



Challenges Experienced by South African Indigenous Musicians: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Sakhiseni Joseph Yende ¹ 

¹ Department of African Language Studies, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa.

ABSTRACT

Framed within social constructivism theory, this article argued that government, organisations, and stakeholders could foster and promote collaboration, community engagement, cultural recognition and policy advocacy to address the socio-economic challenges faced by Indigenous African musicians. With an increasing number of indigenous African musicians who greatly contribute to the country's cultural landscape, South Africa is well renowned for its incredibly rich and diversified heritage of music. However, due to modern influences and globalisation, there are growing concerns that indigenous African musicians are facing significant obstacles in the music industry that have implications for preserving and promoting cultural heritage. A sensitive endeavour that calls for careful navigation and adaptation is balancing classical aspects with modern musical genres. It was against this background that this article set out to critically discuss and raise awareness of the challenges experienced by South African Indigenous musicians. A qualitative research method was adopted together with critical discourse analysis as the primary methodology. The findings of this article pointed out that indigenous African musicians face several socio-economic challenges in pursuing their artistic careers. The findings of this article affirmed that there is a need to empower indigenous African musicians through educational programmes and financial support from various stakeholders to preserve South African culture, identity, and indigenous languages in the globalised world.

Correspondence

Sakhiseni Joseph Yende

Email:

sakhiseniyende@gmail.com

Publication History

Received 10th July, 2023

Accepted 22nd September, 2023

Published online:

24th November, 2023

Keywords: *Cultural Heritage, Indigenous African Musicians, Indigenous Languages, Socio-economy, Sociomusicology*

INTRODUCTION

It is prudent to foreground this article by mentioning that South Africa has a rich and diverse musical heritage, with a solid foundation of indigenous musicians who greatly contribute to the preservation of the languages, identity, and cultural landscape of the nation. There is a growing emphasis on the importance of acknowledging and celebrating South Africa's rich and diverse cultural music which is deeply ingrained in its indigenous performers when discussing the necessity to support indigenous African music.¹ Indigenous African musicians play a vital role in preserving African languages, identities and cultural landscapes thereby contributing to the cultural fabric of the nation. Their artistic expressions not only showcase the beauty of indigenous traditions but

¹ Benjamin Obeghare Izu and Alethea de Villiers, "The Functional Role of Traditional Music and Dance in Xhosa Traditional Healers' Ceremonial Rites," *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, December 30, 2022, 716–29, <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.20223136>; Kgaogelo A. Mailula, "Challenges of Mainstreaming Indigenous African Music at Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) in South African Primary Schools: A Case Study of Three Schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa" (2018); N G Mugovhani and Lebogang Lance Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo," *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 29, no. 1 (June 14, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.25159/1016-8427/3814>; Sakhiseni Joseph Yende and Nsizwazonke E Yende, "The Quest for Curricularisation of UMaskandi Zulu Traditional Music in Higher Education in the Context of Africanisation," *Journal of African Education* 3, no. 1 (April 12, 2022): 107–17, <https://doi.org/10.31920/2633-2930/2022/v3n1a5>.

also serve as a means of transmitting indigenous knowledge, values, and stories from generation to generation. It is true that by highlighting and honouring the accomplishments of indigenous musicians, South African society may help to foster a better awareness of the role of indigenous musicians in defining the musical and cultural identity of South Africa.² Scholars have pointed out that the South African government can unleash the full potential of its indigenous musicians and in the end contribute to a more vibrant and diverse music scene that reflects the country's rich cultural tapestry, by committing to cultural preservation, providing resources and infrastructure, fostering industry partnerships, and promoting inclusivity.³ Even though there are many cultural and educational initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting indigenous music in South Africa, these musicians continue to be marginalised within the music industry and society their unique styles and cultural expressions are sometimes overlooked or underrepresented.⁴ It can be difficult to overcome obstacles and become more visible, particularly when popular platforms tend to favour more commercial and mainstream genres.

This article was motivated by studies that underline the essential part that indigenous African musicians play in preserving and sustaining the unique history, and culture, and enhance the country's unique heritage.⁵ Indigenous African music plays a crucial role in maintaining African languages, customs, and identities; therefore, their contributions go beyond music. Scholars point out that indigenous African musicians open a glimpse into South Africa's rich cultural diversity and history through their individual musical expressions.⁶ However, indigenous African musicians often face several socio-economic challenges that can hinder their artistic development and financial well-being.⁷ Indigenous African musicians have a hard time getting funds for recording, producing, and promoting their music. The cost of musical instruments, studio time, and travel expenses can be prohibitive for many indigenous musicians, limiting their ability to pursue their artistic careers.⁸ Although there is extensive literature on the importance of indigenous music in South Africa, limited attention has been given to critical analysis and investigation of challenges experienced by indigenous African music.⁹ It is against this backdrop that this article seeks to critically discuss the challenges and opportunities experienced by South African indigenous musicians. It is imperative to address the challenges that indigenous African musicians experience while using the opportunities at hand.¹⁰

In this article, the following six questions were developed to critically discuss the challenges experienced by South African Indigenous musicians. These questions are as follows.

