

Understanding the Importance of Reviving the Forgotten and Marginalised Khoisan Indigenous Music in South Africa: A Content Analysis



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ABSTRACT

Framed within the Sociomusicology Theory, this article argued that through the revival of Khoisan indigenous music, South Africa can promote social cohesion, bridging gaps between different ethnic groups and creating a more inclusive society. The Khoisan people, also known as Bushmen or San, are one of the oldest indigenous groups in Africa, and their music is an integral part of their identity and history. However, Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa has been forgotten and marginalised. This can be attributed to various factors including colonialism. In recent years, there has been a quest for revitalising the overlooked and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. Notwithstanding, minimal attention has been given to reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa and this has become a matter of great concern. This article thus sought to understand the importance of reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. In this article, a qualitative content analysis was employed to successfully analyse the purpose of this paper. The findings demonstrated that the extinction of Khoisan indigenous music is attributed to various historical, social, and cultural factors, including colonialism, cultural assimilation, and modernisation. The paper concluded by affirming that the Khoisan indigenous music holds a deep cultural significance for the Khoisan people and South Africa as a whole. It serves as a potent vehicle for the expression and preservation of their great connection to nature, spiritual beliefs, and rich cultural history.

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INTRODUCTION

It is prudent to acknowledge and consider that oral history and the preceding literature reveals that the Khoisan people, commonly referred to as Khoisan or Bushmen, are indigenous groups with a rich history and cultural significance in Southern Africa.¹ Numerous scholars have engaged with the Khoisan people

¹ Willa Boezak, "The Cultural Heritage of South Africa's Khoisan," in *Indigenous Peoples' Cultural Heritage* (Brill Nijhoff, 2017), 253–72; John Stephanus Klaasen, "Khoisan Identity: A Contribution towards Reconciliation in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 44, no. 2 (2018): 1–14; Hermann Wittenberg, "Notes towards a History of Khoi Literature," *English Academy Review* 28, no. 1 (2011): 5–22.

and their culture, as well as language.² For instance, Verbuyst explores issues of archiving Khoisan, while other scholars such as Ralarala et.al. enlighten on historical, linguistics studies, and sociolinguistics in general.³ It is essential to note that these studies have been conducted in different contexts but follow the same pattern upon which the Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa can be understood.

The literature explored in this section shows that the Khoisan are known for their unique languages, click consonants, and traditional hunter-gatherer lifestyle that has been adapted to the challenging environments of the region.⁴ Khoisan history, art, and knowledge of the natural world have made valuable contributions to the cultural tapestry of Southern Africa. In the context of music, oral history points out that Khoisan music in South Africa has a rich and diverse history.⁵ It is deeply intertwined with the culture and traditions of the Khoisan people, who are known for their unique musical expressions. Khoisan music has been primarily transmitted through oral traditions, with songs and chants being passed down through generations. These songs often reflect the daily life, spirituality, and connection to the natural world of the Khoisan people.⁶ Khoisan music plays a significant role in their ceremonies and rituals, including healing rituals and dances. These ceremonies are essential for community bonding and spiritual connections. However, just like many indigenous cultures, Khoisan music has faced challenges due to cultural assimilation and modernisation. Efforts are being made to preserve and revitalise traditional Khoisan music and ensure that it continues to be an integral part of South Africa's cultural heritage.⁷

It is prudent to point out that there is extensive literature on the visual archives of Khoisan historical arts through the means of stone drawings, paintings, engravings, photographs, and recently documentary films.⁸ However, these historical sources have developed over the years, nevertheless, not much empirical research has been done to investigate the importance of reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa in particular. This gap in the research area has also been highlighted in past studies, which found that further research is still needed as there is little is known about Khoisan indigenous music. This view is shared by several other scholars who point out that generally indigenous African music faces the problem of the lack of ethnomusicology studies that go deep into the community's lived experiences.⁹ Some scholars believe that indigenous music, especially Khoisan indigenous music is still endangered to extinction and needs to be preserved.¹⁰ Therefore, to keep up-to-date with this quest, there is a call for academics to collaborate with Khoisan communities to initiate oral history projects. This involves recording interviews with elders and community members who hold knowledge about traditional music, ensuring that their insights are documented.

