK skills and the consequent DPP skill gaps. The resulting DTF was then tested with artisans to see if it enhanced their existing competencies and addressed their challenges in design practice.

This paper has presented the results, findings and discussion on testing the relevance DTF in developing design practice and planning skill in the JKS. The quantitative analysis from the artisans' questionnaires and focus group discussions demonstrated that the developed DTF could be used as a tool for training in the JKA. The paper explored the content, and the relevance of the DTF in not just enhancing design competencies in the sector, but also in linking the training with the TVET institutions

The findings showed that the DTF would enhance design education in the sector by transforming the JKAs into Community of Practice and Community of Learners. This will enable artisans to acquire design knowledge and skills through collaboration. The relevance of the content on the DTF covers the three key design areas that the situational analysis indicated as problematic for the artisans in the sector.

#### **Recommendations**

- Further development of the competency-based DTF to actualize the training in design knowledge and skills.
- Development of the DTF content in Kiswahili and various local ethnic languages to reach a broad range of artisans countrywide.
- Further development of the DTF to include digitization of modules for learning using animation to demonstrate the design processes.

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## Research on Dance or Dance on Research: Recognising the scientific in cultural dances of Kenya

Kahithe Kiiru, MSc.,

Centre for Ethnology and Comparative Sociology (lesc), *University Paris Nanterre*, [kahithe@gmail.com](mailto:kahithe@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Music and dance, and their place within the human experience, are unanimously described as universal, essential and social by nature. The bare fact that structured sound and movement form a part of our everyday experience is sufficient justification for engaging into research of the same. Although the establishment of separate disciplines with exclusive focus on music and dance can be dated to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, their symbolic, interpretive and permeable nature has appealed to scholars since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and proven to be a fertile ground for investigation into a number of social and political issues across diverse geo-cultural contexts. However, the development of a solid academic and research community on the topic still presents major challenges in Kenya, as in other parts of Africa, whereby the majority of research projects are still undertaken in Western institutions and few local universities incorporate disciplines of ethnomusicology or dance anthropology in their academic programs. This paper both reasserts the importance of research projects focusing on music and dance in Kenya and questions its real-life impact(s). It does so by arguing two major trends that accurately depict the relationship between “traditional” music/dance and scientific research. Firstly, it interrogates past and present research-produced narratives of “traditional” dance in Kenya and ways in which these narratives have affected and continue to influence dance heritage products and contemporary artistic creation. Secondly, it examines the notion and the practice of engaged ethnomusicology/engaged dance anthropology in the Kenyan context and the return effects it has on studied practices. In this, the paper questions the production of knowledge on “traditional” music and dance and the involvement of past and present institutions in the shaping of dance heritage in contemporary Kenya. It also advocates for an engaged and self-cognizant approach to research in this domain.*

### Introduction

Indisputably, one of the major social science paradigm shifts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the one that shook our understanding of the nature of knowledge and the implications of its production. Although, recognizing the fact that knowledge and power were closely and symbiotically related was nothing new, it was the ground-breaking work of French philosopher Michel Foucault (1966, 1969, 1971, 1975, etc.) that had a lasting influence on our understanding of how knowledge is created, distributed and used. According to Foucault, power is diffused and embodied in discourse, and therefore implicated in what is considered to be “true” or “false”. Discourse is about production of knowledge through language and through practices and contains rules that govern what is accepted as scientifically true. In this, scientific research becomes a site of power capable of changing the way we interact with our diverse realities and consequently affects their future development.

Structured sound and movement form a part of our everyday experience and provide a spectacle in most societies. Consequently, they have elicited curiosity in documentarists and researchers since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their symbolic, interpretive and permeable nature has proven to be a fertile ground for investigation into a number of social and political issues across diverse geo-cultural contexts. If we understand research, in all its forms, whether documentation only or accompanied by analytical discourse, as a historically situated practice, the social and political context of research projects, initiatives and discourse become at least as equally important as their source.

This paper focuses on the question of production of knowledge on traditional music and dance in Kenya and interrogates the repercussions, both intentional and implicit, produced knowledge may have on existing practices and repertoires. By doing so, it reasserts the importance of research on traditional music and dance in the region and argues for the establishment of a solid academic community that works towards common goals of preservation, promotion and development of these practices. In this, the paper advocates for conscious and deliberate application of knowledge acquired through research – in other words, for an engaged ethnomusicology.

### *Whose Tradition? Which Tradition?: A Debate on Knowledge Production and its’ Implications*

When analysing the past and present discourse on traditional music and dance genres in Africa, and more particularly in the East African region, the context of its production reveals itself crucial. The earliest written data on music and dance can be dated back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when early missionaries and colonial administrators spearheaded what is often referred to as “reconnaissance work”. This work consisted of both topographical survey and ethnographical investigation, identifying and labelling the tribes of the region, as well as providing basic information on their way of life, custom and culture.

In these early reports, music and dance are featured scarcely and described in a stereotypical, racially biased discourse, characteristic of the colonial venture. Authors such as Hobley (1903, 1922) or Cagnolo (1933) did not consider musical practices essential in the quest for easier control over native populations. The short descriptions of music and dance within colonial monographic volumes on a specific tribe either explicitly denigrated and labelled them as primitive and unrefined, or simply commented on their existence as almost random, irrelevant entertainment (Leakey 1930).

However, the late colonial period brought about a wind of change and the British administration was now looking for ways to preserve the African cultures and safeguard them for the advancing threats of modernity. In the 1950s, when the British not only seek to preserve but also commercialize and monetize the traditional music and dances of various tribes of Kenya Colony<sup>8</sup>, two major figures of early ethnomusicology find themselves at the source of influential discourses on African music and consequently at the centre of our argument.

Locally, British musicologist and music educator Graham Hyslop is famous largely for the composition of Kenya's national anthem and his accomplishments in the field of choral music. However, Hyslop, who arrived in Kenya Colony in 1936, should also be credited with pioneering efforts in documenting and publishing on traditional music of the Colony. In 1957, in view of the administration's new enthusiasm for music and performing arts, Hyslop was designated the *Colony Music and Drama Officer*. In this function, he organized in 1958 the first documentation project and published its results in the *African Music Journal*, alarming the authorities that although:

There are many African musical instruments scattered throughout Kenya. In some cases it appears that there will be nobody to carry on this tradition when the present exponent dies. This means that in a short time, some of the traditional instruments of this country will have been lost without trace. (Hyslop 1958: 31)

Hyslop's description of several string, percussion and wind instruments ends with an interesting anecdote. According to him, one of his informants requested if he, as the Colony Music and Drama Officer, could issue "an edict forbidding the use of the guitar as this practice was one of the causes of the gradual disappearance of the traditional musical instruments of the country." (Hyslop 1958: 36) Most of Hyslop's writing on traditional musical instruments consisted of simple descriptions of instruments he had recorded, attempts to note their sounds in Western diatonic scale and a general air of urgency in preservation of the same.

Another important contribution Hyslop had made is in the progressive establishment of colony-wide, and later nation-wide, competitive festivals that exist until today. His efforts in the promotion of what he considered African folk sensibilities, as well as his idea of the benefits a syncretism between those and European sensibilities, have left an undeniable trace on traditional music performance in Kenya. He prescribed the first reconfigurations of African folk songs and dances performed on competitive festival stages, and some of them are still retained in the contemporary system of national festivals (Kidula 1996; Omolo Ongati 2015; Kiiru 2017).

Decades later, research into the world of folk music and dance in Kenya reveals the persistence and omnipresence of these idioms as "vernacular folklore and staged folklore exist in indivisible and unbroken continuity" (Giurchescu 2001, 117). Competitive festivals profoundly influenced the vision Kenyans today have of their folk/cultural dances. Contemporary research has shown that the two parallel traditions - dance in the field and dance on stage (Shay 1999) rely on the same idioms, as defined by a research-informed narrative that started to develop as early as the 1950s.<sup>9</sup>

Graham Hyslop regularly published in *African Music*, a journal started by the other great figure of early ethnomusicology that left a mark in the region - Hugh Tracey (1903-1977). The founder of the International Library of African Music (1954) toured Kenya colony and recorded traditional music of different tribes logistically assisted by the British administration. Although he had no formal education in music, from the 1920s through early 1970s, Tracey amassed and disseminated one of the largest and most significant African music collections in the world. Colleagues at the Royal College of Music in London advised Tracey to accumulate as many recordings and as much documentation about them as possible and not to worry about their transcription and analysis, which could be done later<sup>10</sup>.

Arguing that his field recording missions and resulting library collection were relevant for effective "practical administration" of the colonies, Tracey believed that "support for and preservation of traditional music by the authorities would result in contented and compliant African communities." (Coetzee 2017: 86) In 1958, he wrote:

Research in African music must be done by people with rather exceptional talents who can tolerate the discomforts entailed in field work (and few are prepared to do so), by the rare linguists who can fully appreciate the poetry of a sung lyric; by the still rarer musicians who can participate in the spirit and action of African songs and dances, (and that also means an unusual degree of tolerant understanding of the working of an African society) and, perhaps, most important of all, by

8 For more on the topic read Kiiru 2018.

9 For more on the impact national competitive festivals have had on the development of folk music and dance in Kenya read Kiiru 2017.

10 Unfortunately, Tracey never managed to work on the transcription and analysis of his rich collection of field recording. He had requested a grant for the same in 1969, but did not obtain it.

thoroughly discerning men and women with tape recorders who have the time, the patience and the money to discover and record as much of the representative and authentic compositions of the present day as they can find, and thus store them up against the day when African musicians, having recovered from the initial shock of Western politics, religion and industrialisation, will be ready to take stock of themselves as men in a modern world with the assurance of a national musical culture behind them which can contribute in no small measure to the great folk musics of the world and to their own pride and happiness. (Tracey 1958: 58)

And so, between 1939 and 1970, Tracey mounted 19 field excursions throughout Africa (Thram 2014), one of which took place in Coastal Kenya. Out of a selection of a dozen music and dance genres from different ethnic communities, he got the chance to record a Giriama dance called *gonda*, which found itself sixty years later in the centre of my own research. When comparing notes with Tracey, the importance of understanding field recording as a historically situated practice is instantly reaffirmed. Pre-selected by the British colonial administration officials, with possible involvement of Hyslop, one of the groups recorded was that of Chadi wa Boyi, whose sons still practise *gonda* and were some of our informants in 2016. Tracey describes *gonda* dance as follows:

The *gonda* was danced by a small group of dark-skinned boys & girls dressed in the equivalent of the ballet dancers' 'tutu', a short multiple skirt made of banana fibers, which exaggerated every movement of hips. It was one of the most pleasing attractive dance displays in the whole of East Africa, by child dancers all of who were expert performers. (Tracey 1950: unpublished)<sup>11</sup>

Once again, the early research narrative of music and dance is developed around a comparison with familiar practices of own European culture. When in another field recording report Tracey remarks how “excessive noise of the drums & the somewhat shrill voices of the singers do not do justice to the expert dancing which conflicts them.” (Tracey 1950: unpublished)<sup>12</sup>, we recall the weighty judgement of value intrinsic to the late-colonial process of commercialisation of “native dances”. This judgement was based on Eurocentric definitions of what “entertaining”, “exciting”, “authentic”, “unique” or “original” is. These evaluations coincided with the previously established images and narratives of “African dance”, translated the imagery and the expectations of “Africanity”, “African bodies and beats” to traditions encountered in Kenya and, most importantly, translated into favouritism for certain traditions and their prominence in the colonial cultural tourism endeavours.

One might argue, and rightly so, that we have come a long way since decolonization. Yet, research on traditional and/or folk music and dance in Kenya remains on the side-lines of local research efforts, whether in social sciences or in music and music education studies. In Kenyatta's era, although the official discourse was filled with expressions of a desire to revive old cultural traditions that had been subjected to aggression under colonialism, in practice the project was less successful. The President, an anthropologist by training himself, insisted on the inclusion of African music and dance in all national celebrations and was regularly entertained by traditional groups at his home in Gatundu. However, no clear cultural policy nor guidelines for preservation and promotion of traditional music were developed (Maxon 1995).

It is in the 1980s that we rediscovered local ethnomusicology, with the work of prof. Senoga-Zake, who's colossal *Folk Music of Kenya* (1986) remains one of the major references on traditional music and dance in the country. In the same historical period, other ethnomusicologists such as Arthur Kemoli (1972; 1980). Paul N. Kavyu (1977) and Kamenyi-Wahome (1986), researched and published as well. In the mid-1980s, a rather curious research project is conducted by The Institute of African Studies in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning and National Development. The so-called *Socio-cultural profiles* cover a wide variety of topics in each of the districts of the country (e.g. the physical characteristics, history, population, agriculture, etc.) Among them appear chapters on music and dance of each district, most authored by Asante Darkwa, Ghanaian ethnomusicologist who has worked extensively in Kenya (1984; 1985; 1991). The scientific interest of this project based on imaginary administrative units, which do not have a real common cultural ground, seems unusual, until one recalls the characteristic political climate of the Moi era. In 1984, President Moi commissioned a report on the state of music and dance in the country. The commission chaired by prof. Washington A. Omondi, gave a detailed analysis in a report that became the basis for the institutionalization of the current Permanent Presidential Music Commission. This report provided consequential recommendations on preservation and promotion of traditional music and is, up to date, considered as almost the sole research-based reference containing practical guidelines for policy development. As such, it keeps being revisited and re-analysed even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Opodo 2000; Kioko 2014; Kiiru 2017; etc.).

Since then, ethnomusicology and its applied aspects seem to have been forgotten in the Kenyan context. The development of a solid academic and research community on the topic still presents major challenges, whereby the majority of research projects are still undertaken in Western institutions and few local universities incorporate disciplines

11 Extract from Tracey's original field recordings dated 13<sup>th</sup> October 1950, courtesy of ILAM.

12 Ibid.

of ethnomusicology or dance anthropology in their academic programs.<sup>13</sup> The existing academic institutions (notably Kenyatta University & Technical University of Kenya) and government agencies (PPMC; Department of Culture; Bomas of Kenya; KNATCOM; etc.) do not collaborate nor converge to find solutions, while an official cultural policy still eludes us.

Besides the ever-growing research on popular culture, which includes popular music, the national academic community seems to be divided into two streams: the educationists who focus on methods of teaching music and/or dance and the more “classical” ethnomusicologists who document and analyse specific traditions. In both camps, a large majority of authors seems to be engulfed by the burden of authenticity, deliberating on the “original” or “pure” form of this or that dance and critiquing the “adulterated” stage performances of the same. *What is Authentic?* and *what is Kenyan?* remain, explicitly or implicitly, the main questions guiding our research projects. But, as we discuss these issues in conferences, reports or academic articles, we lack to ask ourselves the question of how and whether the results of our research contribute to the state of researched practices on the ground, on the status of traditional musicians, on the transmission of these practices, on their overall sustainability, as well as on their place in the national policies and preservation efforts.

### *Applied or Engaged?: Towards a Self-Cognisant Approach to Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Music and Dance in Kenya*

When discussing the effects of research-produced narratives on traditional music and dance, allow me to commence from the field. Since my first encounters with traditional Giriama musicians, I was stunned by their reactions to the researcher me and by the number of references they had to this and that *Mzungu* who had, in their words, “stayed here as well” or “done the same as me”. It had quickly become evident that I was dealing with a disproportionately “ethnomusicologised” region, a fact that, in the comparative optics of my research, automatically evoked the question of the effects such presence would have on the music and dance practices, as well as on their perception.

The French ethnologists Anne Doquet, who has done extensive research on the Dogon population in Mali, introduced the notion of “ethnologising” (original – *ethnologiser*) a people and their culture (Doquet 2002). According to her, the famous book on Dogon masked rituals by early ethnographer Marcel Griaule had left such an immense impact on the local community that she pushes the argument to talk of “griaulisation” of the Dogons. Another example is the ethnomusicology work done by Elina Caroli in Salento, Italy on *tarantella* music and dance genre. According to Caroli (2009) it was evident that the folklorisation of the specific ritual and its accompanying music were based, and very consciously so, on a very specific description and analysis of it – that of Ernesto de Martino, an Italian anthropologist.

The two case studies both reveal how local populations progressively incorporated academic and research-produced narratives into their traditional practices and in such a way mummified the practice, rendering it more “authentic” and/or “exotic” in the eyes of the spectator, be it a tourist or a much later researcher. It is important to note that in both cases, the initial researchers proceeded to a vulgarisation of scholarly texts in one form or the other, which resonates with early ethnography efforts in the East African region, notably Tracey’s publishing of recorded materials from Coastal Kenya.

Up to which point does the production of discourse on a specific cultural practice influence subject populations’ perception of their own practices? Do they, consciously or unconsciously incorporate scientific descriptions and/or, in the case of colonial ethnography, “judgments of value”? Back in Coastal Kenya, one of my key informants in the area described the development of *gonda* song and dance structure with reference to its inaudibility to audiences and to the “White men coming to record it”. According to him, it was due to the fact that dancers could not sing “properly” while executing energetic dance movements that the current structure was agreed on. Even though he personally did not read Hugh Tracey’s field notes nor hear the 1950s recordings, he had been exposed to them indirectly via consequent ethnomusicologist presence in the Coast and their interaction with local communities.

