

Perceptions and Reflections of Taking the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Offered by Midlands State University as a Field of Study.

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Abstract

One of the Millennium Development goals is to develop literate populations in the world, and this includes musical literacy development. In Zimbabwe musical literacy is a preserve of a few citizens and there is an imminent need to spread musical literacy to the majority of the country's citizens. Many reasons have been given to explain why Zimbabweans are not taking up music studies, some of them historical, and yet others purely colonial and ludicrous. Using a critical post-colonial approach, we seek to both critique and transform the current perceptions regarding taking up music as a profession. In this article we attempt to uncover Midlands State University (MSU) music students', as well as non-music students' opinions of music as a field of study. From an insider perspective, we place the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Degree Program (BMM) at MSU in a continuum of Zimbabwe's establishment of music study programs aimed at developing musical literacy in the country. We discuss the public views that we observe on the quality of the degree on offer, as well as MSU authorities' views, perceptions and expectations of the Music and Musicology Department's role and viability, which are critical to the department's existence. In this qualitative case study we purposively sampled ten current, and ten former music students, as well as ten non-music students and solicited their views through face to face interviews and questionnaire. The findings show a critical need to rethink the department's brand in Zimbabwe where the music industry is developing rather slowly. The BMM program needs to be reviewed in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in order to remain attractive, while at the same time preparing competent, pace-setting graduates to help develop the country's music industry. The study also aims to provide a forum to reform people's views by advocating for a musically literate population in Zimbabwe. Such a transformative agenda aims to expand the discursive and democratic spaces in which Zimbabwean citizens can realise the ability to read and write music, ironically in an environment that has negatively stereotyped the image of music professionals.

Key words: Musical Literacy, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Music Study, Perception, Rebranding, Music Industry.**Introduction**

Introduction

The ability to read and write music has always been a major concern to international as well as local music scholars. Zimbabweans seriously need to develop a culture of reading and writing music. According to Bauman (1986:09) "Literacy has long been an important typological factor in anthropological thought, but there is now a resurgence of interest in the contrast between orality and literacy as two distinct expressive modes, marked by formal and functional differences". From Bauman's suggestion, it can be noted that there is need to study music so that performers do not only perform music but should be able to theorize what they play. Approaching music from an academic point of view has taken long to be realized in Zimbabwe and the majority of Zimbabweans cannot read and write using music symbols. Many famous musicians practicing in Zimbabwe can neither represent what they perform in written conventional symbols (staff notation and tonic solfa notation) nor professionally analyse the music they play. What differentiates a student of music from an artist performing without any music education is that the student can represent what they play in conventional symbols and can explain the elements of musical sound produced. This study underscores the essence of the ability to read and write music, as well as knowledge of musical performance from an indigenous perspective of culture bearers, in line with one of the MDGs. This has been the concern of music study programs in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980.

This paper focuses on perceptions and reflections of stakeholders on the concept of taking up music as a profession. In the background we place the MSU Music and Musicology Degree program in the history of the development of music as a discipline of study in Zimbabwe since the attainment of independence in 1980. The status of music education in Zimbabwean schools, colleges and universities is also discussed. In this review of the music program at MSU we present views of music lecturers, students enrolled for the Bachelor of Science in Music and Musicology Degree program, students enrolled for other degree programs at MSU, as well as university staff towards music as a field of study. The findings reveal how lack of qualified music teachers in Zimbabwean primary and secondary schools and ZIMSEC's delay in introducing music at 'A' Level have affected the intake of students to study the music program at MSU. The paper further discusses the contribution of Department of Music and Musicology at Midlands State University in providing music education and developing performance skills in students. The last part is concerned with ways of making the department more viable and attractive to modern prospective students.