In light of the current challenges concerning Khoisan indigenous music, it is essential to understand the importance of reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. Therefore, in this study, the researcher focuses on specific questions that emerged from the

² Russell H Kaschula and Michael M Kretzer, "'Hayi, They Don't Know Xhosa': Comparative IsiXhosa Teaching Challenges in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng," *South African Journal of African Languages* 39, no. 3 (2019): 239–52; Rafael Verbuyst, "Khoisan Consciousness: Articulating Indigeneity in Post-Apartheid Cape Town," *Afrika Focus* 35, no. 1 (2022): 213–27.

³ Monwabisi K Ralarala, Russell H Kaschula, and Georgina Heydon, *Language and the Law: Global Perspectives in Forensic Linguistics from Africa and Beyond*, vol. 3 (African Sun Media, 2022).

⁴ Krishna R Veeramah et al., "An Early Divergence of KhoeSan Ancestors from Those of Other Modern Humans Is Supported by an ABC-Based Analysis of Autosomal Resequencing Data," *Molecular Biology and Evolution* 29, no. 2 (2012): 617–30.

⁵ Matheanoga Fana Rabatoko, "San Indigenous Songs as Cultural Heritage for Inclusion in Botswana Music Education Programmes" (University of Pretoria, 2017).

⁶ Shanade Barnabas and Samukelisiwe Miya, "KhoeSan Identity and Language in South Africa: Articulations of Reclamation," in *Rethinking Khoe and San Indigeneity, Language and Culture in Southern Africa* (Routledge, 2022), 94–108.

⁷ Barnabas and Miya, "KhoeSan Identity and Language in South Africa: Articulations of Reclamation."

⁸ Nyasha Mboti, "To Exhibit or Be Exhibited: The Visual Art of Vetkat Regopstaan Boesman Kruiper," *Critical Arts* 28, no. 3 (2014): 472–92; Pfunzo Sidogi and Hulisani Ndou, "Ubuntu Aesthetics in African Theatre of the South," *South African Theatre Journal* 34, no. 1 (2021): 15–33; Ann Wanless, "The Silence of Colonial Melancholy: The Fourie Collection of Khoisan Ethnologia" (University of the Witwatersrand, 2007); Rafael Verbuyst, "Khoisan Identity, Politics, and Representation in Post-Apartheid South Africa (1994-2022): A Selective and Annotated Bibliography," *Electronic Journal of Africana Bibliography* 17, no. 1 (2022).

⁹ Madimabe Geoff Mapaya, "Dipsticking the Study of Indigenous African Music from the John Blacking Era into the 21st Century," *John Blacking and Contemporary African Musicology: Reflections, Reviews, Analyses and Prospects*, 2018, 113–28; Sibongile Margaret Mkhombo, "The Status of Indigenous Music in the South African School Curriculum with Special Reference to IsiZulu" (University of South Africa, 2019); Patrick Ngulube, "Revitalising and Preserving Endangered Indigenous Languages in South Africa through Writing and Publishing," *South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science* 78, no. 1 (2012): 11–24.

