

Article

Indigenous music performance skills development at Humwe Cultural Arts and Education Centre in Mhondoro-Mubaira, Zimbabwe

Wonder Maguraushe 

Midlands State University, Gweru, P Bag 9055, Zimbabwe
Correspondence: wondermaguraushe@gmail.com

Citation: Maguraushe, W. (2024). Indigenous music performance skills development at Humwe Cultural Arts and Education Centre in Mhondoro-Mubaira, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Arts & Cultural Studies*, 3 (2), 1-13.
<https://doi.org/10.23112/acs24110402>



Received: September 13, 2024
Revised: October 21, 2024
Accepted: October 30, 2024
Published: November 4, 2024



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Abstract: *Background:* Applied ethnomusicologists wield potential to champion the promotion of Indigenous music by maintaining a sustained collaborative effort. The provision of traditional mbira, marimba music and dance to local Zimbabwean children who have not experienced the music of their forefathers is a worthwhile cultural restoration and enculturation undertaking that is lacking in many indigenous communities. *Purpose:* This paper provides insights into such work being done at the Cosmas Magaya *Humwe* Cultural Arts and Education Centre in Mhondoro, Mashonaland West Province, in Zimbabwe where children receive cultural music instruction. *Methods:* Using the case study and ethnographic method, I present a descriptive analysis of the Humwe camp. A purposively selected sample of participants validated the activities. *Results:* Learners who participated in the Humwe Camp and Festival got the opportunity to learn and showcase mbira and marimba music and dance from their own culture. This experience brought an insatiable hunger to understand traditional musical cultural practices through participation. Children learned the music primarily by ear, using their local language for instruction. The Zimbabwean music educators who worked with them appreciated the availability of such an opportunity to disseminate indigenous music amongst their own people. Children led each other in the marimba and mbira ensembles, displaying mastery of knowledge and skills attained after three weeks packed with numerous activities. *Conclusion:* Because of its emphasis on collaboration, the Humwe concept can effectively disseminate and promote Indigenous knowledge amongst the young generation. Applied ethnomusicologists should regularly interact through such collaboration, sharing content for the success of multicultural instruction in general music.

Keywords: Collaboration, Dance, Indigenous music, Mbira, Marimba

1. Introduction

Ethnomusicology has made available a large amount of mbira and marimba music and dance to local as well as different cultures on the globe. Such research has tended to enrich multicultural music performances abroad by providing content. The situation that has remained in Zimbabwean local communities has tended to receive little or no attention (Maguraushe, 2017). As a discipline of study, ethnomusicology remains a preserve of tertiary institutions. The drive to teach at the grassroots level from a local cultural perspective has been neglected by music educators who seem obsessed with the idea of relocating to the diaspora for green pastures. This article argues for a new thrust on disseminating indigenous musical cultural traditions amongst Zimbabwean children who have received little or no such Indigenous knowledge and skills about their own cultural heritage. Further, this contribution is a direct effort to encourage applied ethnomusicologists to support the teaching of their local musical cultural traditions in contemporary society. There is great potential for collaboration between applied

ethnomusicologists and local communities to disseminate Indigenous music knowledge and skills internally. This paper argues that teaching local cultural music is a social responsibility because there is a glaring need to expose students to their own culture. This results in developing the learners' cultural awareness by participating in the music traditions of their predecessors.

In Zimbabwe most marimba and mbira songs that are played on the radio or television tend to be a fusion of Western and traditional influences, resulting in acculturation. The teachers at Humwe focus on teaching original songs and dances in order to preserve and promote traditional music and culture, in an environment characterised by the influx of Western music. Humwe creates an avenue for people to experience the beauty of Zimbabwean cultural practices which have been stigmatised and viewed as inferior, and this is critical in changing the perceptions that some locals and foreigners have around traditional music performances. The HCAEC provides free music and dance classes to all students in the program. The students are taught how to play marimba, mbira, hosho, and to sing and dance. They are taught the history and meaning of the songs that they learn. The students spend 4 to 5 hours at the Centre during each practice session. During that time, they are provided with a meal and a snack as most of the children will not have had a meal prior to coming to the Centre.