- a. What are some of the socio-economic challenges faced by Indigenous African musicians in pursuing their artistic careers?
- b. What are the financial constraints that Indigenous African musicians often encounter?
- c. How does the lack of industry support and representation hinder the success and visibility of Indigenous African musicians?
- d. What are the implications of the digital divide for Indigenous African musicians in terms of accessing technology and digital platforms?
- e. What programmes exist to address the challenges faced by Indigenous African musicians and promote their artistic development?
- f. What opportunities arise from the cultural diversity and fusion of Indigenous African musicians' music?

² Mkhombo, Sibongile Margaret. "The status of indigenous music in the South African school curriculum with special reference to IsiZulu." *PhD diss., University of South Africa* (2019); Ndumato George Mugovhani, "The demise of indigenous African music in South African schools and institutions of higher learning." *African Musicology Online*, (2011). 39, 1–22.

³ Sakhiseni Joseph Yende and Ndumato George Mugovhani, 'Tensions and Conflicts in Indigenous African Cultural Heritage at South African Universities: An Artificial Intelligence Perspective', *Journal of African Education*, 3.3 (2022), 79–96. <https://doi.org/10.31920/2633-2930/2022/v3n3a4>.

⁴ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁵ Kofi Agawu, *Representing African Music Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*, ed. Kofi Agawu, 1st Edition (London, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2003); Joseph Yende and E Yende, "The Quest for Curricularisation of UMaskandi Zulu Traditional Music in Higher Education in the Context of Africanisation."

⁶ Agawu, *Representing African Music Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*; Mailula, "Challenges of Mainstreaming Indigenous African Music at Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) in South African Primary Schools: A Case Study of Three Schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa."

⁷ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁸ Sakhiseni Joseph Yende and Rostislava Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills," *Journal of African Films and Diaspora Studies* 5, no. 4 (2022): 145.

⁹ Izu and de Villiers, "The Functional Role of Traditional Music and Dance in Xhosa Traditional Healers' Ceremonial Rites"; Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills."

¹⁰ N G Mugovhani, "Emerging Trends From Indigenous Music And Dance Practices: A Glimpse Into Contemporary Malende And Tshigombela," *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 25, no. 3 (April 18, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.25159/1016-8427/713>.

Indigenous African musicians convey the unique characteristics and experiences of their communities to larger audiences as cultural ambassadors. Their music encourages appreciation and understanding of other cultures not just in South Africa but also around the world.¹¹ Indigenous musicians frequently work together with other artists from different origins, thereby fostering the fusion of musical genres and fostering cross-cultural communication. Indigenous artists make important contributions to social activism and advocacy in addition to their artistic achievements. Their music promotes good change by empowering marginalised populations and addressing problems including social justice, human rights, and environmental concerns.¹²

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brief Historical Overview of Challenges Faced by South African Indigenous Musicians

South African Indigenous musicians have faced a range of challenges throughout history.¹³ During the colonial and apartheid eras, their music and culture were often suppressed and marginalised by the ruling regimes. Indigenous musicians had limited access to education and opportunities, and this hindered the development and preservation of their musical traditions.¹⁴ The Apartheid regime further restricted their movements and expression, making it difficult for indigenous musicians to perform and share their music freely. They were often subjected to censorship and control, with their songs scrutinised for potential political messages. Economic disparities also posed challenges.¹⁵ Scholars further state that many indigenous musicians struggled to earn a sustainable income from their art due to a lack of resources, limited access to recording facilities, and exploitative contracts from record companies. In recent times, globalisation has brought both opportunities and challenges.¹⁶ It is evident that while technology allows for greater exposure through online platforms, it also introduces competition from international music and dilutes traditional sounds. Cultural appropriation and misrepresentation are concerns, as indigenous musicians sometimes find their music borrowed or reinterpreted without proper acknowledgement.

Importance of Homogenisation of Indigenous Music

Numerous studies have shown that the term "homogenisation of indigenous music" refers to the process of changing or streamlining the distinctive and culturally distinctive parts of traditional music from indigenous populations to adhere to mainstream or popular music trends.^{17,18} Evidently, this process frequently takes place when native musicians or their music are influenced by commercial forces, international music trends, or the ambition to achieve greater fame and financial success. Furthermore, scholars point out that homogenisation of indigenous music is crucial as it makes the music more accessible to broader audiences, leading to increased recognition and appreciation.¹⁹ In addition, homogenisation provides indigenous musicians with a chance to explore their creative potential. Through homogenisation of indigenous music, musicians can produce creative fusions that help their music advance while preserving its cultural roots by fusing traditional and modern components.²⁰ It is crucial to point out that striking a balance between traditional and modern components

¹¹ Agawu, *Representing African Music Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*; Madimabe Geoff Mapaya, "The Indigenous Music Learning Process: A Northern Sotho Perspective," *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 21, no. 1 (2011): 65–76.

¹² Mapaya, "The Indigenous Music Learning Process: A Northern Sotho Perspective"; N G Mugovhani, "The Relationship Between Tshivenda Linguistic Vocabulary And Musical Trajectories As Encapsulated In Mirero, Maambele And Dzithai," *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 24, no. 1 (September 30, 2016): 65–77, <https://doi.org/10.25159/1016-8427/1673>.