¹⁰ Ngulube, "Revitalising and Preserving Endangered Indigenous Languages in South Africa through Writing and Publishing"; Sakhiseni Joseph Yende and George Ndwamato Mugovhani, "Tensions and Conflicts in Indigenous African Cultural Heritage at South African Universities: An Artificial Intelligence Perspective," *Journal of African Education* 3, no. 3 (2022): 79.

literature, with special attention to Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. This article addresses the following questions:

- a) What are the factors of colonialism, cultural assimilation, and modernisation to the extinction of Khoisan indigenous music?
- b) How does Khoisan music contribute to the cultural diversity of South Africa?
- c) In what ways can the revival of Khoisan music contribute to cultural preservation and the safeguarding of traditional knowledge?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Khoisan Music: A Cultural Treasure at Risk

Despite its profound cultural significance, Khoisan music like many African indigenous music is facing the threat of extinction.¹¹ The traditional music of the Khoisan people, characterised by unique vocal techniques and rhythmic patterns, is gradually disappearing due to factors such as modernisation, cultural assimilation, and the erosion of traditional lifestyles. For example, Khoisan music is primarily vocal, featuring intricate vocal techniques such as throat singing and clicking sounds. These vocalisations are often accompanied by rhythmic hand clapping, body percussion, and the playing of simple musical instruments like rattles, drums, and stringed instruments.

Khoisan Music is Performed on Various Occasions

Perhaps, it is essential to state that Khoisan music plays a central role in rituals and ceremonies such as initiation rites, coming-of-age ceremonies, and healing ceremonies. The music is believed to invoke spiritual forces and ancestors, facilitating communication with the spirit world.¹² Furthermore, in many Khoisan communities, music is often performed at night as part of storytelling traditions. These nocturnal gatherings are deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of the Khoisan people, serving as a time for community bonding, spiritual reflection, and the sharing of oral histories. During these nighttime gatherings, community members gather around a fire, which serves as a focal point for the storytelling and music. The flickering flames cast shadows on the faces of the listeners, adding to the atmosphere of mystery and intrigue.¹³

The music performed during these storytelling sessions is often slow and melodic, with intricate vocalisations and rhythmic patterns. The storytellers use music to enhance the narrative, creating a captivating and immersive experience for the listeners. The stories told at these gatherings often reflect the beliefs, values, and history of the Khoisan people. They may include tales of ancestral heroes, moral lessons, or explanations of natural phenomena. Through music and storytelling, the Khoisan preserve their cultural heritage and pass down their traditions to future generations. The Khoisan people believe that music has the power to provide mental and physical healing. The rhythmic patterns and melodies of Khoisan music are thought to have therapeutic effects on the mind and body, helping individuals overcome illness, trauma, and emotional distress. The picture below shows the Khoisan community gathered at night.

¹¹ Rabatoko, "San Indigenous Songs as Cultural Heritage for Inclusion in Botswana Music Education Programmes"; George Ndzwamato Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music, and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?," *African Musicology Online*, February 2012, 1–13.

¹² Boezak, "The Cultural Heritage of South Africa's Khoisan"; Klaasen, "Khoisan Identity: A Contribution towards Reconciliation in Post-Apartheid South Africa"; Rabatoko, "San Indigenous Songs as Cultural Heritage for Inclusion in Botswana Music Education Programmes."

¹³ Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?"; Boezak, "The Cultural Heritage of South Africa's Khoisan"; Menán du Plessis, "Khoisan Click Languages of Africa: Present, Past, and Future Map," *Handbook of the Changing World Language Map*, 2020, 1627–41.



Figure 1: An example of the Khoisan Music performance¹⁴

Importance of Revival

Numerous studies mention that reviving Khoisan indigenous cultural knowledge holds immense social, and historical significance in South Africa in particular.¹⁵ It is interesting to note that linguistic scholars have concentrated on paying some consideration to the Khoisan languages, but they also concur that most of them are not accessible to the public, which is detrimental to maintenance.¹⁶ These findings support the ongoing effort to revive Khoisan culture in South Africa.