The HCAEC runs a cultural exchange programme. The inaugural Cultural Exchange camp was hosted from December 13th to December 16th, 2018. The inaugural camp was only open to students that were in the Music and Culture program at that time and others in the local community. As the camp grew, it opened up to other Zimbabwean communities as well as outsiders. Humwe cultural exchange programme provides an opportunity for Zimbabweans that have not been exposed to traditional music and dance an opportunity to immerse themselves in it and learn more about it. It also provides an opportunity for non-Zimbabweans to learn traditional Zimbabwean music and culture as well as experience the village lifestyle through learning at the Centre and by living in the community. The camp not only exposes many people to traditional music but also gives mbira players, traditional singers and dancers an opportunity to share their talent with others. The organisers are working on developing a repository for traditional music and culture related material.

Humwe Annual Camp adapts Indigenous musical cultural practices; marimba, mbira, singing, dance and traditional food and other elements of cultural heritage to buttress community development and revitalise ICH. This paper discusses how the Magaya family, their American partner friends, and the local people under Chief Nherera and Headman Magaya of Magaya Village unite in developing the HCAEC project, which seeks to promote community development and cultural sustainability in Indigenous contexts. The paper also considers the stages, procedures, activities and strategies that are employed as a model for developing the cultural festival within the context of applied ethnomusicology based on the concept of Humwe.

This case study of the HCAEC project used ethnographic methods of semi-structured informal conversational interviews (Swain & King, 2022) with the cultural practitioners and festival audience, document analysis and participant observation. This paper chronicles the activities and strategies that are employed as a model for developing the cultural festival within the context of applied ethnomusicology based on the concept of Humwe.

2. Literature Review

Music and dance education in Zimbabwe is characterised by a significant shortage of specialist teachers in primary and secondary schools (Maguraushe, 2015). Gonye and Moyo (2015) examine the teaching and learning of traditional dance at primary school level in Zimbabwe as a key step towards reclaiming the nation's musical cultural heritage, as well as postcolonial curriculum reimagination. Their research reveals how primary school teachers understand traditional dance; their practice informed by

relatively fair knowledge of dance, and very low competency levels to demonstrate how the dances are performed is a glaring limitation. The teachers' inadequacies are partly because of a general reluctance to utilise Indigenous knowledge systems as a basis for a socially responsive curriculum practice. Culture bearers could be utilised to enhance dance knowledge in both teacher training (pre- and in-service) and school dance ensembles (Maguraushe, 2024). Interventions such as the Humwe Annual Camp stand to bridge the gap in knowledge about mbira, marimba and dance practices in Zimbabwe.

Most Zimbabwean children grow up believing that traditional African music and culture are inferior to all other cultures due to negative perceptions peddled through religion, colonialism and popular culture (Matikiti et al., 2020). The vision at HCAEC is an environment in which Zimbabwean traditional music and dance is embraced and celebrated. Their mission is to preserve the traditional music and culture of Zimbabwe and to improve the lives of those in the communities where they operate.

The Humwe annual programme culminates in a festival showcase where the students showcase the skills that they would have learnt over a period of three weeks. "Festivalisation" refers to transforming cultural activities previously presented in a regular, ongoing pattern or season into a "new" event (Négrier, 2014: 01). Festivalisations are necessitated by the emergence of neo-traditional contexts and the transformation of regular cultural activities into events. Festivalising marimba, mbira and dance Indigenous Cultural Heritage (ICH) elements of the Zezuru people means bridging creativity, entertainment, and cultural tourism. This results in an overall rich experience for the musicians and their audience and, subsequently, the success of the event as a means of promoting community development through cultural arts education. Therefore, festivalisation is the central strategy employed for the adaptive use of cultural music heritage for community development as it creates a platform for the strategic cultural experience. This Humwe strategy involves organising cultural festival events that showcase marimba, mbira and dance ICH elements to promote awareness and appreciation of the heritage among young and old members of the Mhondoro community and the American visitors alike. Through festivalisation, the living Zezuru cultural heritage is revitalised and celebrated while promoting social cohesion within the community.

