Original Research Article

Harnessing community musicians as living archives for "sustainable" teaching and learning of Ugandan musics at Makerere University

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ABSTRACT: At the Department of Performing Arts and Film at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, there is a growing trend of integrating community musicians into music and dance education through workshops on Ugandan musical traditions. These musicians, who play a vital role in the creation, preservation, and transmission of traditional music, function as living archives within their communities. Drawing on research conducted at Makerere University from 2021 to 2023, this article examines how engaging community musicians as key contributors to teaching and learning Ugandan musics has the potential to decolonise music education in Uganda. In describing the benefits of this inclusive approach, I critique the persistence of elitist frameworks in Ugandan university music and dance departments, which often prioritise engagement with PhD holders and published materials over community-based knowledge. I argue that community musicians, as living archives, offer invaluable insights that can foster the sustainable teaching and learning of Uganda's diverse musical heritage. Sustainable teaching and learning, as conceptualised in this article, involve educational practices that acknowledge and integrate the contributions of all stakeholders in the production, dissemination, and appreciation of knowledge, thereby ultimately benefiting educational institutions, students, and the communities to which students may return after graduation.

KEYWORDS: community-based music knowledge, western music knowledge frameworks, decolonial music education, homogeneous whole, diverse Uganda

Introduction

The contemporary higher education system in Uganda, much like its colonial predecessor, continues to prioritise Western knowledge frameworks and to sideline indigenous systems of music knowledge. This bias is particularly evident in how community musicians are perceived. They are often dismissed by the "modern" university system despite being vital custodians of musical heritage. Their form of

embodied music knowledge predominated during the pre-colonial and colonial eras, and many communities in contemporary Uganda continue to rely on community musicians for the collection, preservation, and transmission of essential historical information. The reliance on their archival knowledge through orality in twenty-first-century Uganda is due to inadequate written records. In their safeguarding of this material, I argue that these musicians can be regarded as living archives of the community. If living archives were to safeguard knowledge in contemporary Uganda as they did during the pre-colonial and colonial periods, they could be harnessed to enhance sustainable teaching and learning processes in university settings.

This article adopts a decolonial theoretical approach to describe the historical role community musicians continue to have as living archives. They are repositories of substantial information that may be harnessed to foster sustainable teaching and learning of Ugandan musics at Makerere University. With reference to Makerere University's Department of Performing Arts and Film (PAF), I discuss the advantages of engaging community musicians as living archives and how these resources can be employed in the instruction of Ugandan musics. While Kagumba and Sekalegga (2018, 140) acknowledge that courses on Ugandan musics occupy a shrinking space in the music curriculum at Makerere University, these courses continue to have a presence at several public and private universities in Uganda. As Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2003) and Wabyona (2023) have observed, teaching and learning Ugandan musics is linked to efforts by post-independence governments to decolonise music education by presenting what can be regarded as a "Ugandanised" curriculum — modules in which "traditional" Ugandan musics take centre stage during music teaching and learning at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

For the more than six decades since Uganda gained political independence in 1962, the aspiration of adapting the country's education to "suit the local environment" has been ongoing (Wabyona 2023, 249). In the course of attempting to achieve this goal, approaches to teaching and learning indigenous musics have been the subject of scholarly investigation, such as that of Kagumba and Sekalegga (2018), for whom "replacing foreign faculty with [Ugandan] educators" (2018:132) was seen as a strategy to enhance what I would regard as sustainable teaching and learning of Ugandan musics at different levels of education. Kagumba and Sekalegga (2018) and Wabyona (2023) emphasise the role of community musicians in achieving decolonial music education in Uganda. Since the work of these scholars is lacking in detail, I draw on empirical research to add to weight to their insights by describing the benefits of collaborative teaching, where lecturers partner with students and community musicians and discuss the ways in which this approach to teaching and learning can be executed to decolonise university music education in Uganda.

Decolonialism, which I use interchangeably with concepts such as decolonial and decolonisation, is among the terms I grapple with in this article. Bray (1994, 37)

has used this concept to demonstrate the need for the "transfer of sovereignty from European colonial powers to sovereign nations during the [twenty-first] century." However, I present decolonialism as a "framework that not only challenges the epistemological foundations of colonialism … but is a [way] of de-linking [a post-colonial state] from Eurocentric thought" (Zavala 2016, 1). In applying this term, I emphasise the need for collaborative teaching and learning in university spaces, with community musicians taking a central position in the processes of knowledge production, dissemination, and appreciation, thereby challenging the foundation upon which colonialist forms of teaching are built.