Unlike Hyslop and Tracey, contemporary ethnomusicologists in Kenya do not seem to have a plan for engagement, for applying their knowledge to practices whether in terms of their preservation or development. At the same time, one might argue that applied ethnomusicology began with the origins of ethnomusicology as a discipline. In the recent years, recommendations of appropriate methodologies for applied ethnomusicology have emerged in the context of the debate about distinctions between “pure” and “applied” research. Defined as “the approach guided by principles of social responsibility, which extends the usual academic goal of broadening and deepening knowledge and understanding toward solving concrete problems and towards working both inside and beyond typical academic contexts” (Harrison 2012), the discipline questions the usual dichotomy between academic and applied work. A growing momentum in applied ethnomusicology scholarship has resulted in a series of conferences, an emerging literature, various training programmes and scholarly groups. These are devoted to work in ethnomusicology that puts music to use in a variety of contexts, academic and otherwise, including education, cultural policy, conflict resolution, medicine, arts programming, and community music.

13 For an overview of recent publications in ethnomusicology of East Africa consult Akuno (ed) 2014; and Kiiru & Mutonya (eds) 2018.

Although, attempts at applying knowledge acquired through research have been made, we seem to have failed in developing a common agreement or a collaborative project, and in achieving tangible results. Aside from the national competitive festivals, how and where do we apply our knowledge? Is teaching a Nairobi student how to play for example *litungu* the only way one can advance the preservation agenda?

### Conclusions and Recommendations

It is important to acknowledge that images we create are never truly neutral; they have real world consequences, sometimes unintended ones, and sometimes consequences that contradict precisely what the images were designed to convey. In that sense, we should always be attentive and sensitive to the socio-political context of their creation and distribution.

We should reflect on the complex manner in which historical treatment of practices, the scientific interest in them and the production of knowledge it comes with affect the studied practices. Once we have developed that faculty and incorporated it in our academic practice, whether reading and analysing or producing a discourse, we should be able to reconsider the ethnomusicological practice from the perspective of engagement and/or applied ethnomusicology with deliberate effects on our subject(s) of study.

This area of our discipline should be conceptualised with a strong collaborative component incorporating both horizontal collaboration, among fellow researchers and academic institutions, and vertical collaboration, between different stakeholders (i.e. government, academia and practitioners). Institutions and civil sector groups that deal with traditional music from a more practical point of view should be supported and integrated with research; policies and guidelines based on a research; and research results distributed in diverse formats accessible to a larger audience. Only then shall we be able to achieve significant progress in the area of preservation and promotion of traditional music and dance in Kenya.

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## Finding a Definitive Style in the Animation Industry

Nyabere, Emily

Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya. [nyabere.emily@ku.ac.ke](mailto:nyabere.emily@ku.ac.ke)

### Abstract

*A lot of animation content that is viewed by Kenyans comes from the west. This should not be assumed to mean that there is no local talent, the talent is there. Kenya is however facing a number of challenges that deter its growth in the animation sector, some of which include lack of funding, lack of proper training, lack of recognition and finding a definitive style. Animators in Africa are striving to develop a definitive style, which is difficult since many have been trained by European or American animators. Big international animation companies coming in to train people in countries like Kenya may have had an influence on their style. With many young people taking an interest in animation and realizing that it could be a viable career path for them, there is a need to establish proper training that defines the local narrative and style. One way to tell African stories is to depict these in our productions. The Film industry has made an effort towards trying to portray a definitive style in local films that is able to give a more appropriate narrative of our country, an effort that should be extended towards animation productions. This study aims to explore animation productions in Africa and observe the effort that has been injected towards trying to develop a definitive style in animated productions that are made by Africans, for Africans and with images, scripts and music from Africa. This study will therefore focus on the work of Michael Muthiga, CEO of FatBoy Animations and the man behind the popular local faiba series of animated advertisements delving into his training, growth, trends and style. The study will analyze his productions trying to identify whether he has a definitive style and why.*

**Key words:** *Animation, definitive style, local narrative, African themes, cultural identity, advertising*

### Introduction

“The success of animated films such as *The Lion King* and *Madagascar* suggests that properties with African themes can have significant potential with global audiences. To date, such properties have come out of Hollywood rather than Africa, but there are signs that animators on the continent may be poised to make an impact on the world market”. (Raugust, November 20, 2008). *Tinga Tinga Tales*, a television series animated at Homeboyz Entertainment in Kenya, and produced by U.K. studio Tiger Aspect in partnership with the BBC and Disney denotes such optimism.

The Animation industry is growing in Africa but every African country is faced by different challenges most common being; access to funding, limited resources and lack of training facilities and institutions that offer animation courses. South Africa is the rare country in the region where government support is available for animation.

The South African animation community is large compared to other countries in Africa, but is still small from a global perspective although their studios have developed a reputation for quality giving them significant access to international clients like the US. Egypt is also seen to host a number of significant animation productions with Egyptian studios servicing customers mainly in Egypt and nearby Middle Eastern and North African markets. Animation production in other countries is limited mostly to a few small studios and independent animators in countries such as Mauritius and Kenya, with much of their output consisting of short films and commercials (Raugust, November 20, 2008).

When it comes to training, it is only until this year that USIU-A (United States International University - Africa) launched a Degree program in animation, Bachelor of Animation. Before that, the highest level of training for animation in Kenya was Diploma program, offered by a few institutions. Michael Muthiga, CEO of Fatboy Animations says he has taught himself most aspects of animation through online classes (Mahugu, 2016, June 04).

Andrew Kaggia a leading 3D animator and film maker in Kenya admits that some of the challenges faced by the Kenyan Animation industry include lack of proper training facilities and access to funding. Kaggia is the creator of *Nairobi X*, the first 3D video game developed in Kenya, and *Wagenzi*, an award winning 3D Animation that depicts the battle among the candidates for the 2012 presidential elections. He says, “If governments and private institutions could see the potential of the animation industry and support by building more educational institutions for animation, people could get more training. We could have talented and trained animators producing more local content in Africa.” (Konyango, September 30, 2015).

In 2004, UNESCO formed an initiative for the production of children’s animated cartoons in order to address the lack of local content production. With the ultimate plan of setting up an animation training centre, its aim was to train local animators and encourage the production of animation with African themes. The initiative offered three training workshops in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa but has gone dormant since its founder, Alonso Aznar, relocated out of Africa. (UNESCO, March 29, 2004; Raugust, November 20, 2008).

There has been a concern in the past that international animation companies coming in to train people in countries like Kenya may have had an influence on their style. (Raugust, November 20, 2008). This research therefore explores the works of various animators specifically in Kenya to see whether they have a defined style in their work and understand what has influenced their style.

The study examines local animation productions like *Tinga Tinga Tales*, *faiba* series of animated advertisements, among others with the purpose of exploring and comparing the way in which African themes have been used to render animation productions locally and globally. The study analyzes observations and statistics that have been collected in order to determine the popularity of animation productions based on the use of African themes. The study is interested in finding ways in which local narratives can effectively be relayed through animation by effective use of African themes and seeks to establish the relationship between the use of African themes and product popularity in animation and how one is affected by the other.

## Literature Review

The use of African themes as a definitive style in African animation poses an impact on both the local and global audience and market. Animation has been used all over the world to tell stories. This chapter is keen to analyze the African theme as a component used in animation production and how this has been used in animation to tell African stories to the audience in Kenya and the world.

The study considers the different techniques of animation production, use of African themes in local narratives, studies and theories related to identity in animation. The study also reviews the impact that cultural identity has had on the world market and how this helps to build a definitive style.

### Animation production techniques

Gartenberg (1985) defines animation as “the arts, techniques and processes involved in giving apparent movement and life to inanimate objects by means of cinematography.” Animation production in Kenya varies its techniques from 2D animation, 3D animation and even puppet animation. Kenyan animation is visible in five different areas; advertising, TV programs, short films, gaming and interactivity, and virtual reality.

In Kenya the last couple of years has seen a good appearance of local animation productions on Television and even online, featuring TV programs, short stories and advertisements. Good examples include the *faiba*, a 3D series of animated advertisements for JTL (Jamii Telkom) by FatBoy Animations, *XYZ show*, a local animated puppet series, short films like *Legend of Ngong hills*, and online productions like *Wagenzi*, *Makarao TV* and *The Greedy Lords of the Jungle*, among others.

### Animation advertising

Advertising is a form of non-personal communication by use of fictional characters that is paid for by an organization, using mass media to persuade or influence an audience. FatBoy Animations is currently one of the biggest animation production companies in Kenya, focusing on advertisements. Some of the most common local animation advertisements are credited to Michael Muthiga, CEO of FatBoy Animations. His company is famously known locally for the *Faiba* series of 3D animation adverts with Mbugua and the caveman character, and also the *Jamii milling cooking flour* advert with Wafula and Koimett characters.

### Cultural Identity

The Cambridge English Dictionary defines culture as the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time. Culture is therefore the beliefs, values, practice, and social behaviour that define a way of life for a society or particular group of people. Cultural identity is the feeling of belonging to a group and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture (Anderson & Collins, 2007, as cited in, Rosa, *et al.*, 2018). “Individuals’ identities influence the formation of their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours” (Hecht & Choi, 2012, p.137).

The concept of cultural identity refers to familial and cultural dimensions of a person’s identity, and how others perceive him or her, i.e., factors that are salient to a person’s identity both as perceived by the individual and how others perceive the person’s identity (Ibrahim & Heuer, 2016, p.15).

Batkin talks about using the dynamics of culture to inform identity and how this plays an important role in developing a character. Batkin further posits that place establishes identity (Batkin, 2017). In both the works of Muthiga and Kaggia, a careful consideration has been placed in the way they develop the backgrounds of their animations in a way that the audience is able to identify with the locations and landscapes. In Muthiga’s work especially, his character development adopts the personality of the local ethnicity identity stereotypes. The skinny character dressed in leopard skin with an accent known to be imitating the Akamba community of Kenya, Mbugua a businessman who is a miser and with an



accent that helps to enhance the stereotype of the Kikuyu community also of Kenya and Jalis the Olympics champion who describes himself as a racist when he means runner, is a stereotype depiction of the Kalenjin community. (Mahugu, 2016, June 04). The ways of life of these different communities have definitely informed the making of the characters personalities.

### **African themes in local narratives**

Field and Wells (1995) explains,

If advertising is to attract and communicate to audiences in a way that produces the desired result, advertisers must first understand their audiences. They must acquaint themselves with consumers' ways of thinking, with those factors that motivate them and with the environment in which they live.

There is no doubt that local narratives influence Muthiga's production. When asked how he conceptualized his famous 'Faimba' and 'Mbugua' characters he says that the two mirror people in his own experiences. He further states that interacting with people gives him incredible ideas, which are then woven around the client's concept to come up with the final product (Kahongeh, 2017, April 28).

On the other hand, when Kaggia was asked what inspired him to create *Nairobi X*, an action game he developed and released in June, 2015, he said, "I grew up watching cartoons and playing video games, and I always wondered, why can't we have our own local game? Many of them have foreign story lines..." . Kaggia goes on to say,

I had always told myself that one day I would make a 3-D game, and when the opportunity came, I thought, what will you do about it? So I decided to do something that is based in Nairobi, where people can actually identify with the locations and feel more connected to the game" (Konyango, 2015, September 30).

### **Building a definitive style**

In building a definitive style in animation, the use of African themes and cultural identity are visible elements used in the production of local animators to define the style of their work. In essence, this appears to be the definitive style of some key animators in the Kenyan animation industry. It is seen in the application of their work and even the intent in creating, as studies above have revealed.

### **Theories**

In order to understand whether local animators are using a definitive style in their production, it is important to introduce two key theories that provide a basis for this study.

#### **Communication Theory of Identity**

The CTI (Communication Theory of Identity) provides an integrative framework consisting of four layers of identity; the personal identity which is analogous to self-image is how individuals define themselves, enacted identity which is as a result of the way people communicate or express themselves, relational identity where the formation of a person's identity is influenced by other people's views of that individual, and communal identity which is based on members of a certain group sharing common characteristics, histories, traditions, ancestries or their way of life (Hecht & Choi, 2012; Jung & Hecht, 2004). Communal identities "are sometimes manifested in stereotypes, but other times they are simply the cultural code for the group members – namely, how the individuals are socially constructed at the group level" (Hecht & Choi, p.142). The theory posits that these four layers co-exist together. This study however focuses on the communal layer of identity and how it affects our conception and perception of animation productions.

#### **Cultural Identity Theory**

Cultural Identity theory on the other hand deals with the study into how individuals use communicative processes to construct and negotiate their cultural group identities and relationships in particular contexts. It identifies culture as one of the many identities expressed in communication encounters being evident through social comparison. When an individual interacts with others, multiple cultural identities will be encountered such as nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, among others (communicationtheory.org).

Lustig and Koester (2010) refer to cultural identity as one's sense of belonging to a particular culture or group. It is the way in which members of a group communicate their Identity (communicationtheory.org). In other words, if described within the context of the Communication Theory of Identity discussed above will fall under the communal layer of CTI.

This theory breaks down Cultural identity to a further three components namely; **Individual, Relational and Communal Identity**. Individual refers to how an individual interprets his cultural identity based on his experiences, relational refers to how individuals interact with one and another or what is the appropriate behavior, and communal

identity is the use of communication in the creation, affirmation and negotiation of shared identity. The actions and interactions of the group, their communal practices reflect the identity of the group (Bajracharya, 2018, February 15).

## Research

### Research Problem

The Animation industry in Kenya is facing a number of challenges that deter its growth in the animation sector, some of which include access to funding, limited training facilities, and a definitive style. Some studies indicate that African animators struggle to find a definitive style in their work as a result of the influence of being trained by European or American animators. In order to effectively tell local narratives, animators must first understand their audiences in considering the factors that motivate them and the environment in which they live (Field & Wells, 1995). This study therefore explores the use of African themes in exhibiting animation productions that effectively communicate to their target audience, and make an impact on the local and global market.

### Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish whether African animators are employing specific styles in their production.
- ii. To explore the styles that African animators are using to exhibit their work.
- iii. To determine the impact that these styles have on the local as well as the global market.

### Findings

Apart from the famous *Tinga Tinga Tales*, TV animated series, in the recent past, a number of African animators have indeed been seen to exhibit specific themes in their production. A look into the animation industry in Kenya reveals that the most effective and successful local productions embrace local themes in their narratives. Some of the most common elements seen in their production are the use of the local language or foreign language with a local accent, familiar character names that resonate with the ethnic communities, scene treatments with familiar geographical landscapes and background environments, and creating characters that adopt the physical characteristics and personality features of the local audience. Animation from Africa is also seemingly making an impact on the global world as is indicated by the recognition given to African animators by local and international organizations.

### Discussions of main points

African animators are seen to be employing specific styles in their production in order to appeal to their audiences. An analysis into the works of Kenyan animators reveals the use of local narratives with local themes to execute their productions. In Muthiga's work for example, his famous 3D skinny caveman character dressed in leopard skin exhibits the tendencies of what is considered a characteristic of the Akamba community of Kenya. This is mostly felt in his accent as he speaks, the character further carries the traditional African look in his dressing and the idea of him living in a cave which traditional African society is able to identify with.

Another of his creations is a character called Mbugua who he has used to exhibit a series of 3D advertisements for Jamii Telkom. The character identifies as a business man from the Kikuyu community of Kenya. Muthiga's presents the character very intentionally, as the Kikuyu community is stereotyped to have the most interpreneurial spirit in Kenya. The accent of the character Mbugua helps to enhance his persona. There is a specific and intentional narrative portrayed in Muthiga's productions, but most importantly is that the audience it is created for are able to relate well with the narrative. There is also careful intent in the way Muthiga treats the backgrounds of his production. In the caveman series of his famous *Faiba* adverts for instance, he builds the context in a cave which identifies with traditional African social set-up.

In his works, Muthiga has also been seen to use some traditional music with cultural origins. In one of the *faiba* series of adverts for instance he uses what is commonly known to locals as *Lingala* music as the caveman character dances to it. Another example is in the *Jamii milling* advert where he uses as his background tune a traditional instrumental tune that resonates with the Luhya community of Kenya. Muthiga's adverts have gained a lot of popularity with the local audience as is evident in the continuous series of productions indicating the market demand. These findings reveal that there is a strong correlation between the use of local themes in communicating and product popularity, where the use hence positively affects popularity.

Another example is in the work of Kaggia seen in the landscapes and background scenes adopted in *Nairobi X*, the first 3D video game developed in Kenya. The use of the local political scene theme is also exhibited in *Wagenzi*, an award winning 3D Animation that depicts the battle among the candidates for the 2012 presidential elections. Another popular TV program is XYZ show which is a local animated puppet series that epitomizes political satire.