Theory and methodology

From a post-colonial perspective we aim to autonomously engage ourselves to initiate action to reform the identity of music students, music performers and music

professionals whose public image has been misconstrued. Music as a profession has been authored through historical and colonial forces that have led to people negatively labelling those who partake in music performance as *marombe* (vagrants), and consequently shunning the profession. Yet people are ambivalent as they have a love/hate relationship with music because when they see others (musicians) performing they enjoy the performance act, despite loathing participation in music making (Bhabha, 1994). We argue that such perceptions are not natural because they are human constructions that subject music performers to negative stereotyping. Negative stereotyping prejudices Zimbabweans of their right to being musically literate.

Prejudice and stereotypes are imbedded in social perception which involves the development of an attitude towards phenomena, such as when people implicitly attribute character properties to music performers. *Urombe* (vagrancy) has actually become an identity code for musicians. According to Allport (1988) prejudicial behaviour can progress through malice, verbal putdowns and nasty jokes. Negative stereotyping is damaging and based on incorrect and inaccurate information and is used in defence of a position in society, or disaffiliation or for propaganda. This article shows that negative stereotypes of music performers are crafted to downplay them in society.

The aim of this qualitative case study was to examine the development of music education in Zimbabwe by making particular reference to the effectiveness of the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program in producing pacesetter graduates for Zimbabwe's music industry by analysing it in a continuum of the development of music study programs in Zimbabwe. This evaluative study intends to provide insights into the nature of the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program and has wider policy implications for the reconceptualization and impending rebranding exercise that is imminent. Findings thus have the potential to influence changes that are congruent with all stakeholders' (students, lecturers, university leadership and Zimbabwe music industrialists) perceived needs. The research questions which we set out to answer are: Firstly; What perceptions and opinions do prospective, current and former students encounter when they indicate intent to enrol for the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program? Secondly; How does the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program course develop musical literacy in line with the Millennium Development Goal on education development? And thirdly; What are college leaders' perceptions and expectations of a music education program?

A questionnaire survey of purposively sampled prospective, current and former students was conducted with particular focus on question 1 to solicit their perceptions

on the effectiveness of the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program. Ten questionnaires were distributed to each category and all were filled in and returned. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten purposively sampled music students, ten former music students, and ten non-music students focussing on research questions 2 and 3 to solicit their views and expectations on how to improve the current Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program in line with the Millennium Development Goal on developing literacy. We mixed questionnaires and interviews because they complement each other and yield an enriched and elaborated understanding of a phenomenon being studied (Greene et al 1989). As different methods they ensure depth and breadth (Ballantyne, 2005).

An historical perspective of music programs in Zimbabwe

During the colonial period from 1890 to 1980 music was taught in former 'Group A' schools¹ which were meant to benefit the whites and a few affluent blacks. In ordinary 'Group B' schools music was considered as a core-curricular activity during the third term when schools prepare for traditional dance, percussion band and choral competitions (Matiure, 2008: 52). In Group B schools students were not taught theory of music and how to play musical instruments. White colonial settlers' segregation policies led to the native music syllabus which was meant to offer a watered down curriculum to blacks. In missionary schools students were taught for the sole purpose of singing church hymns at the expense of traditional music and western art music (Vambe, 2004). The major cities of Zimbabwe which are Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru and Mutare had academies of music where both adults and children from the white community would enrol for private lessons in theory of music and playing western musical instruments. The colleges focused on western art music. Students were taught instruments of the orchestra such as piano, strings, woodwinds, and brass. Theory of music teaching was based on the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) curriculum in London which is an examinations board for music. The colleges are College of Music in Bulawayo, Rhodesian College of Music (now the Zimbabwe College of Music) in Harare which was established in 1948 by Professor Eileen Reynolds and built by Sir Stephen and Lady Courtauld, Manicaland Academy of Music in Mutare (formerly called Umtali), and Academy of Music in Gweru (formerly called Gwelo). During colonialism from the late 1890s until the mid-1960s black Zimbabweans had no opportunity to study music beyond the choir until the establishment of Kwanongoma College of Music at the Bulawayo Academy of Music (now the United College of Education) in 1962 where a few blacks started learning a music curriculum spearheaded by Robert Sibson (Matiure, 2008). Numbers of black enrollees into the music program in the 1960s and 1970s were very low. Very few Group A schools (Northlea High, Cranborne Boys High, Chisipite Girls High, Ellis Robin High, and Marlborough High) offered music as an examinable subject and prior to independence these schools were accessible to white children only.