The development of the HCAEC followed steps that align with Van Buren and Schrag's (2018) model for community development through arts-based projects that address locally defined needs. Van Buren and Schrag say that the development of new arts initiatives should involve the following steps: meeting people within a community, talking to them about their arts and goals, and exploring how they can use their arts to meet goals. The Humwe programme organisers sought permission from Sabhuku Magaya and Mambo Nherera (headman and chief respectively), the community leaders. They invite, meet, and engage the local community members from ... Village. The festival management committee includes local teachers: Mudavanhu Magaya who teaches nhare mbira, Tonderai Mhishi who teaches marimba, and Irene Chigamba who teaches dance. Members of the community help the Magaya family to prepare food and mobilise beverages for the festival, and evaluate proceedings afterwards. Titon (1985) says that applied ethnomusicological community interventions should theoretically and practically focus on people's life contexts and needs. The HCAEC resonates well with this recommendation in terms of its organisation and implementation as "the applied" or "practical" aspect of ethnomusicological research strategies, activities and interactions in the Mhondoro community.

"Afrocentricity contends that our main problem as African people is our usually unconscious adoption of the Western worldview and perspective and their attendant conceptual framework" (Mazama 2001: 387). Using Humwe as the cultural arts and education development model resulted in the community members mobilising human and material resources to work together on the project, following an agenda to put

musical knowledge and skills to practical use in a community for education, social improvement, cultural good, and musical benefit (Titon, 2015). This collaborative action in Indigenous applied ethnomusicology is a direct contest to Eurocentric, Western epistemic assumptions that advance or advocate for empirical, proof-based, objective knowledge based on conventional research methods. Banks (2023: 31) posits that revitalising Indigenous music and dance cultures entails reclaiming Indigenous epistemologies and “asserting Indigenous worldviews”. The Humwe cultural arts and education concept is a model for sustainability grounded in Indigenous knowledge of the people that offers the potential for “(re)claiming one’s lost culture” (Wane, 2013: 94). It is an approach in which community members work together because of their locality and sense of belonging, collaboration with American applied ethnomusicologists.

The HCAEC founders adopted the concept of *nhimbe* as a community-based model to organise the festival. Humwe is also called *nhimbe* or *hoka* amongst the Shona. *Nhimbe* is an Indigenous Zimbabwean collaborative or cooperative work practice in which communities pool resources and work together towards common goals for community development. Murisa (2013: 251) says that the practice of *nhimbe* was developed within a community structure of social organisation where members of the same village organised themselves into labour teams for ploughing, planting, weeding and other tasks. Since the *pasichigare* (pre-colonial) era, *humwe* has been performed in Indigenous communities for people to unite in order to strengthen and sustain household and community development programmes (Muyambo, 2017; Sithole, 2020). Characteristically, Indigenous Southern Africans have used inclusive participation, sharing of resources and collective actions at the grassroots level to tackle community developmental challenges (Anderson, 2002: 35). This approach is important for communities to achieve transformative results. It nurtures a sense of ownership and empowerment among members of the same community. Through *humwe*, development interventions are tailored to suit the unique needs and challenges of the local community.

Hamutyinei & Plagger (1987) as cited in Komanisi (2014: 1849) explain *humwe* as:

An approach towards work and especially more towards the production of grain crops, cooperation was the engine for social cohesion among the Shona people. Philosophical ideas (largely couched in the form of Shona proverbs) such as ‘*kuita mushandirapamwe samajuru*’ (to work together like ants (in building an anthill)), ‘*chara chimwe hachitsvanyi inda*’ (one finger cannot squash louse), ‘*kuchera mbeva kukomberana*’ (to dig mice is to encircle them), ‘*rume rimwe harikombi churu*’ (one man does not surround an anthill), ‘*kuturika denga remba kubatirana*’ (to put up a roof to a hut is to assist each other) and ‘*zano ndega akasiya jira mumasese*’ (know- all left his/her blanket in the dregs of beer) were all developed as ways of encouraging cooperative work among the people.

According to Bourdillon (1977: 74), during *nhimbe* “larger groups of kin may cooperate for larger tasks such as ploughing, planting and harvesting”. This means community members work together to help each other with resources and labour in development activities. Bourdillon (1977: 74) adds that it is:

A more traditional means of obtaining help, which is still the practice in some areas, is to hold a work party: the landholder brews a large quantity of millet beer and invites friends and neighbours to help with his work (which, apart from agricultural work may involve such tasks as building or roofing a house) for which they can enjoy the beer, which lasts considerably longer than the work.