The global audience has been seen to express their appreciation of local productions in awarding of various achievements.

Forbes magazine listed Michael Muthiga twice; in 2014 and 2016, as one of 30 Most Promising Young Entrepreneurs in Africa, in the Africa's Top 30 under 30 Entrepreneurs recognition (Mahugu, 2016, June 04). *Wageuzi*, a 3D online production that depicts the battle among the candidates for the 2012 Kenyan presidential elections earned the Best Animation award at the Kalasha Awards in Kenya and was also ranked at the Hiroshima International Festival in 2011. (Konyango, 2015, September 30). There have been many other recognitions made towards, individual Kenyan and African animators, and smaller animation studios in international film markets and festivals held annually across the world.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusion

A lot of Kenyan animators may have been and still are being trained by European and American animators and animators from around the world but this does not necessarily define the style of their work. The works of Fatboy Animations discussed above, as well as other studios like Homeboys Entertainment and Buni Studios reveal that their productions are very much influenced by and employ local themes and narratives. However, they still continue to experience other challenges in the industry which include lack of funding and limited animation resources and lack of training facilities and institutions that offer animation courses.

### Recommendations

Although the study has limited its scope to exploring the use of African themes in order to define the animator's style, it recognizes that there are other areas that still need to be explored by future studies as far as challenges facing the local animation industry are concerned. For instance, lack of funding and scarce resources as well as the lack of sufficient training facilities and institutions offering animation courses could be a contributing factor to the slow growth of the animation industry in Kenya.

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## Film and Restoration of Ruined Humanity: Judy Kibinge's *Something Necessary*

Wafula Yenjela  
South Eastern Kenya University

### Abstract

*This paper reads Judy Kibinge's film *Something Necessary* (2013) that engages with the infamous 2007/2008 post-election violence as a creative enterprise in a quest for the restoration of a ruined humanity. The paper argues that the film surmounts Kenya's complex and perilous political matrix by underscoring the power embodied in individual responsibility to redemption of self and, consequently, others, in the midst of state and/ or societal atrocities. It also puts into perspective the 'necessary' 'thing(s)' that the film dwells on by identifying the implied 'things', pondering on why the film finds them unnameable, grappling with how necessary they are. This speaks to social justice, an important sustainable development goal (SDGs) in a country like Kenya. In the political conflict that the film dwells on, the youth were the major agents of atrocities while the underclass children, women, and the elderly members of society were the largest group on the receiving end. The paper points out that even though the film is cognisant of the need for youth economic empowerment to remake them into agents of transformation in their societies through constructive participation in income generating activities rather than their recourse to enforcing political vendettas for their ethnic political personages for a living, it champions social empathy as the most enduring empowerment strategy for the youth in volatile spaces. To this end, the paper highlights the film's depictions of the centrality of human compassion and empathy in rebuilding a better multicultural world. Through portrayals of several youth's positive changes in their moral personae, the film underpins the creative industry's power in fostering a peaceful and prosperous society. Generally, the paper reads Kibinge's *Something Necessary* as prototypical of the creative industry's instrumental capacity to empower the youth both intellectually and morally.*

### Introduction

Writing on the need to invest in stories for teenagers and young adults as he fetes philanthropist William Burt for intervention through the generous Burt Award in Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Ghana, Henry Indangasi makes the following profound observations:

...it is as a teenager that we start asking the all-important question: who am I? It is when we are teenagers that our worst socially-induced personality traits can transform us into demons. But it is also as teenagers that our finest feelings solidify into enduring moral values. [...]. The outlines of our moral persona were drawn at that stage in our lives. (2018, 48)

Indangasi's reflections underscore the power of stories in shaping our humanity. This demonstrates the empowering nature of stories young people can identify with in terms of the ages of characters and the struggles involved. Similarly, films as audio-visual stories in which young people are part of the cast resonate with as they influence young people's lives and, by extension, their society.

This paper reads Judy Kibinge's film *Something Necessary* (2013) as a creative enterprise to empower the youth intellectually and morally in spaces where ethnic political scores have adversely ruined their humanity. The film is set in the aftermath of Kenya's infamous 2007/2008 post-election violence that claimed over 1500 lives and rendered almost a million people to Internally Displaced People's (IDP) camps. Most of the IDPs permanently lost their homes and landed property. I expound on the historical circumstances of the violence in the subsequent section. Presently, Kibinge's *Something Necessary* focalises a transformative encounter of a perpetrator of atrocities and his victim in the aftermath of the violence. The encounter is a turning-point in the film as it is constructed on remorse and empathy. While other perpetrators of atrocities during the conflict are indifferent to their victims' pathetic situations, a young man by the name Joseph demonstrates his determination to rise above peer/ and gang influence. While in many cases the ideal role model for the youth is one who proactively avoids deviant behaviour, *Something Necessary* presents a practical situation of redemption. Even though Joseph is reactive in his unorthodox quest for a better society, he represents the power embodied in an individual's resolve to foster a better world. When communal empowerment in the sense of political awareness and advocacy for reparation of perceived historical injustices degenerates into commission of injustices, individual empowerment that manifests through one's ability to empathise seems supreme. Thus, the paper reads *Something Necessary* to demonstrate that social empathy is the hallmark of youth empowerment.

### Context

Even though the 2007/2008 post-election violence was sparked by a highly disputed presidential election, the violence had a deeper reach to Kenya's problematic post-independent histories where, upon independence, Jomo Kenyatta

favoured his ethnic community in acquisition of land vacated by white settlers in the Rift Valley. This would lead to ethnic tensions in the region as the Kalenjin feel aggrieved that Jomo Kenyatta's regime deprived them of their ancestral lands. Thus, most of the people who engaged in the violence that engulfed Kenya in that period viewed their actions as attempts to 'right' the perceived historical injustices. The violence further exposed the uses of political power in Kenya: a socio-economic channel for rewarding ethnic political blocks for their support but also to chastise opponent ethnic blocks for their divergent political affiliation. The ethnic political block that finds itself outside political power considers itself doomed as it braces for exclusion, state neglect and victimisation. In such circumstances, voting for parliamentarians and more so the presidency is more of a community's survival mechanism than a mere expression of one's democratic right.

### Review of Available Literature

Jacqueline Ojiambo (2017) reads Judy Kibinge's *Something Necessary* with an emphasis on how Kenyan women filmmakers use film as an avenue to speak about sexual violation, especially gang rape in times of conflict. According to Ojiambo (2017, 56), "[t]he embodying of both physical and sexual violence through Anne's character shows the reality of the violence, while the focus on Joseph as a perpetrator demonstrates the trauma that arises from committing atrocities and highlights the question of social responsibility." Since Ojiambo does not give much attention on the aspect of a perpetrator's social responsibility, this paper provides more insights on the same through a greater framework of social empathy. M. Alex Wagaman (2011, 285) uses a pyramid figure to show individual empathy as the foundation upon which other layers comprising contextual understanding, social responsibility, skill building, and, at the apex, youth empowerment, mutually reinforce each other. These five layers are definitive of social empathy which informs social justice.

The notion of social justice is sometimes best articulated through film. This is because film, as a cultural medium, translates experiences that resonate with the lives of the audience. In many occasions, film becomes a template upon which some members of the audience construct their social lives. In a study of the impact of Nollywood and Latin American telenovelas on a group of selected young women in Eldoret, Kenya, Solomon Waliaula (2018) uses in-depth interviews as well as group discussions to show the narratives of distant places and experiences in the films greatly influenced the social lives of the women over a period of time. Waliaula (2018, 15) writes:

These narratives influence the way they define social identities in a complex way ranging from the stereotypes associated with spectatorship of certain narratives to the perceived relevance of their themes. [Their] identification with and admiration of the [...] telenovelas resonates with a complexity of social experiences in real life, some of which are deeply personal and in this light, metonymic extensions of autobiographies. More importantly perhaps is the women's use of these narratives as reference points against which they engage with and resolve the social tensions in their real lives.

This shows the power of telenovelas in reshaping the social lives of the viewers. While most telenovelas focus on the intricacies of familial and social tensions, Judy Kibinge's *Something Necessary* engages with horrendous memories of one of Kenya's darkest moments. The depictions of perpetrators and their victims in the film would possibly elicit responses similar to those of respondents in Waliaula's study, among its Kenyan audience and other audiences that have experienced violence.

### Theoretical Underpinnings

This paper is anchored in the postcolonial theory, particularly in the idea of the in-between as imagined by Homi Bhabha. To Bhabha (1994, 2), the 'post' in various theories, including postcolonialism, signify "the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion." Here, Bhabha focuses on what he refers to as border lives; lives where categories overlap resulting a subset of various constituent categories. Bhabha (1994, 2) argues: "It is in the emergence of the interstices — the overlap and displacement of domains of difference — that the intersubjective and collective experiences of *nationness*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated" (original emphasis). The negotiation in the in-between foregrounds "competing claims of communities where, despite shared histories of deprivation and discrimination, the exchange of values, meanings and priorities may not always be collaborative and dialogical, but may be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual and even incommensurable." This liminal space presents enables a greater understanding of Kibinge's film *Something Necessary* where a reformed perpetrator abandons what could be deemed as his Kalenjin ethnic community's collective claims to reparation of land deprivations that were facilitated by the Kenyan state in favour of the Kikuyu community at the dawn of independence. Through his 'desertion', the reformed perpetrator of atrocities against the group he had been persuaded to view as the enemy finds himself at conflict with his 'community' as he attempts to forge a community that is beyond fixed categories of Kalenjin/Kikuyu.

## Research Problem

Since the youth in Kenya as well as many parts of Africa play a major role in enforcing atrocities, the nurturing of social empathy, through the creative industry, among them can work as an empowering mechanism to foster a society that embraces diversity despite problematic histories replete with competing ethnic claims to historical injustices. The paper argues that Kibinge's film *Something Necessary* surmounts Kenya's complex and perilous political matrix by underscoring the power embodied in individual responsibility to redemption of self and, consequently, others, in the midst of state and/ or societal atrocities. Through filmic representation of individual empathy which is the foundation of social empathy, the vision of youth empowerment is powerfully articulated.

## Objectives

This paper's objectives are:

- I. To demonstrate that the film as part of the creative industry is an important avenue to youth empowerment.
- II. To demonstrate that social empathy nurtured through redemptive stories of the youth can foster an egalitarian society.

## Findings

There are cases where communal empowerment is at conflict with individual empowerment. According to Christine Mutuku (2011, 31), "empowered people are perceived as being central agents in the development process and the main actors in the improvement of their own welfare." In other words, empowerment is the possession of agency which greatly contributes to transformation of one's worse situation for the better. Yet, Kibinge's *Something Necessary* demonstrates a case where communal agency can deteriorate into commission of atrocities. It is in such situations that individual moral principles must override communal pursuits. The representation of individuals who, despite the risks against their lives, dare to go against detrimental collective pursuits demonstrate the filmmakers' conviction that an alternative society can be fostered. The paper further found out that youth's encounter with adversity can be empowering to their moral faculties. Candace Lind *et al* (2018, 1) show that adversity can foster resilience among the youth. In depicting a young person's participation in post-election violence as his turning-point in the course of his life, and his strong-willed determination to redirect his energies for the better of humanity, Kibinge suggests that Kenyans should learn from the traumatic encounter and take individual responsibility to build a better nation rather than wait for their ethnic communities to embrace diversity.

## Discussion of Main Points

In an evaluation of the significance of music to the developmental needs of adolescents, Dave Miranda (2013, 10) underlines the complex biopsychosocial challenges the young people undergo, and how music works for them as a resort for intellectual as well as emotional nourishment. Similarly, film is imbued with emotional potency that appeals to young people. With increased access to online platforms that have archived films, young people can find lasting influences from films such as Kibinge's *Something Necessary* that can be accessed on YouTube. Since the film stars a young person's quest for redemption after he has committed atrocities, the young people can find a role model from whom they can construct their identities. Indeed, a toxic political atmosphere greatly contributes to the erosion of many a young people's humanity.

In the film, Joseph is haunted by his participation in inflicting injury, death, and destruction of property against his fellow human beings. Even though he acted in a mob and with the blessings of political kingpins of his ethnic group, it later dawns on him that he should take personal responsibility for his actions. His major step towards redemption is when he rejects blood money, *i.e.*, money sent to the youth by politicians to enable them (youth) continue with a violent campaign targeting people of ethnic groups perceived to be of opponent political affiliation. The reason Joseph gives to the gang for rejecting the money is trivialised by them: "I am still haunted by what we did that night," to which Chepsoi, the leader of the gang dismisses thus: "What's wrong with you? It's as if you've never seen a naked woman before?" (Kibinge 2013). To the gang, Joseph's troubled conscience for his portion in arson, gang rape and murder is a demonstration of weak masculinity. Therefore, they chase him away while ridiculing him to return to his mother, a suggestion that he is still a child or feminine.

Joseph's desertion of the gang is also symbolic of his rejection of the gang's cause for waging war against those perceived as enemy ethnic communities. When political attempts are made at national level to restore peace, through a performance of reconciliation when two political rivals shake hands in a press conference, Chepsoi reminds his gang the cause for their war:

We are fighting because of our land! Our soil! Our soil left to us by our forefathers. They have stolen our land and now they have stolen the election! They have taken everything from us. No! I won't have any of it... (Kibinge 2013)

Perhaps Henry Indangasi is one of the foremost scholars to deflate the question of ancestral lands. In his reading of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child*, Indangasi (2018, 21) claims that "[e]ven globally, the issue of ancestral lands is dodgy." Indangasi writes that linguistic evidence in the naming of places suggest the original occupants of the so-called ancestral lands while histories of people's migrations also work to unsettle the permanence of such spaces. Furthermore, the film demonstrates another in-between in land ownership and inheritance — the question of intermarriages and resultant multi-ethnic children. Anne Wanjiru, a nurse and protagonist of the film is of Kikuyu extraction married to Steve Sirma, a Kalenjin. Kitur, their child cannot fit in the fixed Kalenjin/Kikuyu categories. Yet, Anne asserts that The Haven, as their farm is known, is Kitur's birth-right.

Therefore, the film demonstrates a youth who triumphs over peer influence as well as perceived communal claims to ancestral lands. Instead of relying on 'blood money', Joseph takes bold steps to search for a job so that he can earn a living through decent humane ways. His decision to flee to Nairobi with his girlfriend, Jebet, can also be read as an attempt sever himself from an unchanging communal identity which is no longer sufficient for his new aspirations in life: to be a cosmopolitan citizen. Unfortunately, Joseph's resolve not to participate in atrocities turn him into a prey hunted down by the gang he deserted, till they finally kill him. The film's weak-point lies in its suggestion that youth's joblessness significantly contributed to Kenya's 2007/2008 post-election violence. Electoral malpractices and domination of the presidency by individuals from one ethnic community cannot be underestimated as factors that foment dangerous ethnic divisions.

## Conclusion

The creative industry is a rich platform from which to empower the youth. This paper focused on a film that represents Kenya's 2007/2008 post-election violence to demonstrate that individual empathy is the foundation of youth empowerment. While much attention has been given to empowering the youth with reproductive skills to avoid pregnancies and STDs (see Hutchinson, Mirzoyants, and Leyton 2018), the need to empower the youth with empathy has been marginalised. This paper underscores the power of nurturing empathy through filmic representations of the youth with emphasis on how they triumph over detrimental peer as well societal practices. The paper demonstrates that the Judy Kibinge's film *Something Necessary* epitomises youth empowerment through portrayals of an imagined youth's acquisition of critical thinking values, *i.e.*, the youth's capability to independently question established/normalised detrimental practices and forge his life on sound values.

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## Turning Monologue into Play: A journey through self-revelatory theatre in the one woman play *Diary of a Divorced Woman* by Zippy Okoth

Okoth Zippora

Kenyatta University, [zippyokoth@gmail.com](mailto:zippyokoth@gmail.com)/[okoth.zippora@gmail.com](mailto:okoth.zippora@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Self-Revelatory theatre is a form of drama therapy where the performer draws from their real-life experiences to help solve some life issues. The issues could be directly related to the performer or to people they interact with. Often self-revelatory performance looks at one person's life while solving a social issue, which recurs in other people's lives singularly. Self-revelatory performance is a powerful tool of influencing people's perceptions and behaviours because it has the strength to question people's unconscious. It is considered therapy not just to the performer but to the audience. The paper will be looking at the scripting, production, and performance of the one woman play 'Diary of a Divorced Woman' performed in 2018. The play looks at one woman's encounter of domestic abuse/violence through their dating, marriage, the separation, divorce process and eventually rebuilding of her new life through the social stigma that faces many divorced persons. It looks through her regrets, fears and struggles in the eyes of religion, society and family. The paper will share in the journey of the performer and how she synced the real and the stage and if she found therapy. In this we are able to appreciate the power of self-revelatory performance and the power of theatre in opening up conscious discussions on sensitive social issues while finding closure to the performer, who in this case would be acting their real-life experiences.*

### Introduction

The play *Diary of a Divorced Woman* is a one-woman play based on the real-life experiences of Zippy Okoth (me). The production based on my real-life experiences was born out of the idea that I needed to share my story. I felt that there are a lot of women going through domestic violence who are judged harshly for getting a divorce. There is also a lot of news of spouses who had murdered their families and perhaps, taken away their own lives. Through the 5 years from the time I moved out of my matrimonial home, I had been working on excerpts on the different events in my life and finding my healing through writing. I wanted to tell my story to people beyond my circle of friends and family. I felt that perhaps my story could resonate with someone else and could help them make a turnaround in their life, either to stay or to leave abusive marriages. So, in 2017, I put the excerpts together and wove them into one story. I wanted to perform it as storytelling where I would stand in a spotlight and narrate the story. I later turned it into a play of two characters, Zippy and Ricky (my ex-husband Pseudo name). However, after analysing the depth of emotions involved in the play, I felt that most actors would not bring out the inner truth in the story, and my story would end up being like any other fictional play about domestic violence. I then started thinking of the possibility of acting in my story, bringing out the fears as they were, and reliving every moment of the love, passion, abuse, bitterness, the fears and the silent voices. And that is how the One-Woman Play was born and I became one of the few actors to act their real-life stories.