The college which contributed to the development of music education which had aspects of African music was Kwanongoma College of Music which was established in Makokoba Township in Bulawayo with Mr Leslie Williamson as the Director (Matiure 2008:61). Kwanongoma College of Music developed with the contribution of professional ethnomusicologists such as Hugh Tracey and Andrew Tracey on how to incorporate elements of African music, as well as musicians such as Jege Tapera and Elliot Ndlovu at its new site at United College of Education. The courses taught were theory of music, aural training, history of music, musical appreciation, acoustics and practical performance (voice, piano, guitar, marimba, *mbira*, traditional drums, flute), ensemble work (choral work, traditional drum and *marimba*), English Language and teaching practice. The College trained a number of black students who graduated with a certificate in music. Some of the graduates were appointed as peripatetic teachers who would move around schools teaching basic principles of music, and later others became lecturers in Teachers' Colleges to teach music to student teachers as Main Subject or Curriculum Development Studies. These included Dumisani Maraire, Sheasby Matiure, Evans Chinyama, Chiradza, Tendekai Kuture, Bema Tshuma and Cephas Tshuma. Kwanongoma College of Music was closed in 1985 because of budgetary constraints, leaving a gap in music education (Matiure, 2008). Although teachers were trained in music in colleges, they were not given an opportunity to teach the subject because of non-availability of resources in schools or because music was not an examinable subject.

In 1994 the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) introduced a Bachelor of Education Degree with music specialization in its Faculty of Education Department of Teacher Education. The first intake comprised lecturers from teachers' colleges. Some of the students include Sheasby Matiure who is currently at UZ, Jerry Rutsate who is at Great Zimbabwe, Tendekai Kuture who is at Africa University and many others who have left the country. The UZ degree encompasses courses in music teacher education and curriculum studies. Music courses are ethnomusicology, aural and written theory of music, transcription and analysis, performance techniques and methodology, and instrument of major or minor specialization. The program was initially meant for lecturers who were teaching music in teachers' colleges who had no degree qualifications. Later even school teachers enrolled into the program and in no time most of them were absorbed by colleges and universities to lecture in music. To some extent the introduction of this program improved the teaching of music in colleges and schools. Lecturers in the Department of Music and Musicology who are products of this degree are Perminus Matiure, Tendai Shoko, Claudio Chipendo, Wonder Maguraushe and Isaac Machafa.

Another university that introduced a Bachelor of Education Degree with music as a specialization is Africa University. It also trained teachers who were later absorbed in teachers' colleges and universities as lecturers who include Richard

Muranda. The two universities did not offer a fully fetched degree in music and the target group comprised teachers only. Although all these institutions have played an important role in developing music literacy, a lot still needs to be done to make the nation aware of the benefits of studying music from kindergarten to tertiary level. Perceptions and opinions about music have to be changed in many people. We still have people who still think pursuing music is a hopeless endeavour meant for vagabonds (*urombe*) and that those who join the field have a weak intellectual competency. We asked musicians what their parents used to do when they saw them playing a banjo (*gitare*) and they said that parents, especially fathers, would destroy their banjos saying *ndezeurombe* (it is about vagrancy). Yet many families are being looked after by people whose careers are in music. Notably, some of the richest people in the world are musicians. Such people's misconceptions have to change. Music as a career is just like any other career and it can be studied in the same way we study mathematics, physics or any other discipline.