Nhimbe is organised to help community members with labour and resources for agricultural work, construction and other sectors of life. Apart from agricultural and construction work, *hoka* is also done during community social events such as cultural ceremonies, rituals, funerals, and marriages. Community members collectively contribute resources for the event and participate. This shows that *nhimbe* is characterised by unity of purpose, collaboration, cooperation, pooling of resources and

helping one another towards a common goal. At the HCAEC the concept of *nhimbe* is used to bring community members together to disseminate and celebrate their *mbira*, *marimba* and dance cultural practices.

Mhamba (traditionally brewed beer) and food, particularly *sadza* with goat meat, are prepared for the people who come to help with the work. Traditional beer is made from *mhunga*, *rukweza* or *mapfunde* (pearl millet/finger millet/sorghum respectively). *Sadza* is cooked on the fire using water and a stirring stick until its thick enough to be eaten. It is prepared using sorghum, *rapoko* or most commonly white maize mealie meal. Beer spices up the occasion and normally attracts the young hard workers and elderly alike. *Muyambo* (2017: 178) says that “as people carry out the work, they are served with *doro*, enabling them to work hard”. The Shona say during *nhimbe* or other social events “*ukama igasva hunozadziswa nekudya*” (relationships become complete when people eat together). At the HCAEC the young learners are of school going age so they are only served with *sadza* and meat, snacks, *mahewu* (fermented liquid mealie-meal porridge) and soft drinks.

3. Methodology

This is a case study of the HCAEC project, organised together with some members of the *Mubaira* community in *Mhondoro*. Using ethnographic methods of semi-structured informal conversational interviews (Swain & King, 2022) with the cultural practitioners and festival audience, document analysis and participant observation, this paper chronicles the steps followed in the establishment of the HCAEC through applied ethnography and the dissemination of sustainable practices and ideas among the culture-bearers.

Table 1: Research Methods

Research Methods	Specific Research Methods
Literature research method	A comprehensive review of both domestic and foreign literature has been conducted related to the subject for specific research on the theory, design method, and aesthetic implication of applied ethnomusicology projects. Through the literature study, I can grasp the concepts of <i>Humwe</i> , analyze and generalize its application in <i>Mhondoro-Mubaira</i> . Furthermore, we summarize the various design methods and applications ultimately providing solid theoretical support for this research.
Fieldwork	I conducted ethnographic research which entailed participant observation, interviews and document analysis with a view to going holistic insights into the <i>Humwe Camp</i> activities guided by principles of naturalism, understanding and discovery.
Case study method	The study focused on a case study of the <i>Humwe Cultural Arts Education Centre</i> which was founded by <i>Tsitsi Magaya Hantuba</i> and is held annually in <i>Mhondoro-Mubaira</i> community.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 *Humwe* activities

The *Humwe* concept is a project which targets the locals. It came from a desire to help Zimbabwean youths to learn the history and richness of Shona culture. *Humwe Cultural Arts and Education Centre (HCAEC)* was founded by *Tsitsi Magaya Hantuba* who was born into a family that embraced and followed Shona traditions. She is the Founder and President, cultural ambassador, *mbira* player, teacher and daughter of the late *Cosmas Magaya*. The Board Members are *Jim Pugliese* (secretary), *Glen West* (treasurer), *Cecily Crout* (digital marketer), *Marilyn Kolodziejczyk*, *Blessing Sithole* and *Janice Weeks*. *Humwe* started in 2015 with a group of 12 students, and has grown to about 25 girls and 28 boys totalling 53 in 2024. Unlike the average child growing up in Zimbabwe, *mbira* music was a normal part of *Tsitsi's* everyday life. *Humwe* is a Section 501(c) (3) charitable organization.