### Staging the Play

Thalia Goldstein (2012) states that theory of mind is the ability to understand what others are thinking, feeling, believing, and desiring. This I agree in that a performers' act starts in the state of the mind. I had to train my mind to concentrate, to relax, to observe, to have control of my mind and body movements and to get myself to reflect on the magic of the word 'if' and most of all to use the power of my emotional recall (Moore, 1984). I took myself to Constantine Stanislavski's school of thought, focusing on his theories to realistic acting techniques. I wanted the play to have as much realism as it could, and I had to bring in all my elements as a performer. We started with a month of body and mind training from December 2017 rehearsing daily from 6am through to 9am at the Kenya National Theatre dance studio. We did a lot of movement exercises stretching my body and mind. We did mind exercises like the egg game. This involved playing ball using an egg as a ball. The first time, from a crate of 30 eggs, I broke 20. By the 5<sup>th</sup> day I was able to throw the eggs to my choreographer with the faith that I could throw the eggs and my choreographer would catch it without letting it fall. We broke only 3, probably out of being over confident, which may sometimes harm a performer. We discussed my fears and the rigidity in my nerves were a direct translation to the psychological state of my mind. In this game I learnt to develop the trust I had in people.

We had body movement exercises where I learnt to take control of my body, and to know when to stop. I learnt the core of my strength in different standing and moving positions. I had to learn to take control of the stage and to prepare for any eventuality as I was going to be there alone. Thus, if in any case I was hurting, I would need to know how to save myself. We did the whirlwind exercise. This is where one turns around slowly and increases speed and when one feels

the body is starting to move like a whirlwind, one squats and sits to avoid the pressure throwing them out of space. The first time I did it, When I felt out of control, I forgot to squat and push my body to the earth thus reducing my centre of gravity for stability. What happened next ensured I never forgot again. My body was suddenly lifted and thrown to one wall of the room. I hit my arm so badly the blood clot lasted there for 2 months. We thank God I never hit my head, or we could not have had the play.

In that first month, we choreographed various moves and my body felt stronger, lighter and my concentration and observation skills improved. We then started the rehearsals of the play in January and I had to memorise 23 pages of words within one week. We had scripted the story in first person singular, and all the words were mine. I knew every scene off head, but now I had to get every word in its scripted order and in the right grammar context. At first it felt impossible and I told the director I would improvise. The only challenge with improvisation is that in a professional theatre space, the lighting, sound and stage technicians need to get their cues and that can be challenging without a script.

The play rehearsals were intense. We began rehearsals at 6am for the body and mind exercises until 8am. Thereafter I would start the script rehearsal from 9am until noon. As the days to the show drew to a close, the Kenya National Theatre became my harbour and I would be there as late as 5pm. Sometimes our rehearsals would only consist of talking and crying and sharing my fears. Sometimes, we could enact a scene and we had to stop because the reliving of the moment could take me into a delusion of sorts. Much of the time, the Director was more of a counsellor than your ordinary director. We started living in the play and at some point, the play changed us, we started feeling cruel to each other and our tantrums flew off the air. At this point, the producer could then talk to us to refocus our energies to the production.

The play had Four Acts. Act One looked at the romantic encounters of Zippy and Ricky. In this scene I had to act like a 22-year old that I was at that time. Considering that I was now a 35yrs old mother of three, this became one of the hard moments to relive. I had to check my pictures and relive the things I liked at that stage of my life. In this Act we talked about my music career, the men I dated before I met Ricky, our dating moments with Ricky and our love escapades. Act One looks at my encounter with Ricky showing his romantic side and his proposal. In one moment, I recount our first night together....

...Then one day in April, he comes home. I pick him up at the airport and we spend the whole night with him and his cousins, drinking, dancing and laughing. It's a great night. And when the cousins leave us, we rent a hotel room at The Milimani Hotel and make mad passionate love! It was good. And I'm not even exaggerating. I mean it was so good, that in the morning while we we're having breakfast, Ricky looks at me in the eyes and says,

"Please, marry me"

These lovely moments made the audience love Ricky, to understand that he had his good side. That we had our dating moments and it was ordinary like most relationships. In Act one I had to let my spirit carefree to show youth, to express the passion between Ricky and I. Despite what had happened in real-life, I had to let go and relive this moment with all the enthusiasm that it could bring, and for a moment, it felt great.

In Act Two the play looked at the engagement and the first years of the marriage. In this scene I was acting pregnant with our second baby. My make-up showed my face as bruised which I kept hiding from the audience. Act Two looked in depth into the transition from girl to wife. Here the narration focused on the first two years of our marriage and the struggle to have a baby. This Act further illustrated how I gave up my music career and performance art so as to be a loyal abiding wife. An act highly revered in the society, that it is in the part of the woman to make a home. This scene also looked at the first instance of cheating I experienced, the first slap, that later grew into kicks and punches and finally being beaten and going to the hospital to seek medical help.

Reliving the day I had refused to take a P3 form despite being requested by the doctor to do so, hurt me. Doing this scene created a lot of bitterness within me. I felt as though by having allowed him to hit me that first time, by not doing anything and forgiving him the very first time he slapped me, I had led him on.

In this scene, I took all the blame for Ricky's behaviour towards me and I accepted that it was normal for a man to treat a woman like that. This scene echoed the society's beliefs that a woman has to stay put no matter what. This scene also reflected on the other women in the marriage whom I was very bitter with. In one instance I lament.

'...May be he hits me because he's jealous. Or because he loves me so much. It's those fucking bitches who want to take him away from me. They are confusing him.'

Towards the end of this scene, I however reflect, and I start learning to be independent. This scene reminisced the times I started noticing that Ricky's behaviour towards me was not appropriate of a husband to a wife. It reflected the beginning of the loneliness in the marriage.

In Act Three, the play took us into an emotional encounter of a highly depressed Zippy and a highly abusive Ricky. This scene focused on Zippy as a mother and the loss of our son Zuriel. The scene relived the fun we had and the

occurrences of the morning he died. This scene took me through the grieving moments and Ricky's illicit behaviours and disrespect to the marriage by inviting one of his girlfriends to the funeral, and thereafter having his girlfriend echo insults to me.

Performing this scene broke me countless times throughout the rehearsals. I felt as though I had never mourned my son since he passed on. So during the rehearsals I really broke down. Since the separation and divorce, I had always thought that Ricky's behaviour was what had hurt me the most in the 5 years we were together, yet during the rehearsals I felt that it was the loss of our son Zuriel that hurt me the most. I relived the shock of his death, his funeral and the memories we had together. I had to attend counselling to be able to re-enact this scene.

At times, I could request the director to skip rehearsing that scene for the emotional upheaval it took me through. We had some sessions of role play and role reversal and I had to learn to distance Zippy the actress and Zippy the character. This was tough, and we had to involve a lot of concentration exercises to help me achieve this.

The peak of this Act came when I re-enacted one of the scenes where Ricky had hit me for having greeted a friend on our way from the cinemas. Insisting I was dating the guy. This scene intensifies when I personify Ricky and I start hitting the pillow as though it was Ricky hitting me. I lost control a severally as I could get intense and lose concentration, saying words that were not in the script. We decided to let the scene flow at its own pace. I could hit the pillow, have my tears and abuses and when I got tired I could sit, breath, compose myself and get on with the play. The exhaustion from the energy used in this scene was too intense not just for me as an actor but also to the audience. It is one of the scenes that I could hear pin drop silence the moment I paused, and with the spotlight on some sections of the audience, I could feel the tension and the fear in the eyes of the audience.

In Act 4, Zippy became a new person. The setting was a relaxed bedroom and Zippy all dressed up in heels, black body pants and a red jacket, sipping wine from time to time and moving with an air of authority. The moment I got into the scene the whole audience was excited to see the new powerful me.

In this Act I talked a lot about the reasons why I left. Narrating the final blow after Countless episodes of Ricky cheating on me openly, and the repeated physical abuse. This was in the streets in public glare for having decided to wait for him to pick me up from his escapades. In this scene I relived the public humiliation, and the moment I got my turning point. In it I say...

'It's now a scene. We're struggling. He's still insulting me. The people around us think I'm a whore who's refused to go with the client. They're making fun of me. Then they hear me say I'm his wife. They intervene.... I'm humiliated. Dejected and phoneless. For a second everything is moving in slow motion. This is what my life has turned to. Being beaten in public like a common whore... I snap out of it... Ricky drives past us and our eyes meet. For the first time it's clear; this man is not worth it.'

The Act ends with my going to pick my personal belongings after Ricky brings his latest girlfriend to our matrimonial home. In it I reminisce the peak of all my anger towards Ricky when he comes close to me. In this final scene I narrate Ricky's actions with distaste, giving myself the power I had so much longed to possess. I re-count...

'You know what he does when I get there? He tells me he wants us to talk. I tell him no. He holds my hand. I push him off me so hard he almost falls. I can see the shock on his face. I can feel the rage in me. All that pent up anger. I want to finish him. I want to make him suffer just like I did. I want him to pay (pause). But I step back and go to my room and pack. If there was ever a time I could have killed Ricky, it was that day!'

Emuna Renee (2015) states that Self revelatory performance is a powerful tool of influencing people's perceptions and behaviours because it has the strength to question people's unconscious. It is considered therapy not just to the performer but to the audience. This was highly evident during our production. After the play, there was a long queue of women who waited to hug me and whisper in my ears words that I still hold to date... Different voices, different sentiments, one message...

"Zippy that is not your story, that is the story of my life you were telling... My sister went through the same... tell the world Zippy... we are in this together."

The most gratifying of all this, was seeing all the characters who were mentioned in my story. Most of them not believing that I had gone through all that I had narrated. We had Ricky's friends, nieces, nephews and cousins. We had my aunt, my cousins, and my immediate neighbours in Kitengela and the estates I lived in with Ricky. We had my friends, from high school and college come to watch the play.

Then we had the nay sayers who wrote me emails and phone messages...

"Somethings are better left unsaid Zippy, you didn't have to say everything... Zippy you have embarrassed your family for no reason.... How do you think Ricky feels... What will you do if you one day move back to Ricky... You are not the first to go through that my dear, all women go through the same... This is the problem with educated women, someone hits you once and you want to behave as though you are more special by leaving him... Men must cheat..."

There has been endless reactions from the audience about this play, more to the fact that it is based on a true life experience acted by the victim. To some it is a story of courage, to others it is an issue of shame and ridicule. In all these voices I hear the society and social stigma that comes with it. I hear the religious and social pressures meted out on women to keep their marriages while the man forgets his role as father or husband.

### **Conclusion**

Performing the one-woman play was a source of healing. Through the several re-enactments, I came to face my deepest fears, of social pressures and back-biting. I was able to mourn the loss of my son, and to aver to myself that I had made a good decision to leave Ricky. For were it not so, perhaps one of us could have killed or maimed the other from the depth of bitterness that was growing in us. Through the performance I was able to come to terms with my biggest weakness; too much tolerance. I have learnt to say No and to put a stop to people who hurt me in any way. I have had to redirect my energies from confrontation to negotiation. I learnt to trust my instincts and to attract more positive energies and to believe in my inner strength.

Through the One Woman play, I have been able to learn that there are many other people going through the same and I have got much motivation from getting to know that I inspired someone else by telling my story. And that, is the power of Self Revelatory performance.

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**IV**

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# **Emerging Trends**

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## Augmented Creativity and Connectivity through Digital Musical Instruments – First Empirical Insights

Prof. Dr. Benjamin Jörissen,  
 Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

### Introduction

*Musical instruments are deeply rooted in cultural traditions – relating to musical concepts as well as cultural concepts about materials and things. In our present, digitalization vastly transforms ways of musicking (Small 2011) — not only through streaming services and video networks, which enormously change the listening and musical learning practices, but also through new digital devices and apps that enhance and augment musical practices in various ways. Digital artefacts such as softwares, apps, and material devices and gadgets though imply a fundamental change of what could be called the „performative quality“ of things. Because digital things are inevitably „designed things“ (and not things that primarily grew out of cultural history), they inherit built-in forms of knowledge – e.g. about musical structures, about ergonomic aspects of the human body, about musical and sonic styles – which gain performative power when used.*

*What does it mean for creative production when highly „knowledgeable“ and „quasi-intelligent“ things enter musical practices on a global scale? How would those technologies contribute to creative practices, how would they relate to the innate sociality of music-making? In the following, research questions, approaches, and first insights of an ongoing, major empirical study of two German Universities<sup>14</sup> about hybrid digital-material musical instruments will be presented and discussed. The discussion will be theoretically grounded by a framing of the current socio-technological condition of „post-digital“ culture (1) with a special focus on the pedagogical qualities of material actors, i.e. things (2). The theoretical core thesis that motivated this research project – the connection between affordance, subjectivation and habitus – is briefly explained in section (3), followed by a short sketch of the research design and an overview of some digital musical devices that we included (4). Some first findings of our study (which is still in a very early empirical state) will be presented in order to demonstrate the scope and pedagogical relevance of our research (5).*

### “Post-digital culture“

Today’s living environments - inside and outside of pedagogically organized fields - are permeated by digital networks, mobile gadgets, apps and algorithms; where they are not already today, they will in the foreseeable future be essentially based on them. This process, which profoundly and in many respects affects cultural structures and aesthetic and artistic practices, is referred to in current discourse as the “post-digital state” (Anibid.en 2014; Berry/Dieter 2015; Jorissen 2016; Stalder 2016). In addition to classical cultural diagnoses that are, however, strongly based on anthropocentric communication and cultural concepts (Krotz 2001; Hepp 2011), the current transformations into a post-digital culture can rather be understood on the more basal level of infrastructure and design: Digitality “thus refers to historically new possibilities of constitution and linking of the most diverse human and non-human actors. The term is therefore not limited to digital media but appears everywhere as a relational pattern and changes the space of possibilities of many materials and actors” (Stalder 2016, 18, my translation).

In this sense, “digitality” means not so much the technical conglomerate of certain software, (big) data, social network platforms and terminal devices, but rather the cultural conglomerate of algorithmicity, data form, network form and new materialities, which increasingly substantiate and thus decisively transform their conditions. Against this background, the restructuring of cultural forms - including articulative, communicative, social, but also material and physical, economic and artistic forms - results from the manifold dynamics that are transformed by digitality (and by no means only on the social surface of communicative interactions). Therefore, „digitization“ is to be understood as a process that draws on cultural form repertoires and transforms them in a visible way - e.g. from bodily communion to mobile telephony; from telephone call to chat; from self-portrait to selfie; from weight watchers to digital self-monitoring (quantified self); from public expression to Tweets or Facebook posts; from keyboard to touchscreen; from digitized motor vehicle to motorized artificial intelligence (cf. Reichert 2016), which, however, produces effects above all at the infrastructural level through the networking and aggregation of these various individual dynamics (at the software level, at the data level, at the level of networking networks and at the level of merging them into increasingly universal hardware and interfaces).

These dynamics leave deep traces with regard to processes of the formation of self- and world relations – processes of

14 The project „Musical Interface Designs - Augmented Creativity and Connectivity“ is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research for a period of four years (2017-2021) as one of thirteen currently funded research projects on „Digitalization in Arts and Cultural Education“. It is conducted as a cooperation between the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg (project led by Benjamin Jörissen) and the Leuphana University Lüneburg (project led by Michael Ahlers).

subjectivation and education –, where hybridized cultural forms become the „normal form“, a kind of “third nature“ ((Kluge 2016). In contemporary cultural practices, this can be seen in particular in the various reactive movements - such as retro-aesthetics, rediscovery of material analogues and digital abstinence - because these can only be understood as a reaction to a new, post-digital normality; as a rule, they have to be operated at great expense and can then also create innovative “non-digital“ market niches as cultural trends (such as the current revival of instant photography after the end of the Polaroid era and the liquidation of the old production sites).