Methodology
Research data was collected in the course of workshops with community musicians, and supplemented by interviews with musicians, lecturers, and students. Besides organising interviews with individual students and lecturers, most of the interactions with students were through focus group discussions. The workshops, interview sessions, and focus group discussions were recorded on video for analysis and as material that may be used for future teaching and learning purposes. In cases where I did not use any of the above sources, my experiences as a former student, as a lecturer of music at PAF, and as an archivist at Makerere University's Klaus Wachsmann Audio-Visual Archive (MAKWAA) are relevant in understanding the issues I discuss.

This research raised ethical questions that I had to negotiate. The first issue relates to ensuring that community musicians did not speak ill of the university. Over the years, the Ugandan public has criticised education institutions for being too theoretical and for their marginal contribution to practice. In such contexts, how does the researcher ensure that the community musicians he or she interacts with value the attempts of the university to transform its course offerings to make them more relevant to public interests? Moreover, how does she or he ensure that what is taught during these sessions does not discourage students from participating in university programmes?

The other ethical issue was the navigation of university security infrastructures, which include security checkpoints at the main gate, library entrances, guest houses, and other strategic points on campus, to ensure that community musicians had unimpeded access to the university. There is the added question of the position community musicians occupy in the communities in which they live. At the beginning of my fieldwork, many students observed that the image of community musicians as people who usually beg for food and alcohol, or are "unschooled," in Western terms, makes it difficult for them to serve the university system as instructors. How, then, does the researcher ensure that students do not lose interest in the courses taught by community instructors? Do such courses mean that this knowledge can be acquired from "anywhere"? If this is the case, is it necessary to enrol in a university to study what one can easily learn in the community?

There were also questions related to language and whether to reveal the identities of the students who participated in this study. Without a doubt, many community musicians cannot speak English, the language used for instruction in school contexts in Uganda. This being the case, how does one engage with these musicians during workshops with students in a university context? Moreover, how does the researcher present the views of students since many of the ideas they share may be construed by the lecturers as impolite or offensive?

For purposes of ensuring that no one was offended, I had to mitigate these ethical questions beforehand. First, I ensured that I had explained the focus of the workshops to the community musicians: as they had built their music careers over a long period of time, as noted by Mabingo (2019), they had accumulated substantial knowledge about music and dance which they could now share with others, including university students. Moreover, there are no limits along the knowledge-creation and sharing continuum: universities and surrounding communities can create and share knowledge if they both desire to contribute to the growth and development of the academy and the country at large. Reassured, the musicians accepted the conditions of engagement and participated in the workshops I organised. I had asked my students to appreciate that knowledge is held by all individuals. The question of how someone speaks, his or her appearance, and the social status of the person should not be an impediment to acquiring knowledge from him or her. This briefing changed the students' attitudes, and they proceeded well with their studies.

My invitations to musicians were otherwise accepted without hesitation as Makerere University encourages community engagement in the form of arrangements where communities are brought to the university and the university is taken to the community. Engendering reciprocal engagements between the university and the community is meant to facilitate a mutual relationship in which knowledge is produced, disseminated, and shared between the various groups and entities.

Though several community musicians in Uganda are unable to communicate in English, those I worked with could. Robert Kijjogwa, whom I interacted with most, is a fluent speaker of English. He told me that he had a diploma in music, dance, and drama from Makerere University and had been a music instructor in primary and secondary schools for many years. I found it necessary to protect the identity of students whose views I have quoted in this article by employing *noms de plumes* since lecturers may view their statements as impolite.

A glimpse into theory

This article is informed by two theories. The first relates to the consideration that archives are not only institutions but mechanisms through which communities ensure that items of value in their midst are safeguarded in the present to be retrieved and used in the future. Muller (2002) argues that we need to move beyond

the notion of the archive as a building or institution. We should demystify archiving as encompassing activities conducted by "experts" and conceptualise an archive as any site people use to collect, store, and transmit important information. Muller provides the example of a song composition as an archive, where the composer collects and keeps significant information in the present to be retrieved and used in the future. In Muller's conceptualisation of the archive, rituals and other forms of oral traditions not only become sites where communities gather, document, and transmit significant material from one generation to the next but also represent the idea of the archive in which sacred content is collected and safeguarded.[1]

Following in Muller's footsteps is Sanga (2014), who presents musical paintings as forms of archiving. Sanga was referring to visual works by Elias Jengo at the University of Dar es Salaam. Jengo archives the national identity of Tanzania through sculpture and paintings. According to Sanga, even the practice of teaching students who later transmit the same knowledge to future generations is an act of perpetuating this form of archive. This example is used to demonstrate how Jengo mentors artists who later graduate and pass on the same knowledge to other people in high schools, colleges, and universities.