Mbira teaching is an integral part of Humwe. According to Mudavanhu Magaya (Pers comm, 08 July 2024). In mbira teaching we teach only traditional songs which have been passed on from generation to generation. Much emphasis is placed on the need to preserve the original mbira sound and songs. We started by teaching the very basic songs like Karigamombe (dhongi, mombe, mbudzi) and Chigwaya, then develop from there according to the learner's speed in grasping the basics, then tackle the more complex traditional song modes such as Nhemamusasa, Mahororo and Bangiza. During the camp students are mixed in groups according to their schools and sex so that they can bond. Before we teach a song, we make sure the students know the meaning of the song as all mbira songs have deep meanings. We also strongly encourage learners to start with the mbira as it is more challenging than the marimba.

When probed further on the preservation of originality, Mudavanhu indicated that kushaura (lead), kukaya (interweave) and kutsinhira (response) lines, as variations are maintained in their original form. They are not altered when the students learn them first. Learners may want to improvise and variate later when they try their own new song arrangements and compositions.

There is a Marimba ensemble at Humwe Centre. According to Tonderai Mhishi (Pers comm, 15 June 2024) in marimba performance students have now developed and putting the songs they learnt on the mbira on the marimba now. They are also making their own compositions as well as learning compositions from their role models. Marimba tends to be less challenging than mbira, so we have everyone from all age groups performing on the marimba. He further stated that the students are exposed to traditional song modes such as Chipembere, Nhemamusasa, Chemutengure, and Rugare. The marimba teacher emphasises traditional songs because he feels that this is what the students are lacking since they tend to be exposed more to contemporary music via the media and modern technology.

It was observed that Indigenous dance styles and genres form a key component that unites both mbira and marimba performers in a large group act. For the dance training the learners are waken up at 6 in the morning to do physical exercises so as to condition them for the traditional dances which require fitness. After that they make a circle with the teacher, Irene Chigamba, in the centre demonstrating. She begins with the easy dances, taking them step by step then introduces the more intricate patterns as times goes on when they have mastered the initial stages. Girls are separated from boys when the dance steps are different but later, they are brought together since the dance moves complement each other. Drumming is taught to every one through the teacher's demonstration which the learners emulate. Songs are also taught for each respective dance and the students sing along, eventually leading and responding as their confidence grows. The lessons cover Indigenous dance styles and genres from different parts of the country such as Mhande, Chinyambere, Dinhe, Mbakumba, Muchongoyo and many others. (Irene Chigamba, Pers comm, 15 June 2024).

During sojourns to Magaya Village for the annual camps between 2022 and 2024, it was observed that collaborations are very essential for the various culture preservation tasks like traditional dance, mbira and marimba playing. At the time of interviews informants reported that a teacher solicits the help of colleagues who work with her/him during one of the training camp days, in the knowledge that she/he would do the same for each of them when their turn came to call upon his services. When they are allocated lines and dance steps to learn, the students also convene in small groups targeting specific accomplishable tasks and help each other out to master them. They work in the spirit of unity in line with the Humwe concept. The findings of the study at Humwe Centre with regard to the significance of Indigenous music dissemination reinforce the need for unity of purpose in Magaya village. Local villagers highlighted that the Nhimbe approach is desirable in their cultural activities as they were aimed at helping one another to develop Indigenous musical literacy. They reported that a principal

advantage of collaboration is that it enables a substantial amount of traditional music and dance concepts to be mastered by the youths.

For dance, mbira and marimba teaching, the mode of knowledge transmission was observed to be rote teaching and learning. Learning by rote at Humwe Annual Camp entails the use of mnemonic devices, such as rhythmic patterns, melodic motifs, and storytelling, that aid in memorialisation and ensure that knowledge of music is passed from one generation to the next. Humwe Annual Camp lines up a series of celebration events aimed at teaching the community's narrative, beliefs and ethical norms through playing marimba, mbira and drums, as well as singing and dancing. This camp is essential in preserving the culture of a community which is threatened by modernisation. This is critical because music occupies an integral part of the cultural society/tradition of the Zezuru ethnic groups.

It was observed that at Humwe Annual Camp this transmission occurs orally through demonstration by the teachers and peers who perform traditional songs on mbira and marimba, sing, dance, and clap hands. Shanangurai and Maguraushe (2019: 74) say that "For centuries, the beliefs and knowledge of Africans were transmitted orally from one generation to the next. Music was passed on from one performer to another by imitation and memory." oral traditions, which entail transmitting knowledge through spoken or sung words, have been significant in sustaining and disseminating Africa's Indigenous musical heritage (Femi et al. 2017) and passing down culture, values, beliefs, and histories to the next generation through music (Lebaka, 2019; Izu, 2021). Humwe Annual Camp is maintaining the local oral tradition in an environment where the methodology has since incorporated Western means such as notation and technology.