Since independence in 1980 very few former Group A and Group B schools have been teaching music as an examinable subject. In the majority of cases music is only taught in primary schools as a way of inculcating some rudiments of music in children. The most successful aspect of music in schools is the choir because of the National Association for Primary Heads (NAPH) and National Association for Secondary Heads (NASH) choral competitions which are conducted amongst schools, and every school is compelled to participate. Those who have a passion for music attend private lessons at the colleges of music in the major cities of Zimbabwe, and write ABRSM examinations in theory of music from Grade 1 to Grade 8. These qualifications are taken as entry requirements by some universities that offer music degrees in Zimbabwe.

In 1995 the Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC) Board took over from Cambridge and introduced a syllabus in music for Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) and 'O' Level. The move by ZIMSEC was a positive one aimed at uplifting the long neglected field of music. However, there were very few qualified teachers who had graduated from Mutare and Hillside teachers' Colleges to teach music at secondary level. Furthermore, the level of difficulty of the syllabus is too challenging for secondary school students. The Curriculum Development Unit needs to review the syllabus. An analysis of the syllabus, especially for 'O' Level indicates that the content included is too complex for the level. One wonders what the 'A' Level syllabus will be like, let alone the university level curriculum. Currently, according to statistics of music examination scripts that were marked in December 2014, there are 55 schools that have students who wrote 'O' Level music examinations in Zimbabwe. The 'A' Level syllabus is not yet out and this implies that students enrolled in university come with no 'A' Level music. Against this background, the Department of Music and Musicology at MSU currently cannot get students with 'A' Level music qualifications from Zimbabwe, and this also affects Great Zimbabwe University and Africa University. The Zimbabwe

College of Music has introduced a Diploma in Music Course which students study in order to gain entry into music degree programmes in universities. This is quite a hindrance in that universities sometimes enrol students who only have the experience of being a choir member as their only exposure to music before studying for a music degree. In that case university music lecturers have to teach from the fundamentals instead of building from a foundation created at ZJC, 'O' and 'A' Level.

In 2003 Midlands State University started to offer a degree in music and musicology in Zimbabwe. It enrolls both school leavers who did not get a chance to write 'A' Level music since it is not examinable yet but are driven by interest in the subject. Adults who either have certificates or diplomas enrol on special entry, while those who have 'O' Level only qualify to enrol on mature entry if they are aged twenty-three and twenty-five for females and males respectively. Great Zimbabwe University later started music degree programs in 2013. The MSU Bachelor of Science in Music and Musicology Degree Program was designed by Jerry Rutsate in such a way that it embraces courses that fall under five areas. Below is a table summarizing the areas and the career prospects:

Field	Modules	Career prospects
Music Business	Music Critique, Law and Ethics, Music Management and Marketing	Music manager, marketing manager, promoter, publisher, copyright officer
Music technology	Musical Sound, Music and other Media, Instrument Construction, Music technology	Music recording technician, mixer, composer, DJ. PA system operator, Film maker, record librarian.
Musicology	Theory of Music 1 and 2, Jazz, Musicology, Transcription and Analysis, Compositional Techniques, History of Jazz	Music teacher, musicologists, jazz performer, composer
Ethnomusicology	Ethnography, Organology, Popular Music, World music Cultures, Zimbabwean Dance Styles	Ethnographer, organologist, curator, archivist, lecturer, music teacher, ethnomusicologist, choreographer, instrument repair, instrument maker
Performance	keyboard, piano, <i>marimba</i> , <i>mbira</i> , recorder, dance, voice, guitar	Session musician, pianist, performer, bad manager, instructor, dancer, choreographer, choir conductor, choir trainer, adjudicator.