¹³ Mailula, "Challenges of Mainstreaming Indigenous African Music at Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) in South African Primary Schools: A Case Study of Three Schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa"; Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

¹⁴ Oladele Oladokun Ayorinde, "Dizu Plaatjies and the Amampondo: Music, Agency and Social Transformation," *Unpublished Masters Thesis. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University. Available at: Http://Hdl. Handle. Net/10019.1/103371 (Accessed 28 October 2019), 2018.*

¹⁵ Keanan Christine Jaftha, "Mapping Liberation through Song: The Impact of Anti-Apartheid Popular Music and Protest/Liberation Songs in South Africa and the Diaspora, 1950-1994" (University of the Free State, 2021).

¹⁶ Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills."

¹⁷ Chisa, Ken Dennis, and Patrick Ngulube. "Indigenous music goes digital: Reconciling culture and the law." *Mousaion: South African Journal of Information Studies* 35.4 (2017): 17; Mugovhani, Ndwanamo George. "Emerging trends from indigenous music and dance practices: A glimpse into contemporary Malende and Tshigombela." *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 25.3 (2015): 81-96

¹⁸ Ken Dennis Chisa and Patrick Ngulube, "Indigenous Music Goes Digital: Reconciling Culture and the Law," *Mousaion: South African Journal of Information Studies* 35, no. 4 (2017): 17; Mugovhani, "Emerging Trends From Indigenous Music And Dance Practices: A Glimpse Into Contemporary Malende And Tshigombela."

¹⁹ Richard Barnet and John Cavanagh, "Homogenization of Global Culture," in *The Case against the Global Economy* (Routledge, 2014), 169–74; Dharm P S Bhawuk, "Globalization and Indigenous Cultures: Homogenization or Differentiation?," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 32, no. 4 (2008): 305–17.

²⁰ Mugovhani, "Emerging Trends From Indigenous Music And Dance Practices: A Glimpse Into Contemporary Malende And Tshigombela."

requires sensitivity to and knowledge of the surrounding cultural context. The objective should be to produce music that is true to indigenous traditions and interesting to audiences today, encouraging a conversation between the past and the present.

Addressing Cultural Appropriation Issues

Scholars highlight that cultural appropriation occurs when elements of one culture are borrowed or taken by another culture, often without proper understanding, respect, or acknowledgement.²¹ Mainstream artists might incorporate indigenous music styles, instruments, or visual aesthetics into their work without recognising the significance or history behind these elements. This has resulted in a superficial or distorted representation of indigenous culture, leading to a disconnect between the music and its original context.²² Obviously, cultural appropriation can perpetuate harmful stereotypes, erase the contributions of indigenous communities, and undermine the authenticity of the music.²³ Addressing these issues requires an awareness of the cultural dynamics at play and a commitment to respectful cross-cultural engagement. Artists and creators can take steps to avoid cultural appropriation by learning about the cultural significance of the elements they are interested in incorporating, seeking permission or collaboration with members of the culture, giving credit where it is due, and promoting genuine understanding and appreciation rather than superficial imitation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this article, the researcher applied the Social Constructivism Theory as a fundamental theory to address socioeconomic challenges and opportunities faced by Indigenous African musicians. The Social Constructivism Theory, according to Kim Socio is an approach to theory that emphasises the way social interactions, cultural settings, and shared meanings influence how people see the world and behave within it.²⁴ The justification for using this theory is that social constructivism theory acknowledges that musical practices and meanings are socially constructed within specific cultural contexts. Indigenous African music has a strong foundation in the customs, principles, and cultural traditions of various African communities.²⁵ The theory places a strong emphasis on comprehending how these cultural paradigms influence the creation, reception, and interpretation of indigenous African music.

In this analysis, the researcher deploys social constructivism theory to argue that Indigenous African music often functions to express and reaffirm social identity, values, and histories. The theory highlights how music is used by indigenous African societies to construct and preserve their communal meanings and identities. This article argues that by applying social constructivism theory to the challenges faced by indigenous African music, the researcher will gain insights into the social, cultural, and power dynamics that impact the production, preservation, and promotion of this music.²⁶ Hence, in this article, the researcher argues that the Social Constructivism Theory can be used to understand how Indigenous African musicians navigate these changes, traverse hybridity, and modify their musical practices while preserving cultural authenticity and identity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted a qualitative approach located within critical discourse analysis as a paradigm. Scholars point out that qualitative research acknowledges the complexity and contextuality of social phenomena and emphasises the importance of subjective interpretations and multiple perspectives.²⁷ Qualitative researchers build a deeper understanding of the subject under inquiry and produce knowledge that can guide theory creation, policy choices, or additional research by closely evaluating specific themes, patterns, and conditions within the

²¹ Brigitte Vézina, "Curbing Cultural Appropriation in the Fashion Industry," *Centre for International Governance Innovation* 213 (2019), [https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/paper no.213.pdf](https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/paper%20213.pdf).

²² Karen Vuong, "Intercultural Music in Media: Representations of Chinese Music History and Culture within Korra and Mulan," *Spectrum*, no. 6 (2020); Barnet and John Cavanagh, "Homogenization of Global Culture"; Arantxa Vizcaíno-Verdú, Ignacio Aguaded, and Paloma Contreras-Pulido, "Understanding Transmedia Music on YouTube through Disney Storytelling," *Sustainability* 13, no. 7 (2021): 3667.