In the context of music, South Africa is renowned for its diverse cultural landscape. Reviving Khoisan music contributes to this diversity, ensuring that the rich heritage of the Khoisan people is acknowledged and celebrated.¹⁷ It is an opportunity to recognise the contributions of this indigenous community to the nation's cultural mosaic. It is inevitable that Khoisan music is a vital aspect of the cultural heritage of South Africa. It encapsulates the unique traditions, beliefs, and practices of the Khoisan people, providing a living link to their ancestors. Therefore, by reviving this music, we preserve a crucial part of the nation's cultural richness.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Given the nature of this article, the researcher used the Sociomusicology Theory. Sociomusicologists agree that Sociomusicology is an interdisciplinary field that examines the intersection of music and society.¹⁸ It focuses on how music is shaped by and, in turn, influences social, cultural, and political dynamics. Since, Sociomusicology Theory (hereafter, ST) is not a single, unified theory but rather an interdisciplinary field of study, the researcher draws the understanding of how music reflects and shapes cultural norms, identities, and power structures from cultural studies and ethnomusicology.¹⁹

The justification for using ST is that this theory draws on insights from various disciplines, including cultural studies and ethnomusicology. This interdisciplinary approach allowed the researcher to examine the multifaceted ways in which Khoisan indigenous music is intertwined with broader societal dynamics. By incorporating perspectives from cultural studies, the study can delve into the cultural norms and values reflected in the music, while ethnomusicology provides a lens through which to analyse the musical structures and traditions. Secondly, the researcher chose to use ST because it posits that music is

¹⁴ <https://www.exploring-africa.com/en/botswana/san-or-bushmen/art-and-dances-san>

¹⁵ Boezak, "The Cultural Heritage of South Africa's Khoisan"; Klaasen, "Khoisan Identity: A Contribution towards Reconciliation in Post-Apartheid South Africa"; Wittenberg, "Notes towards a History of Khoi Literature."

¹⁶ Verbuyst, "Khoisan Consciousness: Articulating Indigeneity in Post-Apartheid Cape Town"; Micheal M van Wyk, "[Re] Claiming the Riel as Khoisan Indigenous Cultural Knowledge," *Studies of Tribes and Tribals* 10, no. 1 (2012): 47–56.

¹⁷ Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?"

¹⁸ Paul Honigsheim, *Sociologists and Music* (London: Routledge, 1989); Marcello Sorce Keller, "Sociology of Music and Ethnomusicology: Two Disciplines in Competition," *The Journal of General Education* 38, no. 3 (1986): 167–81.

¹⁹ Keller, "Sociology of Music and Ethnomusicology: Two Disciplines in Competition."

not just a passive reflection of society but also an active force that shapes and influences social, cultural, and political dynamics. By utilising ST, the researcher can explore how Khoisan indigenous music has been shaped by historical events, cultural practices, and power structures in South Africa. Additionally, the theory allows for an examination of how the revival of this music could potentially influence and contribute to broader social changes.

Lastly, the choice of ST is particularly apt for studying Khoisan indigenous music, given that these musical traditions have been predominantly transmitted through oral means. Songs and chants passed down through generations can offer valuable insights into the daily life, spirituality, and connection to the natural world of the Khoisan people. ST's emphasis on the social aspects of music allows for an in-depth examination of how these oral traditions have contributed to the preservation and transmission of Khoisan cultural heritage. ST provides a robust framework for understanding the significance of reviving Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. Therefore, by leveraging the interdisciplinary nature of ST and its focus on social identity and cultural transmission, the researcher unravelled the intricate connections between music and the broader socio-cultural context, shedding light on the importance of preserving

METHODOLOGY

In conducting qualitative research for this article, content analysis emerged as the primary tool, aligning with the scholarly perspective that qualitative research involves identifying subjects, themes, and characterising settings.²⁰ There was a need for qualitative content analysis to ensure the research project's premise was substantiated, fostering a coherent alignment with the data.²¹ The overarching objective was to identify and effectively communicate the key elements associated with the revival of forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. To gather relevant data, this article relied on reputable sources such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, ResearchGate, and University repositories, limiting inclusion to academic work published from 2000 till date. The rationale behind this temporal constraint was driven by the scarcity of recent scholarly writings on Indigenous African Music, particularly focusing on Khoisan Music. The qualitative content analysis process, emphasising a systematic approach to working through transcripts to identify and quantify the frequency of certain themes while considering both content and context.²²