Figure 1

The Department has managed to produce about over 300 graduates who have secured job opportunities in recording studios, teaching, performance, and other organisations. Since 2010 the enrolment of students in the department has been very low with plus or minus ten students per intake. What is surprising is that those who apply to enrol are usually around fifty conventional students but those who take up the offer of places are far below that number. We investigated how enrolment is like in other universities and colleges in and outside Zimbabwe and below is the summary of institutions and their enrolments for 2013 Semester 2 which we purposively sampled;

University	Type of Program	Number	Expected	Total enrolled
UZ	Visiting	8	20	8
MSU	Visiting	15	15	30
	Conventional	13	15	28
GZU	Visiting	0	20	0
	Conventional	0	20	0
University of KwaZulu-Natal	African Music and Dance	18	30	18
Africa University	Conventional	10	20	10
College of Music (Harare)		12	25	12
Academy of Music (Gweru)	Conventional	1	25	1
College of Music (Bulawayo)		5	25	5
Mutare Polytechnic	Conventional	8	20	8

Figure 2

From the table it may be noted that the field of music is still growing and since it is a field of speciality, it obviously attracts the very few talented individuals. It can also be concluded that the trend of low numbers is evident in most of the institutions that were consulted. In fact MSU has the greatest number in the country, far higher than Great Zimbabwe, which failed to enrol even a single student during the second semester of 2013. Realizing that there is generally a low turn-up of students who opt for music in the various universities and colleges, we were prompted to carry out an evaluative assessment of the development of music studies in Zimbabwe.

Some of the students who have enrolled for the Bachelor of Music and Musicology (BMM) Degree Program at MSU have shown excellence in performance ensembles at various occasions such as public lectures, graduation ceremonies, memorial

services, weddings and road shows. The Department's performance ensembles have also participated in various national events such as the 2010 National Independence Gala, as well as annual Midlands Provincial Independence Celebration Ceremonies at Mkoba Stadium. They portray a high standard of proficiency in playing *mbira*, guitar, marimba and keyboards. The lecturing staff for the BMM program comprises ten lecturers who are talented in different areas of music who always make sure that students are well trained in both theory and instrument playing.

Perceptions towards the music program

Data collected from both current and former music students showed that while many students are more than willing to enrol to study music, parents and guardians who pay the students' fees are against taking up music as a career. They indicated that they enjoy the subject and they also emulate successful musicians such as Oliver Mutukudzi, Sulumani Chimbetu, Aleck Macheso, Charles and Olivia Charamba and many others. They join the program without the support of parents or guardians, as well as having to contend with their peers who laugh at them in on campus. It is only after the friends have seen them performing that they start to appreciate the program. What some of our respondents said is that music and other practical subjects have been sidelined by colonialism. The colonial system wanted Zimbabweans to prefer white collar jobs, and to think that practical subjects such as music, woodwork, agriculture and building are dirty and meant for those who would have failed to proceed with academic work. The way we see it is that the former colonizers knew that practical skills learnt in these subjects can make people rich when they market their products such as songs, crops and furniture, or their building skills. They knew that farming, mining, engineering and the performing arts (music included) can make someone rich in no time. So they made sure that black people shun these areas. A very good example is what used to happen if one graduates as an engineer. The graduands would be smeared with used oil all over their body and be taken to the streets to be paraded where everyone passing by would see them. The move was a psychological warfare to make people think that engineering is a dirty job yet it was a highly paid profession. The same negative perception is encountered by people who take up music as a profession who are viewed as *marombe*.

We also interviewed students who are not enrolled with the Department of Music and Musicology at MSU, but who find time to come and quench their appetite for performing music in the department's guitar, dance, marimba, *mbira* and voice ensembles. About 80% of them indicated that given a chance they would join music. Some said they even wanted to do so when they applied at MSU. However, the biggest hindrance which they all expressed concerned the attitude of their parents who refused to allow them to join music. One of them reported that her

mother would not waste her money paying university fees for her to study music. Below are some of the responses given by these students;

