

Exploring Music Performance Practices in the Zimbabwe Republic Police

Patson Manyame & Richard Muranda

Abstract

The study explored the music performance practices in the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP). The authors examined musical practices envisioned in the ZRP from colonial times to date. The ZRP music section has dance and brass bands, traditional dance, and vocal ensembles. The study focused on the ZRP dance and brass bands since they were subjected to colonial practices. Decoloniality theory was used to interrogate the data. A qualitative research methodology was used to examine the ZRP musical practices. Thirty participants were purposively sampled from current and ex-members of the ZRP. The study collected data through interviews and observations to understand the ZRP musical practices. The study explored topics including sight-reading, harmony, discipline, performance of copyrighted music, European songs, and transcription to explain how they affected the musical practices of the ZRP. The data showed that certain practices, like the playing of “Roast Beef of Old England” depicts the colonial system. Other practices, like playing European calls at national and police ceremonial events did not reflect African contexts. Although the ZRP incorporated indigenous musical practices into their musical renditions, more musical activities are needed to replace the fanfare and songs, including “Scipio,” “Road to the Isles,” and “Waltzing Matilda.”

Keywords: African, colonial legacy, musical culture, performance, police, Western culture.