### Material Things as Pedagogical Actors

At the same time, digitality increasingly conquers *materialities*. Being material to begin with, the intersection and intertwining of symbolical and material realms through digital designs extends from mere hardware and interfaces to material and social spaces on a macro level, to nano surfaces and materials on a micro level (outperforming all human senses), it emulates and surrogates physical, mechanical, electrical and electronical materialities, and vice versa, material things begin to become mere, planned-obsolescent materializations of platonic digital design. We thus are increasingly surrounded by hybrid digital-material things of certain, and powerful implicit knowledge. At the intersection of cultural, anthropological, social, ergonomical, psychological, economical and last not least educational knowledge, material-digital designs act as an instance that performatively delineates and shapes subjects as „user-subjects, turning a theoretical power/knowledge into a practical principle at the level of profane everyday practice.

The fact that things and how we deal with them have a significant influence on our world and self-relations in general - not only with regard to technology - and that they therefore also play a decisive role in learning and subjectivation processes is reflected in the long lines of tradition of epistemological pedagogical discourses. In the context of the increasing penetration of everyday life with complex and highly technical (human) thing arrangements, this perspective - forced by the „material turn“ - moves into focus under new aspects of materiality theory.

The “transactional” qualitative research perspectives as developed by Nohl (2011, p. 204ff; 2013; 2018), inspired by Latour and relying on John Dewey, represent a concrete constructive approach to research according to the new perspectives on materialities. According to Nohl (2011, p. 17ff), the usual hypostasis of the individual human being in social science research contexts can be essentially traced back to their situational framing, which classically focuses entirely on the researched individual and ignores the media, aesthetic and dramaturgical staging of the research situation - e.g. an interview (cf. also Engel 2018, in print). “Transactional” research methodologies, on the other hand, make it possible to look not only at the statements and actions of the researchers, but also at the spatial, physical, temporal and biographical dimensions of all ‘actors’ involved in the situation and their mutual constitutional processes. With Karl Mannheim, Nohl refers in this context to an act of „cognition“ preceding language as an „existential relationship between subject and object“, which is also called „contact region“ in Mannheim (Mannheim 1980, p. 206). The situational event character of this „contact region“ can solidify through the habitual handling of things and the collective reproduction of certain human-things-relations into habits and finally coagulate into habitus when these are handed down (Nohl 2011, p. 49ff, 169ff; 2013). These permanent and ‚traditional‘ mutual constitutional processes of people and things, which Nohl calls „conjunctive transactional spaces“ and understands as „sociogenic collectives“, „in which people and things are tuned to one another“ (Nohl 2011, p. 176), allow both „routines that are located between people and things and connect them with one another“ (Nohl 2013, p. 34) and moments of alienation to come into view. Accordingly, from a transactional perspective it is also empirically about the question of how things, practices, spaces and time structures become effective and relevant for orientation on an implicit level (cf. also Engel 2018, 2019).

With regard to interdisciplinary and international perspectives, there are important thematic connections for our project: From a *subject-theoretical perspective*, it can be seen that digitization phenomena, which are often perceived as ‘emergent’ new phenomena, on the contrary connect to cultural forms - such as subject forms in the sense of historically developed self-relations (Taylor 1996), modes of perception and memory practices - but technically ‘catalyze’ and decisively change them (Jörissen/Meyer 2015; Jörissen 2016). From an *anthropological perspective*, spatiality (Buckow/Fromme/Jörissen 2012; Westphal/Jörissen 2013), temporality and materiality of the digital prove themselves - not only in the sense of the materiality of silicon chips and sensors, but also in the sense of a progressive “granular” constitution of digital interfaces and artefacts (cf. Jörissen 2014) - as essential dimensions within which digital media enter into a quasi-competitive relationship with the human senses and increasingly fall below temporal, sensual and cognitive perception thresholds, whereby their modes of operation elude the visibility and controllability of the human mesocosm. Against this background, the *educational theoretical and orienting potentials of digital mediality* appear to be of particular importance. Here, the more recent examination of media theoretical positions is proving to be groundbreaking (Zahn 2012; Meyer 2013; Zacharias 2013; Othmer/Weich 2014; Hagener/Hediger 2015; Jörissen/Meyer 2015; Pietraß/Jörissen 2017). The more recent interdisciplinary research areas of *Software Studies* (Fuller 2008; Manovich 2013) and *Design Studies* (Gunn/Otto/Smith 2013; Mareis/Held/Joost 2013; Borries 2016) point towards a further fundamental aspect of digitality, and towards important power-theoretical (Chun 2011; Parisi 2013) and participation-theoretical aspects (Ehn 2013)

of software and digital technologies to be included in educational research on digitisation (Jörissen 2015a; Jörissen/Verstaendig 2016).

### **Affordance, subjectivation and habitus in the context of digital-material thing worlds**

Against this background, we understand the field of digital and post-digital musical-aesthetic practices as an exemplary field, particularly suitable for both theoretical and research pragmatic reasons for researching post-digital materialities with regard to aesthetic practices and experiences. From a music pedagogical perspective, this is a field of innovation that has been heavily researched to date, which on the one hand is of considerable importance with regard to ensuring music pedagogical connectivity to “digital youth culture” (Hugger 2010), and on the other hand also goes hand in hand with untapped potentials in the sense of participation in an increasingly digitized society as well as interesting forms of digital literacy and creativity. Interdisciplinary research into the theoretical and pedagogical significance of digital-material music-making in terms of education and music pedagogy allows us to do justice to the particular complexity of the object and the aesthetic practices associated with it: On the one hand, the insights gained can be located within an overarching educational theoretical framework that enables generalizable insights and methodical connections for cultural pedagogical research, especially into material-digital transformation processes. On the other hand, transformations of musical work and process structures are made visible and can be assessed pedagogically. In this way, music pedagogical innovation potentials, professionalisation needs and opportunities are identified and contributed to the development of forward-looking professionalisation models.

Our project thus investigates the musical and aesthetic educational potential of transactional practices in dealing with digital-material music-making in relation to post-digital youth culture (subproject 1, Erlangen) and in relation to professional musicians (subproject 2, Lüneburg). The prefix „post“ stands for the thesis that digitality is no longer only effective where technology is directly involved, but that structural aspects of the digital increasingly shape social and cultural processes - from the database as a symbolic form (Manovich 1999) to the digital network as the dominant form of contemporary sociality (Rainie/Wellman 2012). This is also reflected in a significant change in material environments and thing worlds, which are increasingly becoming „smart“, material-digital hybrids. Because digital phenomena and artefacts come about exclusively through design processes, design is a central principle of digital transformation.

In this sense, “design” does not produce “things” or “design objects”, but its aesthetic forms conceive relations between things, material environments and living beings. Design only becomes a manifest object as a relationship to these anticipated relations, which in turn are based on normative principles. As an object, however, as a designed thing or designed environment, it structurally carries these anticipated relations as potential of their ever concrete realizations within itself. From a knowledge-theoretical point of view, the design world, which in this way emerges from a comprehensive anticipation of later relational scenarios and is always already economic (oriented towards industrial mass production), represents a completely different paradigm than the successive formation of objects from historically relatively invariable contexts of experience, as it was typical for pre-modern object worlds. Like these, however, design provides offers to become the user of a thing in a certain way. Practices in dealing with things that see themselves as “use” are also practices of the self that produce the “user” (or also the “consumer”, the affirmative, critical or goading “recipient”, the creatively articulating “prosumer”) as a way of self-understanding in the first place. The regularity of affirmative forms of use allows subjects to become users and objects to become the affordant “devices” that a design projects: a process that therefore demands not only affordance (Norman 2013), but also “compliance” (Butler 2001, 22) - an agreement or even just an acceptance that de facto represents recognition. These questions about power and affordance can be exemplified by the subject of hybrid digital-material music-making things and their affordances (cf. Bell 2015; 2018). The question of the general pedagogical-anthropological and educational-theoretical significance of digitally configured object worlds, which increasingly permeate future life worlds, has turned out to be significant, but empirically considerably under-researched (cf. Allert/Richter 2011; Jörissen 2014; 2015a; 2017a). The resulting opportunity to answer questions of educational theory regarding the fundamental transformation of self and world relations through post-digital materialities with empirical approaches to cultural educational research on the basis of concrete phenomena holds considerable potential for the development of the field of research of cultural education and its professional perception within educational science.

### **Research Design**

How would hybrid digital-material designs, as epistemic and aesthetic actors, relate to aesthetic practices and subjects, and (how) could these performative processes be made visible by qualitative in-depth empirical research? With reference to several recent research projects on aesthetics and digitality, our project explores this question with exemplary regard to hybrid digital-material sonic/musical things. To this end, we conducted an initial research of the current market of hybrid digital musical instruments in order to gain a categorial overview.

The first category comprises things which mimic or are related to traditional instrumental interfaces. The *Eigenbarp*



(Eigenlabs) for example (a quite early industrial attempt on highly sensitive and powerful digital musical interfaces) mimics a woodwind instrument, the HPD-20 „Handsonic Pad“ (Roland) with its round playing surface refers heavily to traditional handdrums. The second category gathers together things that digitally „estrangle“ traditional instruments. The GR55 guitar synthesizer (Roland) for example turn an electrical guitar in a kind of „cyborg“ instrument. It adds a specialized electromagnetic guitar pickup, which does not actually transfer the complex sound of the guitar (with its overtone structure), but transfers only the basic pitch of each of the six guitar strings independently (even using a special non-generic guitar cable). This information is then used to create or transform synthesized sounds of any kind within the attached device. Interestingly, not only sampled sounds may be played, but also the realtime synthesis of particular guitar sounds of famous (legacy) instruments, including the choice of which of the simulated pickup to choose or mix, is possible. In such way, even a cheap guitar may produce a quite impressive sound (but of course not the touch, playability and feeling) of expensive instruments. The third category encompasses instruments that are based on the idea of musical *loops* (Baumgaertel 2016), such as Ableton Push, Roli Searboard and Blocks or Synthstrom Deluge.

These devices will be analyzed using methods of artifact analysis and structural media analyses in order to gain a comparative horizon for the empirical observations of those devices in the field. „Subproject 1“ (Jörissen) has acquired 26 youths and young adults aged 14-24 who can each borrow a music-making thing of their choice for up to six months, Subproject 2 (Ahlers) conducts a similar study with students of music pedagogy. A change is made for at least one month to a category that has not yet been borrowed, so that the participants are guaranteed to use devices from all the categories mentioned over the course of 24 months. In the sample generation, diversity aspects in the dimensions of postmigration and gender were considered. With regard to the youth cultural clientele, we assume, with a view to the present studies (Feierabend et. al. 2016), a high fascination and (at least initial) motivational power of digital things as well as a generally high youth cultural interest in music, especially in technological contexts (Schuegraf 2008), which promote an open and explorative attitude towards digital-material music-making. In addition to the music-making things and the corresponding peripherals (loudspeakers, cables, possibly a laptop with software), the participants will also borrow an action cam to document their engagement with the music-making things. These autovideographies include, first, an ‚unboxing video‘ in which the unpacking and connecting of the devices is documented, second, the first attempts at unpacking and ‚sessions‘ (contacts), and third, a regular recording of the appropriation process and any surprises, questions or problems that may arise in the process. This process is accompanied by the offer of regular meetings in an open youth work institution, which has been won as a partner for the institutional framing of the project. In addition to the ethnographic field access described above, structural analyses of the available music-making items will be carried out in educational theory, which will be contrasted with the qualitative data collected in the evaluation phases. On the other hand, quantitative surveys on the personality traits of the participants and their instrumental expertise to be evaluated by subproject 2 will be carried out.

### (Very) first results

While only beginning to overview and analyze the auto-ethnographic videographies, we already begin to observe the „performative qualities“ of the things included in our study, and how they relate to and provoke creative (musical as well as technical) learning processes. These first insights are, of course, very preliminary and may not at all serve to answer the complex questions raised above. But they already demonstrate the performative power of some devices, which rather inhibit certain ways of musical „subjectivation“ and affords different ones. Figure 1 shows an example for a first subjection process:



A first try, after unboxing the device, to use the (quite complex) „Ableton Push2“ (looping/DJ-device) on a sofa, in a relaxed, leisurely situation. One could imagine that with a guitar, the sequence would go on like this, showing first attempt of music-making. But Ableton Push2 does not support an approach like this very much. It is a heavy and somewhat clumsy device that demands a table (or some stable, even ground). While it is made to replace the computer as an interface, the software has to be running on the PC, so there are always cables attached. Furthermore, Push2 shows a steep learning curve. Although it is easy to produce some sounds and first results, it demands a much deeper engagement with its possibilities. Accordingly, the next scene we received looks quite different (Fig. 2):

Here, the setting immediately changes into a working situation (a study table full of books and working materials), situated in a working environment. The user-subject that is performatively addressed here is obviously connected to the topic of „work“, not leisure. A different, at least somewhat more formal bodily posture is needed in order to explore the device, and as can be seen, the first step is oriented towards the PC and some learning videos, while the device, which has been in the center in the first scene, now is put aside, or beside the center of action. Based upon our structural analyses, we expect other, less complex or more mobile looping devices included in our study to provoke the opposite – more leisurely forms of musical subjectivation, and maybe, due to a higher mobility, even more social forms of musicking.



## Identity and Purpose from Erasure to Valorising: Mending Broken Creative Education with Urban Youth

Flora Mutere-Okuku,  
Assistant Lecturer, The Technical University of Kenya, [fokuku@gmail.com](mailto:fokuku@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Our education system broke – previously it was not broken, we thought it was and we imagined we fixed it; yet we violated our youth, were dismissive of creative based educations’ strength to cradle our urbane youth’s minds and imagination.*

### Erasure.

*Educators have the ability to fix the brokenness. They need to frontload transformation to enable youth psyche to thrive on education systems they can rely on, providing stability to their growth and preservation of our urban cultural aspirations.*

*Youth psyche and beings are about dreaming, hoping, wishing making things out of thin air; they live in that sphere, youth are the gatekeepers of this space. Urban youth have the ability to revitalize and invigorate our lives when given room. They can shape communities when enabled to explore, experiment and create theatre, film, music, and dance.*

*Creative spaces are dominated by the youth, a perspective that educators are in the youth’s comfort zone means that spaces in classrooms and degree course content can accommodate a rhythm in order for an Educational Institution to be transformative and restorative in its function.*

*Experiences that profile the behavior and response to stimulus will be shared, these as observed phenomena opening an informed, research based pipeline that will speak to and have change conversations within the triologue.*

*Valorising is defined as affirming, a verb that gives or ascribes value or validity to “the culture valorizes the individual”. In what ways can Educators valorize the gatekeepers of urban culture – the youth – allow them to take risks and explore as Creatives in the urban space?*

*This paper presentation seeks to communicate a healing, restorative emphasis in the creative disciplines to craft effective arts education driven by community engagement in observing 4 Dimensional Design Studies Community Based Learning semester at The Technical University of Kenya.*

### Context

#### Brokenness

Based on the “Total Integration of Quality Education and training” Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Education System in Kenya Chaired by Davy K. Koech in 1999, a needs assessment was undertaken. The outcome was that the national curriculum for primary and secondary education was then reviewed in 2002.

...the education system has forced schools to phase out subjects or subjects not being taught, meaning that these subjects are not relevant to the community needs. Phasing out subjects in secondary schools such as Business studies, Art and Design, Music, Woodwork and other applied subjects as was done by the Ministry of Education in 2002. (KICD 2016)

The phasing out of subjects deemed not relevant to community needs broke Creative arts education In Kenya. ECDE and Secondary School stages are fundamental to Higher education training. Educators observe the quality of entrants to Vocational subjects that have no foundation weak principal grounding in their selected undergraduate degrees. Policy strategy unravelled and denied full access to young creative minds.

The cultural and creative industries are among the fastest growing sectors in the world. With an estimated global worth of 4.3 trillion USD per year, the culture sector now accounts for 6.1% of the global economy. They generate annual revenues of US\$ 2,250 billion and nearly 30 million jobs worldwide, employing more people aged 15 to 29 than any other sector. The cultural and creative industries have become essential for inclusive economic growth, reducing inequalities and achieving the goals set out in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. (UNESCO Cultural Expressions 2005)

Acknowledgement of the mistake would own the erasure that took place. Based on a needs assessment the phasing out of creative subjects from the curriculum was disingenuous. *Jabaz’i* journal defines Creativity thus: *To create is to make something ‘new’; something original. Creativity, the formulation of new ideas and the application of these ideas to generate new works of art and cultural products, scientific inventions and innovations in technology, is intricately tied to notions of originality, imagination, inspiration, and ingenuity* (Njogu 2015).

2002 harmed the Cultural Sector. The Higher education Level experience shifted because of the phasing out of these

applied subjects. This reform was counter intuitive.

1) Stymied undergraduate creatives show up at Higher Educations doorstep some not genuinely seeking to acquire these skills but are left with no choice for Degree programmes the exam system having locked them out of preferred programmes.