Participant	Department	Sentiments (Shona)	English translation
A	Media Studies	<i>Ndaidakuita music asi baba vakaramba</i>	I wanted to study music but my father refused.
B	Film and Theatre	<i>Ndakatombodakuita music asi amai vakati haizviite ukaita izvozvo mari handibhadhare</i>	I opted to study music but my mother said it cannot be done if you persist I will not pay fees for you.
C	Human Resources	<i>Inihangu music ndinoda asi chinongonetsa ndechekuti handizwi kuti ndinozoiteyi.</i>	I love music but the only problem is that I do not know what I will do when I finish.
D	Psychology	<i>Ah baba vakati ndezveurombe</i>	Ah my father said that is for hopeless people.
E	Human Resources	<i>Pandakangoti ndinoda music vabereki vakati unoda kuitasa Lindy here, hazviite.</i>	When I said I want to join music my parents said do you want to be like Lindy? that cannot be.
F	Film and Theatre	<i>Vakati havatomboda kuzvinzwa</i>	They said (parents) we do not want to hear that.
G	Psychology	<i>Ini ndingadakungoimba hangu asi kwete kuti dzidza music</i>	I prefer to just join the choir but not studying music.
H	Human Resources	<i>Vanhu vanofunga kuti kumusic kunongoimbwa nekuridzwa uye kana wapedza ndiro basa racho chete.</i>	I thought music is all about singing and playing instruments but when I looked closer I was surprised. People think that music is all about singing and playing instruments and the only job one can do concerns only that.

Figure 3

From the responses presented in the table it can be concluded that some of the parents are still sceptic about music as career. They still associate music with *urombe* or are not enlightened about the other aspects of music which are music business and technology. They think music is about performance only. We do not blame them because performance is the most exposed aspect of music. The same applies to some of the students who think that when they study music the only job they will do is performance.

Towards a Music Business and Technology thrust

Current and former students' responses to the questions we asked about course effectiveness in equipping them to tackle the needs of Zimbabwe's music industry revealed a need to realign the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program course content, course structure and course delivery. Pertaining to course content for the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program, former students in the department recorded that the program was good as a general music degree that encompasses music performance, ethnomusicology, musicology, music business and music technology components. All students who could not play any musical instrument when they enrolled for the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program are now capable of playing at least six musical instruments (marimba, *mbira*, guitar, recorder, keyboard and voice). However, some of the informants indicated that sight reading on guitar, voice and piano needs to be improved. Respondents who recently returned from Work Related Learning (WRL) who taught in schools shared the same sentiments. The respondents recommended that the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program be reviewed in line with modern technology with a business thrust if it is to prepare graduates to be relevant in recording studios, radio stations, the print media, showbiz and arts and culture organisations in Zimbabwe and beyond our borders. There is a direction amongst respondents towards music industry technology; marketing and management which they feel will enhance graduates chances of both entrepreneurship and employment opportunities in an economy that is now emphasizing indigenisation.

In terms of course structure respondents recorded that they need to be taught courses in music technology, music critique, law and ethics and music marketing and management before they go out on WRL internship rather than afterwards, so that the theory can help them during their internship. Students noted that specialisation in instruments should be started at an earlier level than 2.2 so that students have more time to master the instruments they want to specialise in, rather than starting specialisation in level 2.2 when they are about to go on WRL attachment for a year as this causes discontinuity when they stop playing instruments for a whole year. Some of the respondents recommended that they

could be given a feel of all the instruments in level 1.1 and start specialising in level 1.2, so that they will play their instruments of major specialisation for five semesters, not for three semesters as is currently the case.

Course delivery comes in three one hour lectures per week but it seems these do not suffice for serious musicians because perfection on playing a musical instrument requires more time. The thirty six hours per semester are augmented by numerous ensemble practice sessions that run into the evening for students who wish to gain more practical skills and content through exposure to performing on an instrument with other musicians. Lecturers teach modules in their areas of specialisation which are keyboard, guitar, marimba, piano, *mbira*, recorder and voice in order for students to benefit to the maximum. Respondents indicated their satisfaction with the way the modules are taught, though others felt that classical piano has been excluded despite its international appeal. Other instruments of the orchestra such as the woodwind and brass sections are yearned for by some of the respondents.