If musicians, songs, ritual performances, art, teachers, and physical spaces are forms of archives, this implies that numerous forms of living archives exist in our midst. Moreover, if the musician and the songs he or she composes are archives, or if a ritual is a manifestation of an archive and a site of doing archiving, this suggests that a particular archive may manifest itself in different forms. Kurin (2004) describes a situation where both tangible and intangible archives co-exist, as in the case of a place where songs or rituals are staged, with the musicians or rituals themselves representing the idea of the archive. As he observes, this situation makes safeguarding more complex, especially if one must distinguish between the different items that require safeguarding.

Besides redefining the archive, as above, the need for the decolonising of higher education calls for adopting a de(post)-colonial theoretical approach to analyse research data. As this article illustrates, one should reconsider the university as a site where academics and local communities can interact to foster the production, dissemination, and sharing of knowledge. To expound on these ideas: there is a continuum among key concepts such as identity, representation, and surveillance in postcolonial studies, which demonstrates how a university such as Makerere continues to draw a line between different forms of knowledge and their value in society.

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (1998) suggest that the project of colonisation only succeeded because of the coloniser's ingenuity in "postulating that there existed a binary opposition into which the world was divided. Thus [,] the idea

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1. Taylor (2003), in her work on the archive and the repertoire, evokes similar discussions. See also Makwa (2016).

of the savage could occur only if there was a concept of the civilised to oppose it" (1998, 36). Moreover, there also existed categorisations concerning what forms of knowledge had value and which did not matter when it came to examining the processes of knowledge production, dissemination, and consumption.

Knowledge sources that were not easily collected or "without any easily recoverable past" — as Muller (2002, 410) has also pointed out — were considered inappropriate for archiving, whereas those from societies with sustained traditions of writing and reading were valorised. In discussing the ways university music and dance instructors can engage with community musicians in the teaching and learning processes of Ugandan musics and dances, and the advantages thereof, this article contributes to a formation of an understanding that the knowledge contained in everyday living archives has a crucial role in the training of music and dance scholars who can serve both local communities and the university.

The other postcolonial term relevant to this article is representation. In the proliferation of postcolonial studies over the past sixty years, concepts of representation and identity remain eminent. After World War II and the development of independent states (especially in Africa) after decolonisation, the way these nations were represented has been the focus of several scholars. While Uganda has gained political independence, it continues to be represented in ways that evoke colonial prejudices about it. As Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2012) wrote in relation to African music, Uganda is often presented as if it comprised one large sociocultural group whose music represents all Ugandans. Mabingo (2020) shares a similar view when he asks, "why is it that the complex and diverse dances in African cultures are categorised under the homogenising labels 'African dance' and 'world music' yet other dance forms such as those from Euro-American traditions are identified, taught, and valued as distinct genres worth in-depth analysis?" (2020, 3). The project of misrepresenting Ugandan musics and dances especially in university settings is ongoing.

Asaasira (2015) correctly argues that, during the precolonial period, "what is now referred to as Uganda was an area occupied by various kingdoms and chieftaincies, each operating independently with its own leader(s) and leadership system. The people in these different political units identified [and still identify] themselves by drawing borders of difference using their cultures" (2015, 181). Even in the contemporary period, Uganda continues to take pride in its more than sixty socio-cultural groups. Due to the over-ethnicisation of its politics (Ssentongo 2016), Ugandans see themselves more on "ethnic" lines than as one nation.

It is then plausible to think about Ugandan musics and dances, in plural, to refer to the diversity of musics and dances in Uganda as performed by different groups of people in different geographical regions. Thinking about Uganda music as if there is only one major music genre representing the entire country only serves to perpetuate colonial stereotypes.

Courses for Ugandan musics at Makerere University[2]

Ugandan universities with music programmes[3] offer courses in different areas: aural training, composition, ethnomusicology, history, analysis, and the literature on "African" and Western music, music education, and performance. With studies on music technology also gaining momentum, the diversified music programme at Makerere University aims to produce graduates who can compose, produce, perform, and teach music at different levels (from primary or secondary schools to colleges and universities).

The twenty-first-century neoliberal policies of the World Bank have been the largest influence on the undergraduate music programme at Makerere University. Before 2011, students admitted to the BA (Music) programme were those who had studied music either at high school or at diploma level and hence had prior knowledge of the subject.[4] The BA (Music) programme was revised to accommodate students who had not previously studied music.[5] The teaching and learning of Ugandan musics at Makerere University was also informed by the need to re-align the university's music curriculum to respond to national demands, especially as regards curbing unemployment by graduating job-makers as opposed to job-seekers.