In ensuring the rigour and reliability of the data collected for this article, a triangulation approach was employed. Triangulation involves the use of multiple data sources, methods, or perspectives to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings. In the context of this research, triangulation was implemented to strengthen the overall quality of the data. By utilising diverse sources such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, ResearchGate, and University repositories, the researcher accessed a variety of academic perspectives on the revival of Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. As only a few articles were found in the South

African Khoisan music context, the search was broadened to include indigenous music, culture and heritage, and a total of 300 non-duplicate articles were found. After carefully reviewing the titles and abstracts, 272 articles were excluded as they were irrelevant to the study. Of the 28 articles reviewed, all these articles are included in this literature review. This multiplicity of sources contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject, reducing the potential biases associated with relying on a single data stream. Furthermore, the triangulation of methods involved the use of qualitative content analysis, aligning with the study's overarching goal. By systematically working through transcripts and considering both content and context, the researcher ensured a robust and nuanced analysis. The combination of multiple data sources and methodological approaches not only enhances the validity of the research findings but also provides a more holistic and reliable depiction of the importance of reviving Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa.

The chosen method aimed to derive meaningful insights, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the neglected Khoisan indigenous music. The research question, "*What importance does*

²⁰ Päivi Eriksson and Anne Kovalainen, *Qualitative Methods in Business Research: A Practical Guide to Social Research* (Sage, 2015); Lorelli S Nowell et al., "Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16, no. 1 (2017): 1609406917733847.

²¹ Krippendorff, Klaus. *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage publications, 2018.

²² Satu Elo and Helvi Kyngäs, "The Qualitative Content Analysis Process," *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 62, no. 1 (2008): 107–15.

understanding the revival of forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music have in South Africa?" framed the inquiry, facilitating an in-depth exploration of historical factors contributing to the marginalisation of this musical heritage. The article employed qualitative content analysis as a means for the researcher to interpret and present outcomes adequately. Additionally, the use of triangulation enhanced data quality, ensuring a robust and well-rounded analysis of the importance of reviving Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa.

DISCUSSION

Contextualising the Khoisan indigenous music

It is essential to foreground and centre this section by stating that Khoisan indigenous music is an essential component of South Africa's cultural diversity and should be revitalised. It reflects not only the historical depth of the Khoisan people but also their deep spiritual connection to the environment around them. Through their music, they pass down traditions, stories, and knowledge that have been cherished for generations. It is a living testament to the resilience and cultural richness of the Khoisan community. This music serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of preserving and celebrating indigenous cultures worldwide.

The findings reveal common themes that emerged from the three basic research questions developed earlier. The findings were divided into four major sections, namely: (1) Factors of colonialism, cultural assimilation, and modernisation to the extinction of Khoisan indigenous music; (2) Khoisan music contribute to the cultural diversity of South Africa; and (3) **Reviving Khoisan indigenous music contribute to cultural preservation and the safeguarding of traditional knowledge.** The findings addressed the article's research questions according to the literature gathered.

Factors of Colonialism, Cultural Assimilation, and Modernisation to the Extinction of Khoisan Indigenous Music

Perhaps, it is prudent to state that the factors of colonialism, cultural assimilation, and modernisation have played significant roles in the endangerment of indigenous music more particularly with Khoisan indigenous music. Colonial powers sought to impose their own cultural norms and values on the indigenous populations they encountered.²³ This included the suppression of native languages, traditions, and music. As a result, indigenous communities of South Africa mainly the Khoisan were dispossessed of their lands and resources. This disrupted their traditional ways of life, including their musical practices that were closely tied to their natural environment.²⁴ Evidently, colonialism in Africa mainly in South Africa introduced new musical styles and instruments from Europe, which have overshadowed or marginalised indigenous musical traditions.