²³ Tressa Berman, "Cultural Appropriation," *A Companion to the Anthropology of American Indians*, 2004, 383–97.

²⁴ B Kim, "Social Constructivism," *Emerging Perspectives on Learning, Teaching, and Technology* 1, no. 1 (2001): 16.

²⁵ Lloyd Chukwumeka Nwafor, Zaw Naing, and Gary N McLean, "Social Constructivism: We Are the Products of Social Processes," *Human Resource and Organization Development Journal* 4, no. 1 (2012): 35–46; Kim, "Social Constructivism."

²⁶ John W Creswell and J David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Sage publications, 2017); Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," *Qualitative Health Research* 15, no. 9 (November 1, 2005): 1277–88, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>.

²⁷ J W Creswell, "Mapping the Field of Mixed Methods Research," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 3, no. 2 (2009): 95–108; Hsiu Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," *Qualitative Health Research* 15, no. 9 (2005): 1277–88, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>.

data.²⁸ The justification for using qualitative research is that it is a type of research that focuses on exploring and understanding the subjective experiences, meanings, and interpretations of individuals or groups. It aims to gather rich, in-depth data and gain insights into social and human phenomena through various designs which are interviews, observations, and document analysis, which is known as content analysis. Accordingly, in this article, an approach to qualitative research known as Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter, CDA) is used to critically describe, analyse, and explain how discourses create, uphold, and legitimate social inequities.²⁹ Accordingly, CDA relies on a collection of techniques for the study of language use as a social and cultural practice. The justification for the use of CDA is that CDA is commonly used in social sciences to critically analyse and solve problems with any theory or approach that may be relevant because it focuses on social concerns rather than academic perspectives.³⁰

Limitations and Ethics

This article was limited to CDA, and this means that this article did not require any formal university permission as it uses existing literature in the public domain

Data Acquired Using the Developed Research Question

It is prudent to foreground this section by highlighting that the musical heritage of South Africa is extensive and varied, and it is closely entwined with its cultural milieu. The nation's artistic tapestry is enhanced by the vital contribution of indigenous African musicians to the preservation and perpetuation of this heritage. Their contributions go beyond music because they play a crucial role in maintaining African identities, traditions, and languages. Indigenous African musicians provide insight into South Africa's rich cultural history and variety through their distinctive musical expressions.³¹ The contributions of indigenous African musicians are largely responsible for the liveliness of South Africa's cultural environment.³² Their artistic works promote pride, commemorate the rich legacy of the nation, and shape national identity. To preserve the preservation and expansion of South Africa's cultural diversity for future generations, it is crucial to acknowledge and promote the unique contributions of indigenous musicians. The article's findings reveal common themes that emerged from the six basic research questions that were presented earlier to guide this article. These questions were answered using existing scholarly literary writings as this article is based on CDA. The developed questions were divided into six major significant sections, which are discussed below.

a. *Socio-economic challenges faced by Indigenous African musicians in pursuing their artistic careers*

Many indigenous African artists do not have access to official music training or education programmes. This makes it more difficult for them to acquire technical expertise, a thorough understanding of music theory, and a strong professional base. They have fewer options for professional development and are less competitive in the music business due to the absence of educational opportunities.³³ Indigenous African musicians frequently face financial difficulties and have challenges in obtaining funds for musical instruments, equipment, studio time, or expert recording or production services. The lack of financial resources makes it difficult for indigenous African musicians to invest in their artistic endeavours, impeding their capacity to efficiently produce, promote, and distribute their music.³⁴

Indigenous African musicians frequently struggle to gain the backing of record labels, managers, booking agents, and promoters. Their access to performance chances, collaborative opportunities, and visibility may be restricted if the music industry fails to recognise their distinctive styles and cultural expressions.³⁵ Their ability

²⁸ N. Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (London, United Kingdom: Longman, 1995), <https://archives.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/media/methods/critical.html>.

²⁹ Dianna R. Mullet, "A General Critical Discourse Analysis Framework for Educational Research," *Journal of Advanced Academics* 29, no. 2 (May 20, 2018): 116–42, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1932202X18758260>.

³⁰ Mullet, "A General Critical Discourse Analysis Framework for Educational Research."

³¹ Kofi Agawu, "The Challenge of African Art Music Le Défi de La Musique Savante Africaine," *Circuit Musiques Contemporaines* 21, no. 2 (2011): 49–64; Mugovhani, "Emerging Trends From Indigenous Music and Dance Practices: A Glimpse Into Contemporary Malende and Tshigombela."

³² Ndawamoto George Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music, and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?," *African Musicology Online*, February 2012, 1–13.

³³ Agawu, "The Challenge of African Art Music Le Défi de La Musique Savante Africaine"; Mugovhani, "Emerging Trends From Indigenous Music and Dance Practices: A Glimpse Into Contemporary Malende and Tshigombela."