The data gathered during the study proves that the Humwe Cultural Arts and Education Centre is a deep-rooted applied ethnomusicological intervention being practiced in Mhondoro-Mubaira to foster Indigenous music knowledge and skills amongst youths in the area. When asked why they (learners) were engaged in the Humwe Annual Camp, they reported that they partake in Indigenous musical practice due to the following reasons: (a) They are incapable to exhibit perform all the traditional music of their motherland themselves due to a plethora of reasons related to their upbringing in contemporary society. (b) Most of the time they are far away from the village, in learning institutions or in the urban areas where some of the families own or rent houses, only to visit the village occasionally. (c) They have no traditional musical instruments (mbira, marimba, ngoma) of their own nor even in their homesteads. (d) They wish to increase the amount of traditional music knowledge and skills inherited from their forefathers, and thus enhance their cultural identity. (e) They wish to acquire more Indigenous music knowledge and skills for the sustainability and preservation of their culture through active participation.

Ethnomusicologists have shifted their focus towards complimenting academic endeavour with applied work that promotes a more politically engaged and collaborative approach (Harrison et al., 2010; Titon, 2015; Van Buren and Schrag, 2018). Similarly, the Magaya family and their American friends have capitalised on the potential of Humwe in promoting engaged, collaborative and applied participatory Indigenous music skills dissemination for transformation. The basis for their adoption of the Humwe philosophy is that it plays a fundamental role in public projects that originate from its concepts of camaraderie, cohesion, cooperation, and collaboration. Therefore, it has inherent capacities for bringing community members together and working on a heritage-based initiative for promoting Zimbabwean Indigenous musical cultural performance practices. Komanisi (2014) presents empirical material regarding the role of share-cropping and work-parties in cementing social relations among peasants of Gqumahashe Village in Alice District. Makumbirofa (2016) employed the practice as a model "theatre for development project" addressing a conflict that was essentially a struggle for resources in an applied research project based on Nhimbe/ilima

ideology. Mbwirire (2017) also used Nhimbe as an action research method to establish traditional community mechanisms to foster conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. These projects are not music-based research but they cement the argument that Humwe has potential to foster as a model for promoting community-based Indigenous musical cultural heritage education projects. The Humwe Cultural Arts and Education camp is a living example where nhimbe has been adopted and used practically in disseminating musical heritage among local children as a cultural development sustainability initiative.

In Mhondoro the concept of nhimbe is being implemented by the Magaya family and their American friends to ensure community control and grassroots participation in localising the dissemination of Indigenous musical cultural knowledge and skills to youths in Mubaira community. It is very crucial that communities be “in full control of making their own informed choices about the future of their cultural expressions” (Grant, 2014: 14). This is a practical way of memorialising the local intangible cultural heritage and preserving it for future generations. Humwe is hands-on in nature and allows the culture bearers to exercise autonomy and control over the marimba, mbira and dance cultural education and dissemination process. The use of a participatory approach which engages members from the local community itself is central to enculturation, preserving the musical heritage, reclaiming Indigeneity, and promoting cultural literacy and awareness. From an emic perspective, Humwe is a critical fund of Indigenous music knowledge within the framework of cultural heritage aimed at localising and decolonising collaborative and participatory applied ethnomusicology action. Decolonising the mind remains a rolling project in African people’s reclamation of independent spaces which were disrupted by Western knowledge. Humwe is a critical postcolonial strategy to recover cultural heritage which functions as a dialogical approach in favour of decolonising the African mindset (wa Thiong’o, 1986). Humwe is an essential aspect of indigeneity that safeguards musical cultural heritage and identity and promotes the dissemination thereof in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

Hantuba (pers. Comm. 15 May 2024) says the underlying principle in adopting the Humwe concept is that the practice has always been operative in bringing community members to work collaboratively and cooperatively in agricultural production activities, and it wields potential to also contribute positively to teaching marimba, mbira and dance to youths in Mubaira as well. As an Indigenous approach, Humwe is a concept that provides an alternative collaborative methodology through which communities and applied ethnomusicologists may contest received dominant narratives. The involvement of diverse stakeholders such as Chief Nherera, village headmen, councillors, parents and community members in Indigenous musical cultural activities in Humwe Annual camp promotes inclusive decision-making processes, co-productive musicking, and builds bridges through engagement of all stakeholders.