Scholars point out that Western philosophies and religious beliefs were imposed on indigenous communities, sometimes leading to a devaluation or suppression of their own cultural practices, including music which suffered the most.²⁵ Oral history reveals that indigenous populations, including the Khoisan, were pressured to adopt the cultural practices, languages, and norms of the dominant colonial culture. This led to a decline in the practice and transmission of indigenous music.²⁶ When indigenous communities are compelled to assimilate into a dominant culture, they lose aspects of their own cultural identity, including their unique musical traditions. Also, modernisation and urbanisation led to a shift from rural, traditional lifestyles to urban, more industrialised ones. This also can be attributed to colonialism which caused severe disconnection of indigenous African people to their indigenous musical practices. There has been rapid urbanisation that has led to the erosion of traditional practices, including music-making. Urban environments do not provide the same opportunities or spaces for the continuation of these traditions.²⁷ Modernisation often brings with it the influence of globalised media and popular culture which younger

²³ Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music, and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?"

²⁴ du Plessis, "Khoisan Click Languages of Africa: Present, Past, and Future Map."

²⁵ Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music, and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?"

²⁶ Boezak, "The Cultural Heritage of South Africa's Khoisan"; du Plessis, "Khoisan Click Languages of Africa: Present, Past, and Future Map."

²⁷ Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music, and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?"

generations have been more exposed to and influenced by global music trends, potentially diminishing interest in and participation in indigenous musical traditions.²⁸

The Contribution of Khoisan Music to the Cultural Diversity of South Africa

Perhaps, it is important to highlight that as mentioned earlier, there is limited attention given to Khoisan indigenous music the existing literature focuses mainly on the importance of history. Khoisan indigenous music employs distinctive vocal techniques, including throat singing and yodelling, which are not commonly found in other South African musical traditions. Additionally, the use of indigenous instruments like mouth bows and rattles adds a unique sonic dimension.²⁹ Numerous scholars affirm that Khoisan languages are known for their complex system of click consonants. These linguistic elements are seamlessly integrated into their music, creating a sound that is distinctive and not replicated in other regional music forms. Khoisan music draws inspiration from the natural environment.³⁰ Songs and chants mirror the intimate relationship the Khoisan have with their surroundings, celebrating the flora, fauna, and landscapes that shape their daily.

Mugovhani affirms that music plays a central role in African ceremonies and rituals, such as healing ceremonies and dances.³¹ It serves as a means of spiritual communication, connecting individuals with the natural and metaphysical realms. This is also found in the Khoisan indigenous music. Oral history reveals that through songs and chants, the Khoisan pass down stories, beliefs, and practices from one generation to the next. This oral tradition is a crucial aspect of preserving their cultural heritage.³² Khoisan indigenous music is a cornerstone of South Africa's cultural diversity. It provides an auditory window into Khoisan history, spirituality, and close relationship to the natural world. It captures the essence of Khoisan tradition. South Africa acknowledges the Khoisan people's vital contribution to the country's unique cultural tapestry by honouring and conserving this musical tradition.

Reviving Khoisan Indigenous Music to Contribute to Cultural Preservation and the Safeguarding of Traditional Knowledge

Several studies have pointed out that reviving Khoisan indigenous music plays a crucial role in both cultural preservation and the safeguarding of traditional knowledge.³³ It is inevitable that by reviving Khoisan music, communities actively engage with their cultural artefacts. Songs, chants, and musical practices serve as living expressions of their heritage, ensuring that these traditions are not lost to time.³⁴ Much of Khoisan culture and history is transmitted orally through songs and chants. The ongoing transmission of this oral history is made possible by reviving these musical customs, guaranteeing that legends, beliefs, and customs are passed down through the generations. Reviving Khoisan music will aid in the preservation of these linguistic components, adding to the region's overall linguistic diversity. Khoisan communities can strengthen their sense of cultural identity and take pride in their history by actively participating in and revitalising their music. It promotes a sense of community and strengthens their shared identity. Evidently, reviving Khoisan music acts as a defence against the deterioration of their distinctive cultural manifestations in the face of modernisation and cultural assimilation.