Summative evaluation of primary and secondary education in 2009 indicated that the current curriculum content relegates practical skills necessary for economic development to non-examinable subjects, thus, most of the learners exiting the education system at secondary level did not have adequate skills and competences to be absorbed in the job market. Among the skills gaps identified were; agricultural skills, entrepreneurial skills, vocational and technical skills, innovation and creativity and ICT skills, as learners opt not to learn these subjects. The cognitive domain was over emphasized at the expense of affective and psychomotor domains rendering teaching and learning to be exam oriented. (KICD 2016)

2) For Higher Education Institutions to certify what students have no interest in pursuing - is a misallocating of resources. Inadequate investment and poor facilities put up in Institutions for practical and vocational subjects such as agricultural workshops, home science, art and design, woodwork, electricity, power machines among others was not a priority. This affected greatly cultural productivity in schools and subsequently in society and the Creative Industry.

3) Foundations knowledge of Creative skills not a construct at tertiary level however by the time Learners get to Higher Education moulds have to be broken. Instructive strategies and approaches at Higher Educational level attempt to accommodate the anomaly, because these are directed and led by Learners educational experience, training and breeding; training becomes remedial.

### Historical Context

The current Kenya education framework has its basis in colonial education. The existing framework has built on this, and reformed or modified the education system to reflect the needs and aspirations of national development.

This is the type of education which Rodney (1972) argues is education for in subordination, subjugation and perpetuation of imperialism in Kenya. It is in this colonial context that the contemporary and current policy documents on education have sought to address in bid to reflect on the social economic and political realities of an independent Kenya and then focus education to realize vision 2030. (Muricho 2013)

### Review of Available Literature

The literature looks at the background of Kenya's educational and examination of the drivers for change in ECDE and Secondary Structures to Tertiary level. Historical reference of Policy frame-works in Education provide relevance in evaluating the caliber of Creative Education over time at Tertiary levels. To gauge the rationale - societal, economic and political - that brought about these reforms in Kenya's educational systems. The study gazes on Global perspectives that exist for quality framework of modern educational needs. World educational reports, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and conventions.

The high stakes of Educational reform make the subject contentious. The Government especially the political elites interferes with education planning and reforms by focusing education reform to meet the political objectives, fail to plan for change, fail to involve other stakeholders such as education administrators, teaching staff, parents and students. (Muricho, Chang'ach 2013)

"Power coercive strategy" model is highlighted. In this model, decisions are made at the top then communicated down. All these are top down directives that the administrators and teachers must implement without question or input. (Muricho, Chang'ach 2013)

The Creative Industry has blurred the lines between Cultural Art practices and Ndi opines "that the convergence of multimedia and telecommunication technologies has integrated the production, distribution and consumption of creative content. Nothing exists in isolation any longer." Theatre, film, music and dance are embraced by the Semester teaching of Creative coding in Interactive Media. Globally, creative industries have become a strategic choice for reinvigorating social and economic growth, youth employment and integration of communities through cross-cultural learning and sharing. (Ndi 2015).

Digital Technology in Arts practice is a way that academia can speak to community. Seminal Literary pieces provide chronological timelines of Post-independence education reviews in Kenya. Tracking the 2002 fall and subsequent consequences.

### Theoretical Underpinnings

The Creative Coding classroom experience was guided by Herbartianism a theory, an approach and method of teaching by J.F. Herbart (1776-1841). Herbartian method guides and maps lesson planning to reach intended learning objective. Herbartianism proved to be an apt pedagogical approach that connected classroom learning objectives to societal benefits. A hybrid visual/textual live-programming environment for easy prototyping and development designed to facilitate the

handling of large media environments with physical interfaces, real-time motion graphics, audio and video that can interact with many users simultaneously (vvvv organization 2018). This kit was a teaching resource in the 4 Dimensional Design Studies class. The vvvv group are custodians of its development and serve as a community base for a growing global user Creative community. The 4 Dimensional studies class, in this study plugged-in the learners to this Creative community. That way their activities would be buttressed and affirmed by philosophies for constructive positive group think.

The Herbartian approach has five steps in the creation of Lesson Plans

1. **Introduction:** prerequisites classes delivered included Project Planning and Management, Research and Proposal Writing, Rendering Techniques, Design Thinking and Computer Design Skills. Proposal writing, ideation sketches and presentations employed knowledge from these pre requisites classes. Visits to the Railway museum, Art Historian lecture on the History of the Railway delivered as motivational content.
2. **Presentation:** Educator presented examples of projects by the vvvv community and work examples. These included art in architecture, public space, art galleries, on internet, in museums, trade shows, universities, symposiums, workshops, festival, on stage, user experience laboratory and vvvv projects by creative consultants.
3. **Comparison and association:** Learners were challenged to ideate to answer the brief for the Railway Museum. *The Brief: Choose an artefact/ display, design and develop exhibits using basic skills and knowledge in creative programming to create an interactive museum experience for The Railway museum.* The tasks were to be performed in groups of maximum 8 learners.
4. **Generalization:** The Educator guided Learners groups to be innovative in their concepts based on the Learning materials presented. This was to be in response to the brief solving attendant issue of - improving the Railway Museum visit experience using Creative Coding Skills.
5. **Application:** Prototyping by the Learners involved a month of hacking various vvvv applications to take their concepts to installation stages. Exploration and experimentation characterized the activities in the classroom.
6. **Recapitulation:** in the form of summative assessment to know whether Learners had attained information displayed creative concepts to be conclusive in achievement of class objectives. Was desired change achieved by the Creative Coding Class? Both General Instructional Objective (GIOs)and Specific Instructional Objectives(SIOs)

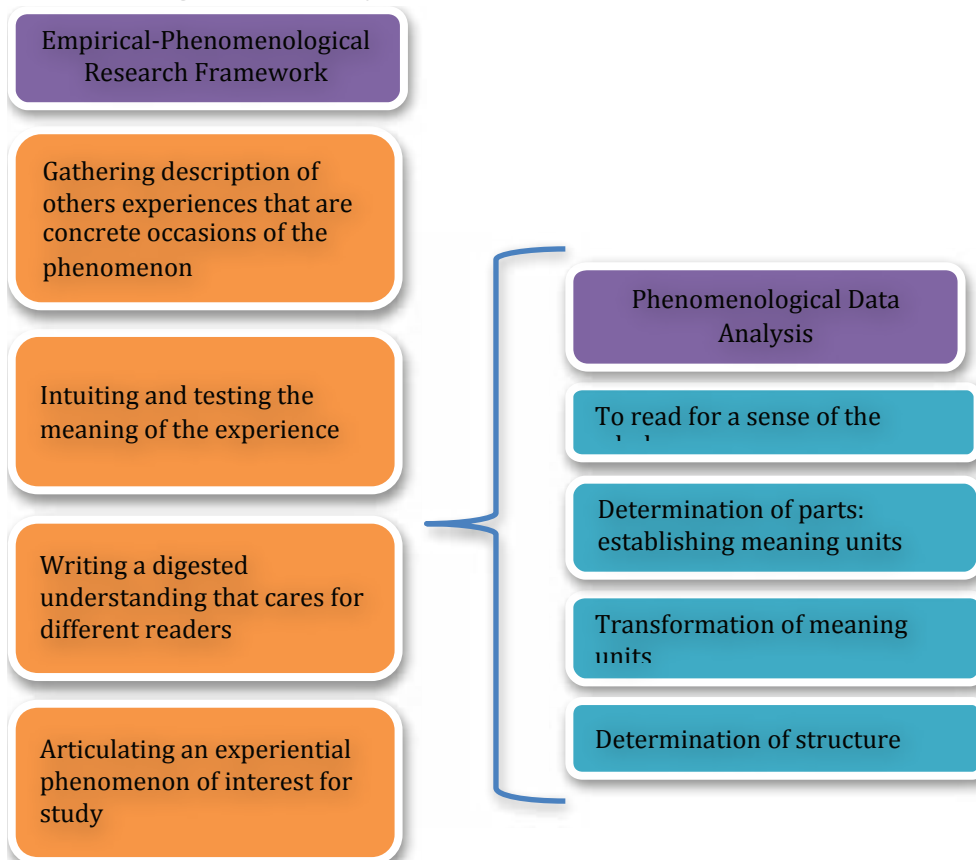
General Instructional Objective (GIOs): Non-behavioural actions, they cannot be measured or observed directly. These objectives are denoted as mental activity. Specific Instructional Objectives (SIOs): Behavioural actions, observable and measurable objectives.

Table.....

LEVEL	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/SPECIFICATIONS	
	BEHAVIOURAL	CONTENT
KNOWLEDGE	Recalls	The History of Railway
	Recognizes	Creative Interventions using Installations at the Railway Museum
UNDERSTANDING	Identifies Selects	The groups of people responsible for the building of the railway.
	Compares Classifies	The implications to the East African region in the building of the railway.
	Identifies Relationships Gives examples	The cultural economic geographical changes that occurred with the building of the railway.
	Describes Explains	Preparation of creative interventions for the display to community about the railway impact
	Generalizes Problem Solving	Create ideas using video, photography, illustration audio, creative coding to install in the Railway museum
	APPLICATION	Gives Reasons
Codes		Audio, video, animation development
Analyses		Detects errors
Establishes		Designs spaces
Relationships		Constructs installations
Detects		Narrates stories
Selects; Illustrates		Creativity and Imagination
SKILL	Draws sketches	Coding
	Experiments	Backgrounds and character sheets
	Participates	Hacking participation
	Presents	Communication and collaboration

LEVEL	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES/SPECIFICATIONS	
	BEHAVIOURAL	CONTENT
INTEREST	Collects	Historical evidence
	Appreciates	Cultural Values
	Prepares	Pitches Presentation for community
	Writes	Prepares Project proposals
	Organises	Citizenship Budgets finances

**Phenomenological Data Analysis combined with Empirical/Naturalistic Phenomenological Framework**



**Figure 1. Giorgi’s (1985) 4-step method to Phenomenological Data Analysis encompassed within Todres and Holloway’s (2004) Empirical-Phenomenological Framework.**

*Adapted from Journal of Nursing Education and Practice, by M. Christensen. Retrieved from <http://jnep.sciedupress.com>, (July 30, 2017)*

This framework supported observation of 57 students over a Semester. Interviews, photos of classroom, videos of classroom pitches, observation and documentary evidence provides qualitative data. The Empirical Phenomenological framework is Architecture to allow for a disciplined look and perspective into the lived experience of the educators and learners over a 12 week period.

**Research Problem**

Creative Pedagogy practice at Tertiary level can operate optimally. Institutions focus on the sector can be heightened. The Creative education sector is taken for granted by the policy makers and administrators. There exists a 2002 revisit playing out in a protracted fashion, stunting Creative Sector productivity, disabling commercial drive in the Creative industry - evidenced by a loss in the ability to drive the creation of employment, sustainable cultural social development and a lost gaze on space that Youth can regenerate.

The total value of creative industries (copy-right based industries) in 2007 was Ksh 85, 208.7 million, which represented 5.32% of the total GDP of Ksh.1,603,176 million (Nyariki et al 2009). Nyariki et al claim that considering that the full potential of these industries may not be captured in the Kenyan circumstances, they may be contributing around 7% to the national economy in terms of GDP (Nyariki et al 2009: 23-24). (Njogu 2015)

### Community Based Learning

4 Dimensional Design Studies expected outcomes were:

1. Introduce students to the idea of participatory public space
2. Semester teaching of Creative Coding Railways incubation space for Design concepts
3. Introducing activities complementary to student life

Community Based Learning was observed to be a stimulating mental and emotional environment for classroom activities. Herbartian attempts to get predictable results are captured with this approach.

It was observed that Learners in the class were rapt with attention engaged rearing to go solve the world's problems. Nairobi's urban setting abounds with possibilities for research and academic involvement to engage with public space. Creative learning applied in this way inspires learners to interrogate development that speaks to these spaces. Percolating of ideas from the Creative Learners translated to values such as commitment, awareness and resolve to solve social dilemmas.

Constructive Community-Academia exchange was observed as Judges, Panelists, or Resource persons planted perspective and relevance to the Learners Design concepts. A shift of focus from Educator to Resource person planted seeds in verdant youthful Creative minds. The panel composed of urban professionals listened to the Creative Concepts in classroom Pitch Sessions; Learners concepts were cross examined and whose outcome was the importance of accurate research. This instructional approach emphatically advised Learners to profile indigenous Kenyan people in the building of the Railway. Emphasis on getting the history correct was key feedback to the Learners. Cultural relevance was enshrined. Reading and obtaining the right source. Concept, Craftsmanship, Creativity and Completion was the assessment criteria that Judges/Panelists/Resource persons used to structure their feedback to the learners.

Perceived lack of familiarity with the tech vvvv was expected. When it translated to a threat of unfinished assignments or procrastination in completing tasks - competition amongst the groups was a solution. Learners were spurred on to complete tasks by witnessing the progress of their classmates. The Competition element was a stimulant to active learning. Thirst to do better than Classroom peers performance became impetus to strive for quality presentation. Engaged Learners displayed positive response in the Cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains.

### Objectives

The aspirations include:

- Achieve the Educational objectives using philosophies like Herbartianism to impact the community through Creative arts education.
- Creative Economy Industries reap in adjusted Method and Practice in the Creative Practice classroom that reflect the big story in Creative Education reform.
- Communities will thrive.
- A Culture Dynamism and regeneration will set in as Learners keen on practicing 21<sup>st</sup> century compliance Creative skill sets in a conducive environment will increase.
- Herbartianism Philosophy made for Quality Creative Arts education that can heal and be sustained.
- Kenya's Educational Historical context to be included in planning for the Creative Educational classroom.
- Educators are transformative actors to mend the Creative Arts Institutional Education pipeline from ECDE to Secondary that feed into the Vocational Training Institutions.
- Frameworks that facilitate Observation of learner behaviour as useful data and Response Frameworks for Educators to relay feedback to Policy makers and Institutions will enable transformation of Learner experience.
- The CBET classroom is the cogent laboratory for testing reform.

### Findings

The mental dropout rate of Learners with Creative programming and coding frontiers was observed to be exponential in some Learners. Intrinsic motivation was needed as engagement waned to help them stay driven and achieve classroom objectives.

Creative coding discipline in the community displayed the spectrum of Learner Response Behaviour closely supervised Learners to those that were self-supervised. Self-driven paced learning in the form of video tutorials was constructive instructional method.

Gender bias in taking on leadership roles was observed. The female Learners were reluctant to step into the roles

citing that they lacked coding know-how. The Educators role to motivate such cases - a chance to balance the learning experience for both sexes.

Meeting hard deadlines to answer community briefs encouraged innovation in the classroom displayed when learners hacked solutions to their creative coding installations to achieve results in completing the Installations for the Museum.

Iteration of lesson plans on the fly by Educator meant an immediacy, planning in situ by listening to the learner and feed off their response to stimulus in the class. Educator response needed flexibility with assignments, assessments and topics.

Learners creating assets – audio, video, photography, animation - was noted to be valorizing, therapeutic and character building. The reinforcement that feedback from panelists and community individuals gave had Dopamine effect. Learners rid of the insecurities, behaviour displayed upon entering the classroom - the reflection of an education system that tainted the reputation of pursuit of scholarly advancement in the arts. Educators are operators that tactically need to be made aware of their role as *valor agents*. An Elevated form of this would trigger activism in the classroom space to reassure learners about their chosen Career paths.

Learners gained valuable social consciousness through discussion, lectures and questions. Keen awareness to use their skills to elevate society and not just for commerce. Data designer Ekene Ijeoma captures this phenomenon accurately in a Design Indaba article he reflects *“I wanted to see data as poetic and not just pragmatic and I wanted to look at people as citizens not just consumers.”*

Misguided Policy reforms strategies, policies, consideration can create the perfect storm. Lost potential for job creation, urban space regeneration, preservation of cultural value and dynamism of cultural expression. Once the youth are generating and as Njogu says; *“By making technology available to youth, the creative sector can flourish.”*

## Discussion of Main Points

The significant points derived from the foregoing include the need to:

1. Harness the cultural productivity potential existing within Educators and cohorts of Learners and CBET institutions.
2. Address the 2002 fall out, to stem the emergence of disengaged Creative youth.
3. Merge community-based learning and Creative classroom learning activities to create learning environments, effectively widening the institutional learning walls.

Education is a literal magic bullet in achieving support for the SDGs. 2015 Convention goals and monitoring areas of SDGs. Goal 3 calls for integrating culture in sustainable development frameworks. A robust pedagogy would buttress the idea of CBET in the creative classroom, thereby achieving quality creative education to give identity and purpose to urban youth learners.

## Conclusions

Educational Philosophies enthuse Creative Education and combining this Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) structure, consistently achieve an inclusive and empowering Learning environment.

Coherent policies that result in Educational reform can be effectively tested within learning environments. They should be inclusive, not limiting access to education. Transformation of Education systems can affect the sector for generations - they are potent change agents and should be socially conscious disruptions.