The findings show that some Zimbabweans are ambivalent (Bhabha, 1994) in their perceptions of a music education program. Their predicament is torn between appreciation of musical performances' ability to provide them with worthwhile entertainment during pastime, and alterative towards enrolment into the discipline of music. Several parents will not allow their children to enrol for music and musicology programs in universities. Those who are courageous enough to convince their parents to pay fees for their music studies are stigmatised by students in other programs as '*marombe*' in the university as previously mentioned. Yet interestingly, there are a number of enrolees from other departments in the college taking part in the marimba, *mbira*, dance and electric band ensembles as a show of their love for a discipline into which many variables couldn't allow them to enrol. This in essence shows that some Zimbabweans are ambivalent in their binary love/hate relationship with music the discipline. Music is seen as a preserve for a peripheral position in academia which is why the BMM program continues to be marginalised as evidenced by low enrolment figures, which is the same scenario in other universities such as The University of Kwazulu-Natal, Great Zimbabwe University, Fort Hare, The University of Pretoria and The University of South Africa. Such exotopy which has resulted in prospective students opting for other degree programs in place of the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program needs to be redressed through a rebranding exercise. This paper is part of our agency (Bhabha, 1994) efforts in initiating action to engage stakeholders to shift from their ambivalent push to and negative attitudes towards the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program and performing musicians in general, to a more accommodative and understanding position. This is critical in improving music scholars' and artists' self-identity and self-consciousness.

Our informants revealed shocking information around the subject of their enrolment into the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program. One respondent said that staff in the admissions office advised him to join the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program after having failed to secure a place in another department, saying that his passes were too low for him to enrol with any other department. In other words some staff members in the admissions office perceive the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program as a last resort for students who are desperate to enrol in university. There are cases of students who have enrolled with the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program as a way to join Midlands State University, then later on they change and join other departments who may initially have turned down their applications. These ones view the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program as an easier passage into the Midlands State University. John (not his actual name) reported that he has not told his father the truth that they have enrolled with the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program for fear of withdrawal of fees sponsorship.

Ethnographies of music have in the past been a result of colonial acquisitiveness and appropriation of our songs and instruments for European music conservatories rather than being grounded in indigenous appreciation of our own performing arts. We need to continue the existing pursuit of Afrocentric views by continuously revising programs of music study to make them relevant to indigenous musical cultural practices and the Zimbabwean music industry, albeit in a global context. This will help us to realise cultural essentialism, a strategic political position in our struggle against a population that has been colonially educated to loathe our own musical art forms and appreciate foreign packages of acculturation. The current Midlands State University course on African Ethnography's content asserts its focus on indigenous musical cultural practices in contemporary contexts and aims to avail thick descriptions that encompass both observers' and participants' views. Bauman (1986) says that ethnography has the potential to contribute significantly to studies of orality and literacy because it yields empirical information. The ethnographic perspective demands that the art forms of a society be comprehended as part of larger social and cultural systems.

According to Franklin (1992) music educators must consider culture when they plan instruction and develop activities for learners with diverse backgrounds so as to teach culturally relevant content. The same author goes on to say that quality instruction should incorporate resources from the learner's environment outside school parameters. The learner's immediate cultural environment is the home and the local community. In this environment, the learner interacts and develops relationships and musical skills that may challenge the school culture. We agree with the author because some performances outside the college or university

environment may surpass the level of skills and knowledge of culture dwelt on in the curriculum. The Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program ought to remain above these skill levels if higher music education is to remain in high esteem and retain its relevance. The organization of teaching, learning and performance has to be compatible with the social structure and the dominant popular culture in our context. Yet learners come from even the dominated cultures and as a result they may find learning culturally irrelevant.

Conclusion

Musical literacy should not be a preserve of a few scholars, but a virtue of all interested Zimbabweans. The world is now a global village hence it is necessary to use the literacy tradition. This will enhance local music graduates to be comfortable with international conventions in music reading, writing and performance. According to Carder (1990: 57), just as the ability to read and write one's own language is essential to the study of various subjects in the academic curriculum, ... skill in music reading and writing is essential to all the various aspects of musical study". College and university students' ability to read and write music needs to be further developed. While a good number of Zimbabwean music students can perform on the instruments or sing pieces competently, a good number of them have the songs interpreted for them by a musically literate few. Without that help a considerable number of them cannot perform music that is notated, let alone sight read it. Most performers learn by rote or receive coaching from a few experts.