Indigenous music education models have often played second fiddle to foreign ones in conventional music teaching practices due to factors such as colonisation, Christianity, urbanisation and technological advancements. This ought to be redressed because they encapsulate the values, beliefs, principles and traditions that are vital for local cultural development. Their neglect has resulted in the erosion of Indigenous knowledge, culture, and identity, perpetuating socio-economic, environmental and cultural injustices. Consequently, local children cannot exhibit the musical cultural traditions of their forefathers. It is important to prioritise Indigenous narratives and models to shape inclusive and sustainable development practices that respect and empower Indigenous communities. Humwe is emancipatory as it advances an epistemology of Indigenous cultural promotion and sustainability that challenges Western systems of safeguarding cultural heritage. Humwe is a voluntary cooperative where villagers willingly and compassionately respond to a community’s developmental need, in this case related to cultural security (Sithole, 2020). This participation on volution ensures cooperation and cultural sustainability.

4.2 Adopting an EPDD model for the Humwe mbira and marimba music dance camp

Humwe camp, as a forum for the performance of mbira & marimba music dance, creates a platform where music students, teachers, dancers and other culture bearers showcase their talent, celebrate their culture and promote their traditional music heritage. Maguraushe (2017) developed the Educate, Practice, Promote, and Disseminate (EPDD) model to facilitate the performance of Indigenous music by bringing together different stakeholders to promote cultural exchange and collaboration while fostering community development and cultural sustainability. The ideology behind Humwe camp resonates and fits well into this model for disseminating marimba, mbira music and dance. Zimbabwe marimba, mbira and dance music performance practice can grow to an extent where the majority of local children become literate in their musical cultural traditions. Maguraushe (2017: 196) proposes the EPDD Music Performance Theory Model which provides some notes on how musicking on the mbira and marimba can be developed in Zimbabwe. This theory emanated from personal experiences in Zimbabwe where mbira, marimba and dance practitioners are bedevilled by numerous challenges as they play their instruments; lack of resources, negative stereotyping of musicians, religion and colonialism.

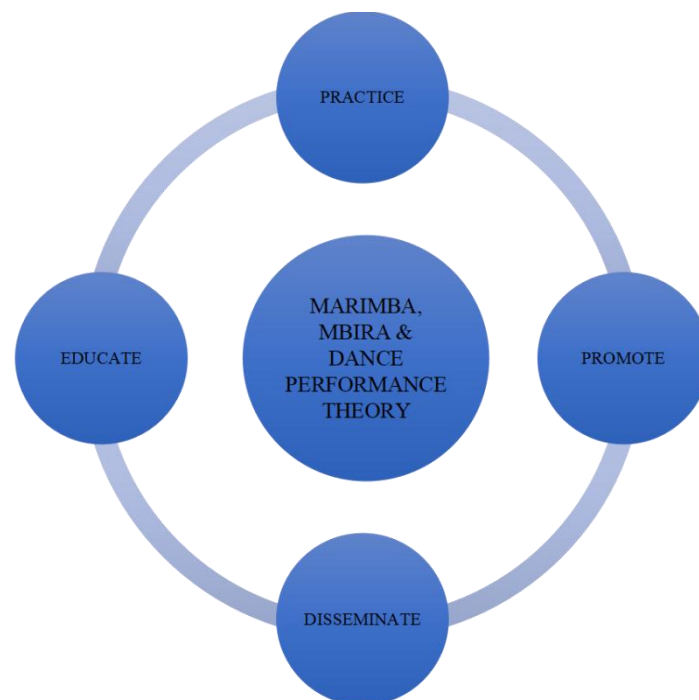


Figure 2: Mbira, Marimba and Dance Performance Theory Model

EDUCATE

Education is a key factor in mbira, marimba and dance music dissemination amongst school children. It happens in both formal and non-formal institutions, primary and secondary schools, and tertiary institutions. Children and young adults receive lessons from mentors on several key aspects of the marimba such as anatomy, acoustics, scales, chord progressions, playing techniques, and live performance. Mentors undergo pre-service tutelage, and also continue to receive further in-service training on emerging trends in marimba music performance practice.