Discussion Summary

The current study sought to understand the importance of reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa using content analysis. The findings of this article argue that Khoisan

²⁸ Yende and Mugovhani, "Tensions and Conflicts in Indigenous African Cultural Heritage at South African Universities."

²⁹ Boezak, "The Cultural Heritage of South Africa's Khoisan"; du Plessis, "Khoisan Click Languages of Africa: Present, Past, and Future Map."

³⁰ Veeramah et al., "An Early Divergence of KhoeSan Ancestors from Those of Other Modern Humans Is Supported by an ABC-Based Analysis of Autosomal Resequencing Data."

³¹ Mugovhani, "African Renaissance, Indigenous African Music, and Globalisation: Collusion or Collision?"

³² du Plessis, "Khoisan Click Languages of Africa: Present, Past, and Future Map."

³³ Mapaya, "Dipsticking the Study of Indigenous African Music from the John Blacking Era into the 21st Century"; Sakhiseni Joseph Yende, "Challenges Experienced by South African Indigenous Musicians: A Critical Discourse Analysis," *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 4, no. 11 (2023): 1404–14.

³⁴ Monica Lynn, *Music of the Khoisan Area and Its Influence on Eurocentric Art Music of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries* (University of California, Santa Cruz, 2010); Rabatoko, "San Indigenous Songs as Cultural Heritage for Inclusion in Botswana Music Education Programmes."

indigenous music in South Africa faces several significant challenges, many of which are rooted in historical marginalisation, cultural assimilation, and economic disparities. The article further highlights that the Khoisan people have historically been marginalised and their cultures suppressed by colonial powers and later by apartheid policies. This has resulted in a loss of cultural identity and traditions, including their music.

The existing literature attributes the extinction of Khoisan indigenous music to several historical and contemporary factors. For instance, the findings of this article point out that the arrival of European colonisers in Southern Africa led to significant disruptions in the social, cultural, and political structures of Khoisan communities. Consistent with previous research, the findings of the current study reveal that colonisers suppressed indigenous cultures and imposed their own norms and values in Africa. Khoisan music, being a fundamental part of their cultural identity, faced active attempts at suppression or assimilation into European musical forms.

The study findings show that as Khoisan communities faced pressures to adopt colonial languages and abandon their native tongues, this also affected the linguistic elements within their music. This view is supported by sociolinguistic scholars who affirm that presently many of the original Khoisan languages are now either extinct or endangered, with many of them having no written records. This is because many Khoisan people now speak mostly Afrikaans and, to a lesser extent, English. This is attributed to the colonialism. Again, the findings of the current study show that reviving Khoisan music is not only important for preserving their linguistic elements but also for safeguarding their cultural heritage. Music is a fundamental aspect of any culture, and for the Khoisan communities, it holds deep historical and linguistic significance.

Using a framework of analysis that was largely informed by the central tenets of Sociomusicology Theory, the article sought to understand the importance of reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. By so doing, the article has argued and revealed that indigenous music among Khoisan people plays a crucial role as it reflects their daily life, spirituality, and their connection to the natural world as highlighted earlier. The approach and analysis in the article were informed by what the researcher views as a nexus that is gradually growing in Sociomusicology as a foundation for understanding the importance of reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. There has been an increasing quest to revive the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan culture in South Africa. This call represents a significant step towards cultural reclamation and heritage preservation. It is heartening to know that efforts are being made to acknowledge and uplift the cultural traditions of the Khoisan people. This resurgence not only benefits the Khoisan communities but also contributes to the broader richness of South African culture. It is essential to continue supporting and celebrating these initiatives.