Measures to infuse cultural identity with Creative education are deemed by this study to be a priority for the objectives of inculcating cultural values in learners. Content creation, tackling people stories and narratives empower both the society and learner. The relevance of community-based learning in a Creative Learning environment makes for stimulating relevant experiences. Art has an unlimited powers to change the minds and behaviour of those who experience it. Therefore, it makes a significant difference to the lives of individuals and society (Tkachuk 2018)

## Recommendations

- Policy makers and educators to make room for classroom activity seamless with community involvement. A transformative change from stale knowledge, skills, attitude and value transfer to Learners.
- Educational reform by erasure of subjects to be acknowledged and abolished. A commitment to suspend disbelief, disregard and diminishing of subject relevance, knowledge, skills and values to be addressed.
- Cultural production is the foundation, or wellspring, of the creative economy (Njogu 2015). Cultural production, values and identity are sustained well in community based learning. Nairobi’s urban spaces present abundant opportunity to engage Learners with creative innovative problem solving experiences.



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## Enhancing Creativity through Assessment for Learning

Benjamin Bolden,

Associate Professor, Queen's University, Canada. [ben.bolden@queensu.ca](mailto:ben.bolden@queensu.ca)

### Abstract

*This paper reports research that identified and analyzed assessment for learning (AFL) strategies employed by music educators to nurture students' creativity. Data were gathered via semi-structured interviews with three music teachers (two elementary and one secondary) in Ontario, Canada to discuss the pedagogical strategies they use to enhance students' creative work. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Data were analyzed deductively for core AFL strategies, then inductively using a standard thematic approach to identify additional creativity-nurturing practices. Findings include descriptions of creativity-nurturing strategies organized into four themes: (a) developing assessment criteria; (b) encouraging creative processes; (c) activating self-assessment and (d) optimizing the environment for AFL. Results provide detailed descriptions of strategies that music educators can employ to support and nurture student creativity.*

### Introduction

Creativity has been identified as the number one predictor of success within the current knowledge economy (IBM, 2010), recognized for its value in enabling youth to negotiate an uncertain future (Craft, 2011), and shown to enhance wellbeing (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Globally, based on metrics of income generation, job creation, and export earnings, the creative sector is among those that demonstrate the most rapid growth (UNESCO, 2013). Unsurprisingly given the increased valuing of creativity in society, creativity has recently emerged as a key 21<sup>st</sup> century competency and central learning objective for students across educational systems internationally (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). To date, however, much literature suggests that teachers and schools are more likely to stifle creativity than nurture it (Csikszentmihalyi & Wolfe, 2014; Robinson, 2006). Accordingly, given the importance of creativity to 21<sup>st</sup> century youth and society in general, research is needed into effective pedagogical strategies that teachers can productively leverage to support students' creativity.

### Literature Review

Given that it is possible for creativity to be learned (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Dweck, 2006; Lucas & Claxton, 2010), it follows that it is also possible to assess the development of creativity in ways useful to both learners and teachers (Lucas, 2016). However, despite recognition that "an important aspect of supporting children to develop their creativity is teacher engagement with, and sound application of, assessment for learning strategies" (Blamires & Peterson, 2014, p. 155), the use of assessment for learning (AFL) strategies to support student creativity remains underdeveloped (Collard & Looney, 2014). Hence, in this research, we examined teachers' practices to learn how AFL can be used to support student creativity.

### Theoretical Underpinnings

This research is grounded in the conception of creativity as the production of something original within a given context (through divergent thinking) and of value within a given context (through convergent thinking) (Cropley, 2006). When the context is a classroom, it is helpful to draw on the recognition of "little-c" creativity (Craft, 1996) that all people including young students can demonstrate, and the recognition that feedback can enhance students' creative efforts (Beghetto & Kauffman, 2014).

Assessment for learning (Black & Wiliam, 2006) engages students in formative assessment activities (including self-, peer-, and teacher-based feedback) with the goal of improving achievement and developing students' self-regulation and metacognition.

Black and Wiliam (2006) have identified key evidence-based strategies that optimize AFL:

1. Clarifying and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success;
2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, and tasks that elicit evidence of learning;
3. Providing feedback that moves learners forward;
4. Activating students as instructional resources for each other;
5. Activating students as owners of their own learning.

AFL is among the most statistically significant approaches for improving student learning (Hattie, 2009), yet very little research has examined how AFL can be applied to the development of students' creativity (Collard & Looney, 2014; Lucas, 2016).

## Research Objective

The purpose of this research was to identify and analyze AFL strategies employed by school music educators to nurture students' creativity. Specifically, our study was guided by the question: *How do music educators leverage AFL to nurture students' creativity?*

## Method

In this qualitative interview study, data were gathered via semi-structured interviews with three music teachers (two elementary and one secondary) who taught at public schools in Ontario, Canada. Participants included Darlene (all names are pseudonyms) who taught music, dance and drama, grades 1-5, and had 13 years' teaching experience; Evelyn, who taught music, dance and drama, grades 1-4, and had 14 years' teaching experience; and Bruce, who taught vocal music, music theatre, and drama, grades 9-12, and had 6 years' teaching experience.

The interviews, focusing on the pedagogical strategies the teachers used to support students' creative work, were audio-recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were then sent back to the participants for member-checking. The interviews were first analyzed deductively for core AFL strategies, then inductively using a standard thematic approach to identify additional creativity-nurturing practices.

## Findings

Analysis of the data enabled identification of creativity-nurturing strategies that I have organized into four themes: (a) developing assessment criteria; (b) encouraging creative processes; (c) activating self-assessment and (d) optimizing the context for AFL.

### Developing Assessment Criteria

All participants described developing assessment criteria, with their students, as a preliminary step in supporting creative work. Evelyn (teaching grades 1-4) explained, "We use chart paper... They come up with their criteria and then we talk a little bit about what it looks like." Darlene (teaching grades 1-5) offered possible criteria for a compositional task:

*They need to incorporate some quarter notes, some half notes, some eighth notes. It's in 4/4 time; they're going to create 16 beats . . . the mood of the piece aligns with the texts that they're using—the way it sounds, you know, fits.*

Bruce (teaching grades 9-12) described "co-constructing the success criteria as a class, putting it on the board, getting a kid to transcribe it and posting it in the Facebook group . . . documenting the expectations."

### Dynamic assessment criteria.

An important nuance of developing assessment criteria was that it was important to the teachers that the assessment criteria remain dynamic. Evelyn explained,

*As we're working through the process, the criteria change. So, if we're constantly talking about something that's not on the criteria list, we say, "Okay, If it's this important, then perhaps we need to add it in." Or if it doesn't seem to be relevant anymore, we cross it out.*

Bruce emphasized that "Putting something in four columns, typed out and printed out, ends up being meaningless because the project completely changes in two days based on how they're responding and reacting to it." Bruce's experience had taught him that a strict, pre-determined list of assessment criteria did not make sense. Instead, he explained,

*We try to keep it dynamic and we check in verbally a lot: "What does success look like on this project, how are we going to define progress?"*

### Encouraging Creative Processes

In addition to developing assessment criteria to identify expectations for students' creative products, teachers also described actively encouraging students' creative processes.

### Referencing a creative process framework.

As a structure to encourage students' creative work, all three teachers described referring to a model of the creative process featured in the current Ontario Ministry of Education Arts curriculum documents. Evelyn reported,

*There's a table with the different phases of the creative process. . . . So, we kind of looked at that as a guide . . . If they're in this phase, what should the students actually be doing or saying?*

The Ontario Ministry of Education has also produced a poster with a visual depiction of the model. Bruce said, "I have it on the wall and we look at it and refer to it a lot. . . . They seem to understand and resonate with it, and I've actually seen them discussing it with each other." The teachers described using the heuristic to help guide students through their creative work. Darlene explained, "We have the creative process up on the board and we're constantly talking about it: 'Okay, so we're at this stage, we're hoping to go here next class.' Similarly, Evelyn offered, "I'll talk to the kids a lot about that creative process. . . Like are we in the 'imagining' stage, or are we revising?"

### Exploration.

One of the stages identified in the model of the creative process is “Exploring and Experimenting” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 20). As the teachers described the feedback they gave to students, feedback related to exploration figured prominently. Evelyn explained,

*I find they're not very good at that [stage], and that's where a lot of the potential for creativity is. They try one thing, and they're like, “Yep, that's it, that's done.” So, they need a lot of prompting and a lot of questioning and a lot of gentle pushing.*

The teachers often described making use of questions to promote exploration. Evelyn reported, “I’m all about the probing questions. ‘What might this look like if you...’ or ‘How could you...’ Just to kind of get them thinking in a different way.” Bruce, however, also offered a different strategy—challenging a student with a particular directive as a means to encourage exploration:

*I had a really good songwriter in the class—I challenged her to substitute a different chord for every single chord in [her song]. So, still make it fit with the melody, make the chords be related, but can you substitute a chord with a different quality, and see what happens?*

### Refining.

Another stage in the creative process that teachers described actively encouraging was the “Revising and Refining” stage. Darlene provided an example: “What do you want the audience to be feeling when they’re listening to your piece? . . . When I was listening to your piece, I was feeling this way. Is that how you wanted me to be feeling?” Similarly, Bruce reported that he encourages revision by asking students

*to explain certain creative choices. “Why have you chosen this chord here?” “Why have you highlighted this lyric in this way?” “Why are you using three singers instead of two?” . . . Just getting them to look a little deeper at what they’ve done and be critical about why they made those choices.*

All the teachers identified that their students tended to resist revising and refining. Bruce explained it this way:

*A lot of them put something out really fast, but then aren't keen to go through the process of refining it. So, I use some of those questions and cues to let them know it's okay to be slow. “Let the process be slow, you're not done yet!”*

### Forward motion (next steps).

A significant aspect of encouraging creative processes that teachers described was encouraging students to move *through* the various stages of the creative process—encouraging forward motion. A common strategy the teachers employed to help students move forward was to provide feedback indicating clear and specific next steps. Bruce offered this example:

*We come in a circle at the end of the day and I'll say, “Where are you at today?” And they'll say. . . “I picked my song and I sat with the manuscript paper for 45 minutes and stared at it and couldn't write anything down.” “Great. So tomorrow you're going to stare at that manuscript paper again and you're going to write your name on it and you're going to label some chords and write some lyrics. Then the next day you'll see if you can add a harmony to your melody.”*

### Activating Self-Assessment

In analyzing the data, it became apparent that much of the teachers’ support of students’ creative work involved activating students to self-assess their creative products-in-progress and processes. As mentioned earlier, the teachers often provided feedback in the form of questions; these questions frequently activated self-assessment. For example, Evelyn described questioning intent: “Why did you make that? Why did you make that artistic choice and is there a better choice?” Teachers also used questions to offer alternative possibilities, e.g., “What else could you be doing with your left hand that would add colour to the chord?” (Bruce).

The teachers also described activating self-assessment by inviting students to listen to and consider the work of their peers, and thereby gain new perspectives on their own work. Darlene explained:

*We have them watch each other and then ask, how was so-and-so's different from yours? What was it that you appreciated about their piece compared to yours? Is there something you could take from there that you think would work with yours?*

### Self-assessment as holistic self-reflection.

The teachers also activated self-assessment at a broader, holistic level. All three teachers described inviting students to self-reflect on their *experience* of their creative work. Darlene reported:

*Sometimes it doesn't go so well, especially for the little guys. It's nice for them to take the very last minute or two of class, and just do that self-assessment piece—checking in where they're at and where they want to go forward with it when they come back to our room.*

Similarly, Darlene offered: “We have them lie on their backs and we’ll just ask them a question or ask them to reflect on a particular criteria . . . did they meet the criteria? What do they need to do for the next day?” Bruce described inviting self-reflection at a broader level still:

*We often do a mantra . . . come together and set an intention that sets the tone for the day, a positive “I am.” It can be anything, “I am leaving my ego at the door,” or “I am being my best self,” or “I am trusting my instincts,” or “I am not worrying about the outside world.”...* Then I prompt them to check in with that throughout the period to see how they’re honoring the intention.

### Optimizing the Context for AFL

The teachers also described the importance of optimizing the classroom context so that students were in the right frame of mind to receive and benefit from the feedback they received, both from the teacher and from peers.

### Supporting how students engage in peer assessment.

The teachers made clear that they worked carefully to shape the way students provided feedback to their peers. For instance, the teachers described consciously striving to build a safe space within their classrooms where students could feel comfortable sharing their creative work, which meant that the teachers had to vigilantly manage the way students provided feedback. Bruce explained that the students who are sharing their creative work

*feel like there’s already a spotlight on them, [and need to] trust that it [the feedback] is going to be safe and constructive. I feel that’s more important than letting it be a free for all that takes its own shape, because I care about controlling how that feels in the room.*

While insisting that the peer feedback be encouraging, the teachers also required that it be focused and purposeful. Darlene described a strategy for structuring peer feedback:

*We give them sentence starters: “A star that I noticed you did today would be this.” “A wish that I have...” We really push the wishes to be feedback that’s not just like, “I wish you practised more.” That doesn’t really tell us anything . . . give them information to have them be able to add and improve their piece.*

### Teacher enthusiasm.

Another aspect of optimizing the classroom context so that students were open to assessment for learning was teacher enthusiasm—so that students would perceive the teacher as a champion of their work. Bruce explained:

*I think the biggest thing to nurturing their creativity is my own excitement about art and music and them in general. . . . When I can really max my enthusiasm towards a project or a piece of music that they’re working on, I really feel the response from them in kind. So their enthusiasm and creative spirit and willingness goes up . . . Me being excited is important for them to feel validated and therefore wanting to go and be more creative.*

### Building relationships.

A related theme was the idea of enhancing the environment for creativity nurturing by building relationships with the students:

*The relationship with kids outside of the class is super important to me—checking in about non-musical things . . . results in having a rich relationship with the kid and then the door is open for them to say, like, “Look at these lyrics that I wrote,” or “Look at this song that I wrote.” Then this sort of space is created where they feel safe sharing their creative work with you, which is highly personal. (Bruce)*

### Avoiding marks.

A final very significant strategy for optimizing the classroom context for creativity that all three teachers emphasized was avoiding marks. Evelyn stated,

*We don’t ever give them marks. I mean, we give them marks on the report card, but we, um, our feedback is always just that: it’s feedback. And it’s about what are they doing well and what are their next steps.*

Similarly, Bruce also described avoiding marks. Bruce went further—perhaps because his students were older—avoiding the language that students may have come to associate with being judged or graded:

*The one thing that I don’t do, especially with this type of work, is use language like “assessment” or “success criteria” or “level 3 or level 4” or any of that. Because I feel that attaches judgment. Of course they’re going to be assessed eventually and they know that, but the early stages are hopefully not about that.*

Both these teachers indicated that they do grade their students’ work, but that they intentionally avoid doing so early in the creative process.

## Discussion

The purpose of this research was to identify and analyze AFL strategies employed by music educators to nurture students’ creativity. Working with data provided by two elementary and one secondary level music teachers I identified four categories of strategies—those associated with (a) developing assessment criteria; (b) encouraging creative processes; (c) activating self-assessment and (d) optimizing the context for AFL.

I now consider the findings described above through the lens of Black and Wiliam's (2006) core evidence-based strategies that optimize AFL.

#### **Clarifying and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success.**

The teachers all described developing assessment/success criteria, with students, to help them understand the expectations for their creative endeavors. Notably, the teachers in this study identified that they needed to keep the criteria flexible to be meaningful throughout the arc of the students' engagement with the creative task, and that they needed to apply the success criteria in a non-judgmental way (e.g., avoiding marks).

#### **Engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, and tasks that elicit evidence of learning.**

In nurturing students' creative work, the teachers described engineering classroom discussions, but not so much for the purpose of eliciting evidence of learning as for providing a forum for feedback to help the creators move forward. Given the learning context of a music class, and the students' ultimate goal of creating a musical product, the AFL language doesn't quite match up. The evidence of learning was represented by the creative product, rather than by discussion. When the product was shared or presented, it served to spark discussion that drove the learning/creative work forward. Similarly, teachers engineered questions, but with the primary purpose of provoking students' self-assessment about their creative products and work, e.g., questions about intent, or about the efficacy of certain compositional choices. Teachers also engineered tasks, for example, Bruce requiring his student to "substitute a different chord for every single chord in [her song]." However, this task was set as a means not to elicit evidence of learning, but to encourage exploration.

#### **Providing feedback that moves learners forward.**

The strategy of providing feedback to move learners forward was very much in evidence. Specifically, the teachers provided feedback and elicited feedback from peers that encouraged students' creative processes by (a) referencing a creative process framework; (b) encouraging exploration; (c) encouraging refinement; and (d) directly providing next steps.