PRACTICE

Practice is essential because what is learnt can be retained by being put into regular exercise. Rehearsals are a key component of practice so that the skills learnt can be reinforced and polished. All skills and performance techniques ought to be rehearsed and mastered first before they are presented to an audience. Mentors ensure this by assessing their individual marimba & mbira players and dancers to check if they have mastered the skills required.

PROMOTE

Motivation is a critical element in marimba, mbira & dance performance practice. Players themselves need to have intrinsic motivation so that they keep their performances at the highest level. Extrinsic motivation is also necessary to encourage players through rewards such as prizes for outstanding achievements, and funding for upkeep. Marimba, mbira & dance performance practice has to be promoted through mediatisation so that the general populace is aware of education programs, practice opportunities, and performance schedules. A deliberate effort ought to be made to market marimba, mbira & dance music amongst Zimbabweans so that the majority of youths can perform.

DISSEMINATE

The dissemination process is the one that transmits live marimba, mbira & dance performances across the country. A local music research institute can champion the dissemination process by spearheading new knowledge on various aspects of Zimbabwean traditional music. A key task is to set up information on how marimba, drums and mbira instruments can be made locally available and cheaply accessible. The institute can also generate knowledge on how to produce marimba, mbira and dance recordings because this is a key setback in the dissemination process. Zimbabwean music can be popularised through various avenues such as camps, street shows, community outreach programs, competitions, festivals and galas.

5. Conclusion

It became clear in the research that Humwe Annual Camp in an applied ethnomusicology endeavour that plays a vital role in the dissemination of Indigenous musical cultural traditions in Mhondoro-Mubaira. It has benefits for both learners and the rest of the Magaya Village community. It encourages the preservation of mbira and marimba music and dance locally, solving the diaspora rush problem. Also, Humwe is viewed as a form of collaboration since it encourages youths to work together amongst themselves, as well as with their tutors for a common goal to memorialise Indigenous musical heritage. From general observations and discussions with research participants of the Magaya Village community, it became clear that cooperative effort at the Humwe Annual Camp is a form of partnership between local musicians that play a significant role in the Indigenous music sector. The research evidence suggests that Humwe Camp goes engage themselves in Musicking in situations where knowledge of local traditions is challenged by numerous factors in contemporary Zimbabwean society where traditional teachings have become rarified and where there are shortages of human resources such as culture bearers. Based on primary and secondary data, this article concludes that Humwe Annual Camp cultivates the spirit of “oneness” through collaborative marimba, mbira and dance performances. The camp brings village elders, youths of school-going age, and the local people together. The sentiment put forward in the informal conversational interviews is that mutual effort and reciprocity is the root of Indigenous musical knowledge dissemination.

The HCAEC directorate is deeply immersed into advocate ethnomusicology, which involves any use of ethnomusicological knowledge by the ethnomusicologist to increase the power of self-determination (Spradley and McCurdy (2000:411) for the Zezuru

cultural group in Mhondoro-Mubaira. It is identified as a programme of regional independent not-for-profit intercultural arts organizations, often referred to as folklife centres (Van Buren 2003: 61) which serves in the public interest. The directors and their team of culture bearers are devoted to ethnomusicological work that falls outside of typical academic contexts and purposes. Their applied ethnomusicology work is in an apprenticeship Indigenous marimba, mbira and dance music program, and entails a training camp and concludes with a showcase concert towards the end of the meeting. I argue that such interventions to curb cultural corruption or erosion are vital interventions in local communities in the wake of the global village phenomenon which is punctuated by cultural syncretism.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Acknowledgments: Not applicable.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest. This paper has no other sponsors besides the author himself. No other people had any role in the design of the study, in the collection of data, analyses, or interpretation of data, writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results.

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