³⁴ Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills"; Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

³⁵ Sibongile Margaret Mkhombo, "The Status of Indigenous Music in the South African School Curriculum with Special Reference to IsiZulu" (University of South Africa, 2019).

to grow in their careers is severely hampered by the absence of industry representation and advice. Accessing distribution and marketing outlets that can increase their reach and awareness may prove challenging for indigenous African musicians. Obtaining exposure on popular radio stations can be difficult, and there are few options for music videos to be distributed, in addition to a weak online streaming presence. This was substantiated by a study that points out that indigenous African musicians' capacity to engage a bigger audience and make a living from their music is constrained by these obstacles.³⁶ As a result, it might be difficult for indigenous African musicians to protect their intellectual property rights and obtain just recompense for their artistic endeavours. The sustainability of their artistic careers is threatened by copyright violations, unlawful uses of their work, and a lack of transparent mechanisms for collecting royalties.³⁷ These difficulties are made worse by the absence of effective legal systems and enforcement procedures.

b. Financial constraints that Indigenous African musicians often encounter.

Scholars point out that indigenous African musicians often face various financial constraints that hinder their artistic careers.³⁸ Indigenous African musicians may find it difficult to obtain funding to sustain their artistic endeavours due to various factors, and these factors include globalisation and increasing digital technologies among others. In recent years, traditional funding channels such as government grants, sponsorships and loans have become difficult to access. This limits their ability to invest in quality musical instruments, studio recording, marketing, and promotional activities.³⁹ For indigenous African musicians, making a living off their music might be difficult. Due to fewer opportunities for live performances, poor or inconsistent income, and a lack of access to digital distribution outlets that provide reasonable compensation, they could have trouble making income from their music. Indigenous African musicians' ability to support their artistic endeavours is hampered by their financial instability.

Accordingly, due to financial constraints, indigenous African musicians have limited access to professional services including music managers, booking agents, and lawyers.⁴⁰ To secure performance chances, negotiate contracts, protect intellectual property rights, and navigate the music industry, these services are necessary for promoting their music. The lack of professional support can hinder their career advancement and financial stability. Although financial literacy is crucial for Indigenous African musicians to effectively manage their finances and make informed decisions, many Indigenous African musicians do not have access to financial education programmes that guide budgeting, financial planning, and revenue management. A lack of financial understanding can result in improper handling of funds and jeopardize a person's capacity to maintain financial stability.⁴¹

c. Lack of industry support and representation hinder the success and visibility of Indigenous African musicians

It may be crucial to emphasise that the lack of industry support and representation poses significant barriers to the success and recognition of Indigenous African musicians.⁴² This problem is influenced by several factors, including historical marginalisation, resource scarcity, and cultural biases in the music industry. Indigenous African musicians have historically suffered from exclusion because of colonialism and laws that restrict their ability to express themselves culturally.⁴³ Due to this, their music has received little backing and recognition from the media. Indigenous African musicians frequently do not have access to crucial resources like recording facilities, expensive instruments, and music education. These restrictions may make it more difficult for them to make high-calibre recordings and connect with more people.⁴⁴ Like many other businesses,

³⁶ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

³⁷ Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills."

³⁸ Agawu, "The Challenge of African Art Music Le Défi de La Musique Savante Africaine"; Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills."

³⁹ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁴⁰ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁴¹ Agawu, "The Challenge of African Art Music Le Défi de La Musique Savante Africaine"; Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills."

⁴² Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills"; Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁴³ Agawu, "The Challenge of African Art Music Le Défi de La Musique Savante Africaine."

⁴⁴ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

the music business can be impacted by cultural prejudices that favour some musical genres or styles over others. There may not be widespread support for or representation of indigenous African music, which includes a variety of traditional forms and modern fusions.

d. Implications of the digital divide for Indigenous African musicians in terms of accessing technology and digital platforms

Indigenous African musicians face considerable challenges when it comes to using technology and digital platforms due to the "digital divide," a disparity in access to and usage of information and communication technologies (ICTs).⁴⁵ Indigenous African musicians may face challenges in accessing the necessary technology for music production, promotion, and distribution. This covers devices like computers, audio recording devices, software, and steady internet access. Indigenous African musicians are unable to make and distribute music digitally because they lack access to these resources. The disparity between Indigenous African musicians and those from areas with better access to technology is made worse by the digital divide.⁴⁶ Their visibility and reach are constrained by this discrepancy, which makes it challenging for them to engage with a wider audience on a global scale. The digital divide needs to be bridged to enable Indigenous African musicians to share their music, protect their cultural heritage, and take an active role in the digital music industry. This will increase their visibility and career options.

e. Programmes exist to address the challenges faced by Indigenous African musicians and promote their artistic development

Since 1994, many initiatives have been established to address the challenges that are faced by Indigenous African musicians as well as promote the growth of their art. These initiatives are designed to give these musicians the help, opportunity, and resources they need to succeed in the music industry.⁴⁷ Indigenous African performers are prioritised for inclusion in the lineups of numerous cultural and music festivals around Africa. These festivals offer venues for displaying their music, promoting intercultural dialogue, and raising their profile among various audiences.⁴⁸ It is crucial to note that even while these programmes already exist in many parts of the country, much effort needs to be made to guarantee mass accessibility and long-term sustainability. These initiatives offer workshops, masterclasses, and mentorship programmes focused on music production, performance skills, songwriting, and business management in the music industry. Some programmes were developed to place a strong emphasis on preserving and promoting the languages, musical and cultural heritage of Indigenous South Africans.⁴⁹ These programmes do not foster the intergenerational exchange of knowledge, develop venues for sharing and archiving traditional music, and collaborate with Indigenous people to record traditional musical forms due to the marginalisation of indigenous African music.