The challenge for the music department is to measure the suitability of the current program and to develop it into an internationally recognized music one while remaining relevant to local needs. We are of the opinion that our music program can earn an international acclaim and appeal with an internationally acceptable rebranding effort. Our findings reflect that the field of music lacks proper support and recognition by curriculum planners at the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and some parents. The negative perceptions of the majority of parents about music deter some of the students from joining the department. Some of the parents associate music with performance and are not aware that there are twenty-three theory modules that do not involve performance, and only six modules which cover performance practice. They are taking time to understand that music is a profession that embraces a number of issues which are not necessarily performance in bands.

The establishment of the Department of Music and Musicology in 2003 at MSU went a long way in providing students with an opportunity to develop themselves in the field of music by preparing them to take up some of the careers mentioned

in figure 1. The department was formed with the aim of providing students with an opportunity to study music. The program comprises modules that fall under five major categories which are Musicology, Ethnomusicology, Music Marketing and Management, Music Technology and Music Performance. Although the program sounds loaded, it still has room to embrace more courses covering music business and technology. The sentiments that we solicited from MSU students and parents indicated that their perceptions about music as a career contributes somehow to the low numbers of those who opt for the field.

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Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BACHELOR OF MUSIC AND MUSICOLOGY HONOURS DEGREE PROGRAM GRADUATES

A study is being carried out to establish the extent to which Zimbabwe's music education programs have gone in fulfilling one of the eight Millennium Development Goals on the promotion of education, as well as the contribution of Midlands State University Music and Musicology Department's program. Please feel free to give your views and suggestions and these will only be used to help in knowledge generation and policy making for the betterment of music education development in Zimbabwe.

1. In your view what is the purpose of music education?
2. How would you describe the role of a music scholar to someone who is unfamiliar with what music scholars do?
3. What identity do you have as a music and musicology program graduate?

Probe: Explore perceptions of music graduate identity.

4. What impact has the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program had on your experiences in your first few years after university education?
5. What experiences have you had that have built on the knowledge and skills that you gained from the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program?
6. What experiences have you had that the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program did not prepare for well?

Probe: How could the course prepare for that?

7. Describe how an ideal university music education program should be like in your own view.

8. What recommendations do you have to improve the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Degree Program?

Thank you.

Appendix B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CURRENT BACHELOR OF MUSIC AND MUSICOLOGY HONOURS DEGREE PROGRAM STUDENTS

A study is being carried out to establish the extent to which Zimbabwe's music education programs have gone in fulfilling one of the eight Millennium Development Goals on the promotion of education, as well as the contribution of Midlands State University Music and Musicology Department's program. Please feel free to give your views and suggestions and these will only be used to help in knowledge generation and policy making for the betterment of music education development in Zimbabwe.

Level _____ Semester _____

1. What is your perception of a Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Program student?

2. What identity do you have as a Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Program student?

Probe: Do you face any identity challenges as a music student at Midlands State University or at home?

3. From your experiences so far, do you think the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Honours Program is heading you for any career prospects?

Probe: Please explain possible career paths.

4. What are your expectations of a university music education program?

5. Do you think the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Program is adequately preparing students to survive in Zimbabwe's music industry?
6. What do you think might be included in the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Program to improve the products?
7. How do you measure university music education program effectiveness?
8. What enables/hinders the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Program to effectively fulfil its role of producing pace setting graduates in society?
9. Do you have any suggestions on how the Bachelor of Music and Musicology Program students can be prepared to effectively fulfil the role of performers?

Thank you.

Footnotes

¹ Group A schools were the best schools attended by children of rich (usually white) parents. Group B schools were inferior to Group A schools.