Reviving traditional Khoisan music becomes a proactive strategy in the face of modernisation and cultural assimilation. It serves as a means of cultural resistance, allowing communities to assert their distinctiveness and resist the pressures to conform to external influences. Through the revival of their music, Khoisan communities assert their agency and take a stand against the potential erosion of their unique cultural expressions. Moreover, this process fosters a sense of cultural pride and self-determination. It empowers community members to actively engage with their heritage and pass it on to future generations. This act of cultural revitalisation strengthens the collective sense of identity and belonging among Khoisan communities. In essence, reviving traditional music within the framework of Sociomusicology theory is a powerful tool for preserving and celebrating the cultural richness and diversity of the Khoisan communities. It not only safeguards their unique expressions but also reinforces their resilience in the face of external pressures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings and reflecting on the study, the following recommendations are made: Firstly, it is recommended that reviving the forgotten and marginalised Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa is crucial for several reasons. This includes preservation of cultural heritage. This is essential as Khoisan indigenous music is an integral part of South Africa's cultural heritage. Therefore, reviving it ensures that this rich tradition is preserved for future generations. Secondly, it is recommended to embrace and celebrate Khoisan indigenous music as it helps individuals of Khoisan descent to connect with their

cultural roots, fostering a sense of pride and identity. Thirdly, it is also recommended to revive Khoisan indigenous music to contribute to the mosaic of cultural expressions, promoting inclusivity and understanding among different communities. This is attributed to the fact that South Africa is known for its diverse cultural landscape. It is also recommended that South African universities consider curricula using Khoisan indigenous music as it provides valuable insights into the history, language, and societal structures of the Khoisan people. Fourthly, it is recommended to revive Khoisan indigenous music as it has the potential to create opportunities for cross-cultural interactions and understanding, fostering social cohesion in a diverse society. This is also attributed to the fact that music has the power to bring people together. Lastly, acknowledging, and reviving Khoisan music recognises the validity and importance of indigenous knowledge systems, which have been historically marginalised.

CONCLUSION

This article set out to understand the importance of reviving the forgotten and marginalised indigenous music in South Africa. Specific focus was placed on the Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. The study looked broadly at factors that have contributed to the extinction of Khoisan indigenous music in South Africa. The study recognises that despite all the ongoing challenges South Africa may make significant strides toward inclusivity, understanding, and the enjoyment of its unique cultural heritage by appreciating the value of Khoisan indigenous music. This initiative improves social cohesiveness and togetherness among the nation's citizens while also enhancing the cultural richness of the country.

This article also mentions that Khoisan indigenous music is one example of an indigenous cultural expression that should be preserved and promoted since it helps create a community that is more alive, diverse, and cognisant of many cultures. The study further points out that reviving Khoisan indigenous music holds immense cultural, social, and historical importance. It serves as a crucial link to the heritage of the Khoisan people, preserving their unique traditions and practices. Additionally, it is revealed in this article that Khoisan indigenous music contributes to South Africa's cultural diversity, acknowledging the rich heritage of the Khoisan and promoting inclusivity. The revival also plays a role in reconciliation efforts, fostering unity and understanding among different communities, particularly considering historical injustices. Moreover, it reinforces cultural identity and pride for the Khoisan people.

It is evident that reviving this music allows for the exchange of cultural knowledge, ensuring valuable traditional wisdom is passed down. Economically, it can provide livelihoods for musicians and artists, and attract cultural tourism. This article also states that reviving Khoisan music contributes to building a more inclusive, culturally rich society in South Africa. Ongoing efforts in preserving this heritage are crucial for sustaining these benefits and acknowledging the integral role of indigenous cultures in the nation's history and identity. In conclusion, this article affirms that the Khoisan indigenous music holds a deep cultural significance for the Khoisan people and South Africa as a whole. It serves as a potent vehicle for the expression and preservation of their great connection to nature, spiritual beliefs, and rich cultural history.

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