f. Opportunities arise from the cultural diversity and fusion of Indigenous African musicians' music

Indigenous African musicians' music offers much potential for artistic innovation, cross-cultural appreciation, and diversity thanks to its cultural richness and fusion. Indigenous African musicians draw from a vast tapestry of folk music, rhythms, and instruments from their distinct communities.⁵⁰ They develop a distinctive musical character that distinguishes them by mixing these classic components with modern genres and international influences. This originality may draw listeners looking for new and genuine sounds. Fusion is a potent instrument for revitalising and preserving cultures. Indigenous African musicians can introduce traditional music genres to new generations and make them more approachable and relevant by fusing traditional and modern components.⁵¹ In doing so, the risk of traditional music extinction is reduced, and cultural legacy is preserved. Indigenous African musicians frequently employ their music as a platform for social and political commentary.⁵² They can use fusion to incorporate several musical genres to discuss pertinent topics, tell stories,

⁴⁵ Joseph Yende and George Mugovhani, "Tensions and Conflicts in Indigenous African Cultural Heritage at South African Universities: An Artificial Intelligence Perspective."

⁴⁶ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁴⁷ Mugovhani, "Emerging Trends From Indigenous Music and Dance Practices: A Glimpse Into Contemporary Malende and Tshigombela."

⁴⁸ Yende and Pashkevitch, "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills."

⁴⁹ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁵⁰ Mkhombo, "The Status of Indigenous Music in the South African School Curriculum with Special Reference to IsiZulu."

⁵¹ Caleb Mauwa, "Influence of Traditional Musics in Modern Genres," *Unpublished Article*, August 2020.

⁵² Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

and throw light on issues of social justice, identity, and cultural challenges. This presents an opportunity to spread awareness and participate in important conversations.

DISCUSSION

This article argued that indigenous African musicians use their musical works to promote, preserve and celebrate indigenous languages. This article highlights the preservation these languages and passing them on to future generations by adding elements of traditional languages into their lyrics. The music of indigenous African musicians ensures that indigenous languages are heard, spoken, and appreciated, making it an important tool for language preservation. Indigenous African musicians engage their native communities to support efforts at language revitalisation. They often give performances at community gatherings, cultural festivals, and events with a linguistic component, where their music acts as a spark for initiatives to revive endangered languages. Indigenous African musicians motivate communities to actively use and maintain their indigenous languages through their interactions and performances. The findings of this study are consistent with studies that reveal indigenous African musicians use various kinds of languages in their music to demonstrate this linguistic diversity.⁵³ Their songs may contain lyrics in several indigenous tongues, encouraging multilingualism and cultivating an appreciation for Africa's rich linguistic diversity. The findings of this article show there is a need to promote indigenous African music. Stakeholders, including governments, cultural groups, educational institutions, media outlets, and the music industry, can collaborate to create to promote indigenous African music by organising festivals and concerts, providing financial support, setting up music education programmes, facilitating networking opportunities, and incorporating indigenous African music into popular culture and mainstream media.

This article raised some strong concerns about the challenges experienced by South African Indigenous musicians in South Africa. These concerns include lack of access to fair digital distribution platforms, copyright infringement and piracy and exploitation. The findings of this article state that indigenous African musicians struggle with inconsistent pay for their live performances even when they get performance opportunities. This might be a result of a lack of industry laws, an imbalance in power during negotiations, or a general undervaluation of their music. It has been difficult for indigenous African musicians to cover their expenses, invest in their careers, and maintain their livelihoods when faced with such financial difficulties. The findings further point out that financial literacy is crucial for Indigenous African musicians to effectively manage their finances and make informed decisions. This was echoed by Mugovhani and Nawa who reveal that the financial instability undermines their ability to sustain indigenous African musicians' careers.⁵⁴

Social constructivism emphasises the value of appreciating and acknowledging various indigenous languages and cultural expressions. A more inclusive music industry can be created by vigorously promoting the recognition and representation of Indigenous musicians and their music in society. Social constructivism theory in this article was used to examine the difficulties faced by indigenous musicians in South Africa and offer helpful solutions. The social constructivism school of thought places a strong emphasis on the way social interactions, cultural circumstances, and shared meanings shape people's experiences and identities. Evidence from the findings illustrates that indigenous African musicians face marginalisation within the music industry due to cultural biases and stereotypes. This is partly influenced by the fact that indigenous African music is hardly promoted in the music industry. The premise presented by previous scholarly writers proves that even though there have been serious challenges faced by indigenous African musicians, their music presents unique styles and cultural expressions that promote and preserve African languages.⁵⁵

It is evident that opportunities for cultural collaboration and interaction are made possible by the musical diversity of indigenous African musicians. Indigenous African musicians can work with musicians from diverse origins, both inside Africa and beyond, by accepting and celebrating the fusion of many musical styles, genres, and traditions. This partnership enables the exchange of information, ideas, and original musical expressions which results in the creation of ground-breaking and engrossing music.