#### **Activating students as instructional resources for each other.**

The teachers provided a number of examples of activating students as instructional resources for each other. One way they did this was by engineering opportunities for peer feedback. Of note were the efforts teachers made to optimize the effectiveness of peer support, e.g., by striving to communicate to students how to offer feedback in a way that maintained the creators' sense of safety and comfort, while also providing feedback that was focused and purposeful. In addition, teachers encouraged students to learn from listening to the work of their peers, i.e., to consider the work in relation to their own, and to borrow ideas.

#### **Activating students as owners of their own learning.**

The strategy of activating students as owners of their own learning was evident throughout the data in the teachers' activation of the students' self-assessment of their work. Teachers often activated self-assessment through questioning, e.g., by questioning intent and compositional choices or through questions to offer alternative possibilities. Of note was that the teachers in this study also activated self-assessment at a broader, holistic level. All three teachers described inviting students to self-reflect on their *experience* of their creative work.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This research has provided detailed descriptions of how music educators employ AFL strategies to nurture creativity. While the study was certainly limited by the small sample, the descriptions nevertheless provide valuable evidence of the nuanced ways educators can support musical creativities through formative assessment.

Given the qualitative nature of this study, general recommendations for music educators are probably not so helpful as encouragement to consider the strategies described here, and to try out the ones that seem suited to each teacher's unique context. However, based on the findings shared here, I propose that teachers particularly consider (a) developing assessment criteria with their students but keeping the criteria flexible and cautiously applying them (e.g., avoid assigning grades in early stages of creative work); (b) encouraging creative processes by specifically referencing a creative process framework and actively supporting exploration and refinement in particular; (c) by continuously activating students' self-assessment through questions about intent, choices, and alternate possibilities; and (d) optimizing the context for AFL and indeed for creative work in general by helping peers to structure their feedback in an encouraging way, by building personal relationships with students to open the door for the sharing of personal creative ideas, and by communicating enthusiasm for those ideas.

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## The Viability of Using Character Animation as a Visual Medium in Educating Sign Language Users at Primary School Level in Developing Countries

Munyao, Isabella

Nairobi Institute of Technology, [munyaobella@gmail.com](mailto:munyaobella@gmail.com)

### Abstract:

*The use of character animation towards sign language education is an effective merger at face value. Herein, an analysis of extant text assesses the viability of the use of character animation in sign language. This analysis targets the low-prior knowledge learner at the primary school level. Using R. Mayer's Principles of Multimedia Learning, the text-based analysis is assessed in accordance with multimedia principles of fostering generative learning, managing essential processing and reducing extraneous processing. Results support the use of modified multimedia principles of instructional design towards interactive aspects. Adding elements of interaction within the animated content is crucial to a deaf learner's cognition. Implications for future research, the design and execution of sign language animations are discussed.*

**Key-words:** *character animation, sign language, multimedia learning, interactive media.*

### Introduction

Sign language users include: deaf learners, hearing students of sign language, hearing interpreters and the deaf community as a whole “who consider [it] as a mother tongue” (KSLRP, 2002, p. iii). Animation is a visually-based medium and has been incorporated with sign before, seeing animated characters use sign languages of developed countries (American & British sign languages). This is a positive step in the right direction as animation has a long history of entertaining and educating young learners with educational animations being aimed at increasing the learners' cognition (Mayer, 2014, p. 3). However, the deaf learners in developing countries aren't taken into account as the language of instruction is not their own. Additionally, deaf learners in developing countries face various problems trying to learn in an early/primary-level educational environment that is built upon spoken and written language; a system that views literacy as “the cognitive skills of reading and writing” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 149) and tests on the proficiency of the above. This essay argues that if we cannot informatively design educational animations made in sign language, then we are unable to take the necessary advancements to create and improve them. An informative design would then improve the deaf learners' cognition and educational experience in developing countries as well as that of sign users wholly. Through an analysis of extant text surrounding the fields of sign and animation, this paper examines both deaf pedagogy in developing countries and the pre-existing multimedia design principles in animation pedagogy which were designed for hearing learners. This analysis aims to raise tailored multimedia design principles targeted towards, primarily, the deaf learner in a developing country and other sign users.

### Literature review

The recurrent theme throughout this paper would be pedagogy in relation to two, rarely connected, fields of animation and sign language. Among the primary literary sources is R. Mayer's 2014 edition of *The Cambridge Handbook of Multimedia Learning*, a collection of academic research aimed at improving the design of educational animations. The text places emphasis on animation's education content over the production technology. The book will be utilised to outline a multimedia design structure conducive to sign education.

The second literature source is the 2005 article from M. Chan and J. Black. *When Can Animation Improve Learning? Some Implications for Human Interaction and Learning* will provide support on the topic of animation pedagogy. Unlike several literary works of the same topic, this article differs slightly from the norm; it creates principles that are tailored to enhance Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) to foster effective learning. Its hypothesis gave rise to various presentation formats with varying results drawn from the sample group. With the information drawn from this reading, a proposed method emerges to better create character-animated content in sign language.

Third, C. Kimani's 2012 thesis entitled *Teaching Deaf Learners in Kenyan Classrooms*, in which I shall draw out the basis for sign language education in a current setting. The thesis is described as focusing on the teaching and learning of deaf pupils in Kenya paying attention to the physical facilities available to them in the different environments in which they learn and access teaching and learning materials.

Lastly, A. Croft's 2012 monograph; *Including Disabled Children in Learning: Challenges in Developing Countries* will be used to create a baseline of disabled learning throughout several countries, and not solely focused on Kenya. Theories derived from Kimani's thesis will then be mirrored with Croft's to identify similarities between the two texts. The



research monograph is described as aimed at developing examples of different approaches to disability and learning from different countries and highlights problems that emerge, notably in relation to strategies that promote special education and mainstreaming for disabled children.

### Theoretical underpinnings

Theoretical approaches to disabled-specific pedagogy have been outlined by Croft: the inclusive, the general differences and the unique differences approach (p. 15). The inclusive approach built off the social model definition of disability (p. 4) is, generally, most conducive because it places all students on an even platform to attain the same knowledge, in the same setting in order to achieve the standard goal. The inclusive approach is described as a concept which “focuses on how to extend what is ordinarily available in the community of the classroom as a way of reducing the need to mark some learners as different” (Florian, Black-Hawkins, 2011, p. 826). Kimani contextualises, “Inclusive education is a concept that emerged from the efforts of disability groups that demanded equal treatment and opportunities” (p. 55). While the remaining two opposing approaches can be executed – the unique differences position is informed by common and individual needs, and the general differences position is informed by both common and individual needs, as well as those specific to a group (Croft, 2012, p. 8) – they could both be viewed as separatist especially in the scope of all disabilities. In an effort to abolish the, often stigmatizing, medical model/individual model definition of disability (p. 4), the disabled community rallied for education equality through the inclusive approach (p. 11).

While the inclusive approach is conducive for disabled people in general, it is not as conducive for the deaf. Opposing views support the segregated education, or special education, of deaf learners based on their language. The support is based largely on language acquisition. Repeated exposure to sign language is an integral part of its acquisition, “Due to the nature of their language and its structural difference from other (spoken) languages ... For the learners to develop sign language, they require interactions with those who are fluent in the same language” (Kimani, 2012, p. 60). Their segregation will serve to develop their language skills rather than violate their rights to equal education. Towards enhancing the acquisition of sign language, Kimani raises the Individualised Approach to deaf learning. This pedagogical approach supports due attention paid to those whom the learning is aimed at, rather than sole focus on the act of learning itself (p. 66).

Both Individualised and inclusive approaches share some commonalities; seeking reform in key areas of education. And both “accept that learners have individual differences” (Croft, 2012, p. 18). Ultimately, the inclusive educational setting would not be conducive to sign language development whereas the Individualised Approach would consider the learner’s language.

Mayer’s theory of multimedia learning, based off of Sweller’s cognitive load theory, promotes both audio and visual information being selected, organised and integrated with prior knowledge in separate, parallel, processes (Mayer, 2014, p. 3). Since the deaf cannot perceive audio information, the visual cognitive process is tasked with illustrated and print media. The modifications to the principles suggested through this research will be mindful of that fact as well as the shortcomings in applying prior knowledge grounded in their “differences in visual processing, long term memory, and short term memory [inherent] in deaf learners ... needs to be addressed in classroom instruction.” (Kimani, 2012, p. 54).

The multimedia design principles, stemming from the theory of multimedia learning, are traced back to three cognitive processes that link the three stages of memory, in order; sensory, working and long-term memory. Of those, three cognitive processes; selecting, organizing and integrating, operate between and link these stages of memory. These cognitive processes – that predate multimedia’s design principles – formed three further thematic categories for the purpose of multimedia design: extraneous processing, essential processing and generative processing.

To firm up the basis of multimedia instruction content creation, the three themes were tied to instructional goals; reducing extraneous processing, managing essential processing and fostering generative processing. According to Mayer’s chapter, from Lowe & Schnotz’s 2008 book *Learning With Animation*, they are described as reducing that ‘which drains limited cognitive processing capacity without contributing to learning’, managing the process of ‘selecting relevant information and organizing it as presented in working memory’ and lastly, fostering the process of ‘making sense of the material by reorganizing it into a coherent structure and integrating it with relevant prior knowledge’ (p. 32).

Mayer’s theory of multimedia learning presents twelve principles of multimedia learning grouped in accordance with the previously mentioned instructional goals. The goal of reducing extraneous processing holds four principles: coherence, signaling, redundancy, spatial contiguity and temporal contiguity. The goal of managing essential processing holds three principles: segmenting, pre-training and modality. Lastly, the goal of fostering generative learning holds four principles: personalisation, voice, embodiment and image (Lowe, Schnotz, 2008, p 37).

### Discussion

The present specialised system of enrolling, educating and assessing deaf students yields low results due to their delayed language acquisition. Curricula founded on a speech-based language system will invariably, inadvertently, penalise the deaf learner for their visual language. In the spirit of the social model definition of disability, society must take steps

to accommodate sign language; as Sutton-Spence and Kaneko wrote “Hearing people often labelled deaf people as disabled rather than members of a community that uses a different language” (p. 8). This process of accommodating sign language can begin by addition of visual material to aid the deaf learner that will result in their cognitive development.

Addition of sign-based animations must be approached through extant principles of multimedia design. This approach begins with the goal of reducing extraneous processing. For the deaf audience, reducing extraneous processing is emphasised. The emphasis is brought about by the deaf learner’s sole reliance on visuals for sensory memory. The coherence principle sees elimination of the distractions that would increase learners’ focus and remains relevant to the deaf audience. The spatial contiguity principle cites effective learning occurs when corresponding text and visuals are placed near each other rather than far apart. The principle remains relevant in the instructions of sign users, especially with static imagery.

The signaling principle is that which calls the audience’s attention to the important material. The principle is not only relevant to the deaf learner it is part of their language structure. Sign language makes use of various manual (hand-based) and non-manual (facial and body-movement based) signs to focus the attention of the audience. The redundancy principle supports a combination of both graphics and narration rather than both with an additional on-screen text. For deaf learners we may do away with both text and narration since the visuals carry the information.

Secondly, the goal of managing essential processing in which selecting and organizing of relevant information in working memory takes place. Segmenting applies to all audiences; sign users, deaf and hearing learners. The segmenting rule sees a presentation deconstructed in learner-paced segments rather than a continuous unit. Allowing the learner to control the pace of information gives them the capacity to internalise information to working memory and integrate it with prior-knowledge at their own pace. This principle is highly conducive to Kimani’s individualised approach which allows the learner to “add information and extract new understandings from their own experiences through discovery and classroom conversations” (Power, Leigh, 2000, p. 39). The learner-centred pace that segmentation puts forth should be put into consideration throughout production of multimedia content, but more so in its presentation.

The pre-training principle proposes prior training on content and main concepts. Given the delayed language acquisition of deaf learners, the pre-training principle is of great importance. In a deaf learners’ setting, this would be enacted by introducing the signs of the main concepts, signing the topic and/or theme beforehand.

To foster generative processing for the deaf learner, the content (which at this point is ideally clear, concise, visual-based and modular/learner-paced) has to motivate the final step of cognition; the integration of prior knowledge with the new. The embodiment principle warrants the use of on-screen agents with human-like gesturing and facial expressions. In sign language, the embodiment principle is elevated to an integral part of the language’s syntax. The use of facial expressions, eye movement and expressive body movements, collectively known as non-manual signs, are not only useful in language cohesion, they serve to entertain targeted young audience through signed anthropomorphism which is popular with young children (Sutton-Spence, Kaneko, 2016, p. 68).

Personalisation supports an informal use of speech over the formal. Sign, like any other language can be formal and informal. The differentiation often based on non-manual signs as speech has with inflection. Just as hearing learners would favour informal speech, similarly the deaf favour informal signs.

The principles of temporal contiguity, voice, modality and image are inapplicable to the deaf audience. The temporal contiguity principle described as, “Present spoken words at the same time as corresponding graphics” (Mayer, Fiorella, 2014, p. 279) requires an audio-based input and therefore omitted from further analysis in this context. Similarly, the voice principle sees favour of a human voice over the mechanical voice and on-screen text (Mayer, 2014, p. 345); the modality principle favours “Use [of] spoken words rather than written words” (Mayer, Pilegard, 2014, p. 316). These three audio-based principles have no application to the deaf learner. The image principle which was supported by Mayer & Moreno’s study on ‘image effect’ reveals presentation of the image of an agent did not affect the learners’ performance (p. 3); it cannot be applied to the deaf learner. Their need for visual representations/agents is crucial.

Despite sign being an inherently dynamic language, assuming animation as the best presentational format is presumptuous. Chan & Black’s 2005 study found no discernable benefits between animated and static display. To support their findings, the authors stated the following challenges faced with use of animation, “low working memory capacity and learner’s prior domain specific knowledge” as likely causes. Additionally, prior domain-knowledge influenced the learner’s comprehension of the content (p. 2). These issues put the viability of animated presentations under scrutiny as deaf learners’ exhibit low working memory and low-prior knowledge. The authors proposed the “format-support hypothesis”; a presentation format solution to meet the challenges (p. 2). Presentation must therefore be approached with the intent of correlating the content to the presentation method.

Multimedia presentation must take into account Mayer’s principle of segmentation. An important finding in Chan & Black’s study was the Direct-manipulation animation (DMA) presentation format. DMA is a special form of animation born out of the need to “mitigate the perceptual and cognitive demands that animation imposes on learners” (p. 2) it is a combination of an interactive interface with animated visuals that learners can manipulate in accordance with their pace

of comprehension. In practice, the DMA was tested against two other forms of presentation; static visuals and system-controlled animation, aiming at determining the effects each solicited in the learning of dynamic physical processes. DMA was successful; however, the results of the static visuals group supported the original hypothesis. That of each presentation format bearing its own strength and flaws, as such the segmentation of a presentation should be considered in the pre-production of multimedia instruction content.

## Conclusion

The assessment of animation and sign, an efficient merger at face value, targeted towards deaf learners in separatist educational systems within developing countries has presented various results. The most notable result is the reduction of the existing twelve principles to eight. Further the principles have been re-grouped in accordance with three deaf-tailored goals of: clarity, compliance with sign language lexicon and learner-centred modularity in presentation. Within the three elements, the respective extant goals are: reducing extraneous processing, fostering generative processing and managing essential processing. Given the uniquely challenged – low working-memory capacity and low prior-knowledge – deaf learners, the placement of fostering generative processing before managing essential processing prioritises formation of long-term memories over the organisation of working memories. A priority that addresses delayed language acquisition present in several deaf pedagogical systems.

Individualised learning in both deaf and animated pedagogy would require endeavoured effort at various levels. Effort should not solely be focused on the systematic adaptation towards the deaf learner in terms of their low prior knowledge influenced by social upbringing, language acquisition and assessment, similar amount of effort should be placed in the finer details of tailoring visuals for the deaf learner; customisation to their specific language, adapting for interactivity and corresponding presentation methods.

A crucial question posed by this study was if animation was the best suited presentation medium. Individualised education calls broadly for more visual input, it doesn't specify on animated input. Static visuals are the easiest to construct, though they would fall short of fully conveying sign language's dynamic nature. Animation, when designed in line with these principles, would convey the dynamic nature of sign and enhance the cognitive ability of its users. However, its creation involves time-intensive labour. A middle ground can be found when combining live-action film (fully capable of conveying dynamic content) and animation (when necessary as dictated by the content to be conveyed). Regardless of its application as primary or supporting multimedia, animated instructional material for deaf learners must initially consider the final presentation mode and its correlation to the content. In future efforts to accomplish interactive and individualised animations in sign language, the presentation-content relationship must be considered prior to commencing production.

This paper does not exhaust the correlation between the two fields of animation and sign. Rather, it provides an opportunity for further in-depth research on the matter, in pursuit of creating ideal tailored animations for the deaf learner. Possible areas for advancement include, but not limited to; the possibilities signed anthropomorphism can offer to character animation. Introducing a visual-based linguistic level of sentience in personified non-human animated characters gives an extra layer of depth to the character's persona. Another area would be the ideal method of integrating static visuals with existing filmed sign performance in order to bring out the best of both.

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