Using a theoretical framework influenced by the central concepts of social constructivism, it is demonstrated that recognising the importance of collaboration and group action among numerous stakeholders is necessary to address the socioeconomic challenges faced by indigenous African artists. It involves expanding access to top-notch education and training, establishing funding avenues and financial assistance programs,

⁵³ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁵⁴ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

⁵⁵ Agawu, "The Challenge of African Art Music Le Défi de La Musique Savante Africaine"; Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

promoting business partnerships and representation, improving copyright defence and royalty collection systems, overcoming cultural prejudices and stereotypes, and creating inclusive platforms for visibility and market access. By addressing these concerns, indigenous African artists can improve their prospects of having successful and sustained musical careers.

This article establishes that the South African government and other stakeholders should work together to promote, fund, and support the nation's indigenous musicians. With these measures, South Africa's rich musical history will be celebrated and preserved, and local musicians will have the chance to succeed. This article is consistent with the previous findings, which indicated that the government ought to launch more programmes to encourage indigenous African musicians it has been determined how important it is to preserve indigenous languages and music.⁵⁶ These initiatives could include mentorship programmes, workshops, and festivals that feature traditional music and give up-and-coming performers a stage to acquire recognition. The findings of this article highlight the importance of noting that despite obstacles like limited funds, unequal access to opportunities, and the dominance of marketable music industries faced by indigenous African musicians, the promotion and preservation of indigenous African music in South Africa can thrive and prosper with the support of the government and stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The current article sought to discuss and raise awareness of the challenges experienced by South African Indigenous musicians. Even though their situation has become very gloomy given the present economic crisis in South Africa, there is light at the end of their career tunnel, particularly when the following recommendations are implemented. Firstly, the South African government must increase access to funding opportunities tailored to the needs of indigenous African musicians and promote financial literacy programmes. Secondly, the researcher recommends that the government should commit to platforms and events that specifically focus on promoting and supporting indigenous African musicians. This can include cultural festivals, community gatherings, and collaborations with established artists and organisations that appreciate and value their music. Thirdly, the Southern African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) should advocate for fair payment in the music industry for indigenous African musicians, supporting affordable production and recording facilities, and providing mentorship and guidance on financial management. Lastly, it is recommended that Music institutions, such as music universities should offer short educational programmes for indigenous African musicians, helping them develop their skills and pursue a music career.

CONCLUSION

Upon reflection on the study results, there is a collective effort that must be made to ensure that indigenous African musicians continue to thrive in South Africa. It is crucial to point out that while numerous programmes already exist to ensure that indigenous music is appreciated, much effort needs to be made to guarantee mass accessibility and long-term sustainability. To improve these current initiatives and create new ones that address the unique requirements and difficulties experienced by Indigenous African musicians, continued efforts, collaborations, and support from governments, the music business, and society are required. In this article, the technique and analysis in the study were informed by what the researcher perceived as a nexus that increasingly developed in the African music industry as a key for indigenous African music. Addressing marginalisation requires highlighting the value of cultural renewal and preservation of South African cultural heritage. Supporting Indigenous musicians as they strive to maintain their cultural heritage, traditional music genres, and languages can advance their musical growth and give them a distinctive platform for expression. This can involve collaborations with cultural organisations, language preservation initiatives, and support for community-based music projects that prioritise Indigenous cultural integrity. Manifestly, South Africa could benefit from a thriving music industry that honours the rich cultural heritage of its indigenous African musicians. As a result, the nation's total cultural diversity will be enhanced and this will promote pride in and admiration for its many musical traditions and contribute to preserving its indigenous languages. This is not only advantageous for the musicians but also for the country. The findings of this article conclude by affirming that there is a need to empower indigenous African musicians through educational programmes and financial support from various stakeholders to preserve South African culture, identity, and indigenous languages in the globalised world.

⁵⁶ Mugovhani and Nawa, "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo."

Implications for Further Research

Understanding the importance of South African Indigenous musicians facing various challenges in their artistic careers, as presented in this article, implies direct issues of the lack of funding, government support and other stakeholders. The findings presented in this article indicate that there is a need for the South African government to embrace indigenous African music. Considering these implications, the findings of this article pose the following questions. How does the limited access to education and training impact the development of Indigenous African musicians? How can collaborations between Indigenous African musicians and mainstream artists contribute to their visibility and success?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agawu, Kofi. *Representing African Music Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*. Edited by Kofi Agawu. 1st Edition. London, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2003.
- . “The Challenge of African Art Music Le Défi de La Musique Savante Africaine.” *Circuit Musiques Contemporaines* 21, no. 2 (2011): 49–64.
- Ayorinde, Oladele Oladokun. “Dizu Plaatjies and the Amampondo: Music, Agency and Social Transformation.” *Unpublished Masters Thesis. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University. Available at: Http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/103371 (Accessed 28 October 2019)*, 2018.
- Barnet, Richard, and John Cavanagh. “Homogenization of Global Culture.” In *The Case against the Global Economy*, 169–74. Routledge, 2014.
- Berman, Tressa. “Cultural Appropriation.” *A Companion to the Anthropology of American Indians*, 2004, 383–97.
- Bhawuk, Dharm P S. “Globalization and Indigenous Cultures: Homogenization or Differentiation?” *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 32, no. 4 (2008): 305–17.
- Chisa, Ken Dennis, and Patrick Ngulube. “Indigenous Music Goes Digital: Reconciling Culture and the Law.” *Mousaion: South African Journal of Information Studies* 35, no. 4 (2017): 17-pages.
- Creswell, J W. “Mapping the Field of Mixed Methods Research.” *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 3, no. 2 (2009): 95–108.
- Creswell, John W, and J David Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage publications, 2017.
- Fairclough, N. *Critical Discourse Analysis*. London, United Kingdom: Longman, 1995. <https://archives.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/media/methods/critical.html>.
- Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang, and Sarah E. Shannon. “Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis.” *Qualitative Health Research* 15, no. 9 (November 1, 2005): 1277–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>.
- Hsieh, Hsiu Fang, and Sarah E. Shannon. “Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis.” *Qualitative Health Research* 15, no. 9 (2005): 1277–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>.
- Izu, Benjamin Obeghare, and Alethea de Villiers. “The Functional Role of Traditional Music and Dance in Xhosa Traditional Healers’ Ceremonial Rites.” *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, December 30, 2022, 716–29. <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.20223136>.
- Jaftha, Keanan Christine. “Mapping Liberation through Song: The Impact of Anti-Apartheid Popular Music and Protest/Liberation Songs in South Africa and the Diaspora, 1950-1994.” University of the Free State, 2021.
- Joseph Yende, Sakhiseni, and Nsizwazonke E Yende. “The Quest for Curricularisation of UMaskandi Zulu Traditional Music in Higher Education in the Context of Africanisation.” *Journal of African Education* 3, no. 1 (April 12, 2022): 107–17. <https://doi.org/10.31920/2633-2930/2022/v3n1a5>.
- Joseph Yende, Sakhiseni, and Ndwamato George Mugovhani. “Tensions and Conflicts in Indigenous African Cultural Heritage at South African Universities: An Artificial Intelligence Perspective.” *Journal of African Education* 3, no. 3 (December 17, 2022): 79–96. <https://doi.org/10.31920/2633-2930/2022/v3n3a4>.
- Kim, B. “Social Constructivism.” *Emerging Perspectives on Learning, Teaching, and Technology* 1, no. 1 (2001): 16.
- Mailula, Kgaogelo A. “Challenges of Mainstreaming Indigenous African Music at Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) in South African Primary Schools: A Case Study of Three Schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa,” 2018.
- Mapaya, Madimabe Geoff. “The Indigenous Music Learning Process: A Northern Sotho Perspective.” *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 21, no. 1 (2011): 65–76.
- Mauwa, Caleb. “Influence of Traditional Musics in Modern Genres.” *Unpublished Article*, August 2020.

- Mkhombo, Sibongile Margaret. "The Status of Indigenous Music in the South African School Curriculum with Special Reference to IsiZulu." University of South Africa, 2019.
- Mugovhani, N G. "Emerging Trends From Indigenous Music and Dance Practices: A Glimpse Into Contemporary Malende and Tshigombela." *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 25, no. 3 (April 18, 2016). <https://doi.org/10.25159/1016-8427/713>.
- . "The Relationship Between Tshivenda Linguistic Vocabulary And Musical Trajectories As Encapsulated In Mirero, Maambele And Dzithai." *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 24, no. 1 (September 30, 2016): 65–77. <https://doi.org/10.25159/1016-8427/1673>.
- Mugovhani, N G, and Lebogang Lance Nawa. "The Socio-Economic Challenges of South African Indigenous Musicians: A Case Study of Venda-Based Vho-Ntshengedzeni Mamphodo." *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* 29, no. 1 (June 14, 2019). <https://doi.org/10.25159/1016-8427/3814>.
- Mugovhani, Ndwamato George. "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music, and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?" *African Musicology Online*, February 2012, 1–13.
- Mullet, Dianna R. "A General Critical Discourse Analysis Framework for Educational Research." *Journal of Advanced Academics* 29, no. 2 (May 20, 2018): 116–42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1932202X18758260>.
- Nwafor, Lloyd Chukwuemeka, Zaw Naing, and Gary N McLean. "Social Constructivism: We Are the Products of Social Processes." *Human Resource and Organization Development Journal* 4, no. 1 (2012): 35–46.
- Vézina, Brigitte. "Curbing Cultural Appropriation in the Fashion Industry." *Centre for International Governance Innovation* 213 (2019). [https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/paper no.213.pdf](https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/paper%20no.213.pdf).
- Vizcaíno-Verdú, Arantxa, Ignacio Aguaded, and Paloma Contreras-Pulido. "Understanding Transmedia Music on YouTube through Disney Storytelling." *Sustainability* 13, no. 7 (2021): 3667.
- Vuong, Karen. "Intercultural Music in Media: Representations of Chinese Music History and Culture within Korra and Mulan." *Spectrum*, no. 6 (2020).
- Yende, Sakhiseni Joseph, and Rostislava Pashkevitch. "Importance of Career Management for South African Musicians: A Perspective of Talent-Preneur Skills." *Journal of African Films and Diaspora Studies* 5, no. 4 (2022): 145.

ABOUT AUTHOR

Dr. Sakhiseni Joseph Yende is an emerging distinguished young scholar currently affiliated with the University of Western Cape in South Africa, where he serves as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of African Language Studies within the Forensic Linguistics and Multilingualism division. His academic trajectory has been marked by remarkable achievements and substantial contributions to various aspects of the performing arts, with a particular emphasis on opera.