Ugandan musics are offered throughout the three years of the BA (Music) degree and the two years of the Diploma in Performing Arts (DPA). In this section, I provide more important information about many of these courses in relation to their content, their aims, and the teaching and learning approaches adopted by the course facilitators.

The MUS 1209 course (the study of music in selected cultures in Uganda) and DPA 2103 course (appreciation of music in selected Ugandan cultures) are among

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2. The Department of Performing Arts and Film, initially known as Music, Dance, and Drama, has revised its programmes since its inception in 1971. The beginning of the academic year 2024/2025 in August 2024 saw the implementation of the new BA in Music programme and, like in all the previous programmes, courses on Ugandan musics take a central position. This study was conducted before the implementation of the new programme and thus draws on courses presented in the old music curriculum. Most of the issues concerning the new music programme at Makerere University are beyond the scope of this article.

3. Most universities in Uganda run a music programme at undergraduate level. A few of them, including Makerere University, have graduate programmes in which students specialise in music composition, ethnomusicology, or music education. The discussions offered in this article are based on teaching and learning Ugandan musics at university undergraduate level.

4. In Uganda, the minimum requirement to enrol on a university degree programme is two principal passes obtained at the same sitting of Senior Six in the relevant subject combination.

5. For more discussions on these policies and their impact on the teaching and learning of music at Makerere University, see Kagumba and Sekalegga (2018). See also Ahikire and Ninsiima's (2022) discussions of how neoliberal policies have impacted on the teaching of and research on humanities at Makerere University.

the core courses for bachelor's and diploma students. MUS 1209 is offered to first-year BA students while DPA 2103 is a course for second-year diploma students. Despite being offered in the first semester to students in different academic programmes during different years of study, the courses have similar content, including discussions of music and its role in the life cycle of people, and students are usually tasked with conducting a small study of their sociocultural group. The aim here is to have students share examples and experiences of how music is used from the time a baby is conceived up to one's funeral rites.

There are also discussions of music diversity in Uganda and of factors that account for the varieties, studies of court music (with specific reference to the Ankole, Buganda, Bunyoro, and Tooro courts), *imbalu* circumcision musics and dances among the Bagisu (Bamasaaba) of eastern Uganda, and a survey of musics from different regions of Uganda. In addition to providing an overview of musical instruments (illuminating the four classes, as explained by Von Hornbostel) in the various parts of Uganda, these courses include topics on religious influences (both Islam and Christianity) on musics from different parts of Uganda, as well as the study of Ugandan art music. Ugandan art musicians such as Joseph Kyaggambiddwa, Anthony Okello, and Justinian Tamusuza are featured in the latter.

As the above descriptions of courses suggest, the main aim of teaching MUS 1209 and DPA 2103 is to expose students to the different musics created, performed, and consumed by different socio-cultural groups in Uganda. Questions of how the cultural, social, aesthetic, political, and economic contexts, all concerns of ethnomusicology, influence processes of music creation, performance, and consumption, are at the centre of these courses. Moreover, as most of the students are Ugandans, it is pertinent for them (and even non-Ugandans) to be exposed to musics from different parts of the country.

The study of regional musics — undertaken within a consortium of four courses — forms part of the music curriculum at Makerere University. In this category are MUS 2120 (performing "ethnic" musics and dances from eastern Uganda), MUS 2207 (performing "ethnic" musics and dances from northern Uganda), MUS 1207 (performing "ethnic" musics and dances from central Uganda) and MUS 1107 (performing "ethnic" musics and dances from western Uganda).

MUS 2120 is a second-year music course for BA students presented during their first semester. From eastern Uganda, four "ethnic" groups are usually surveyed. These are the Iteso, Bagisu (Bamasaaba), Basamia, and Basoga. The a*kogo* dance (which is accompanied by a set of lamellaphones), is taught as the music and dance genre of the Iteso. *Imbalu* circumcision musics and dances are the main items selected from the Bagisu (Bamasaaba) community. From the Basamia (who, like the Bamasaaba or Bagisu, are found along the border with Kenya), *owaro* (an entertainment music and dance genre) is the main music and dance that receives attention. *Tamenhaibuga* (also an entertainment dance and music genre) of the Basoga is also taught.

In MUS 1207 (performing "ethnic" musics and dances from central Uganda), *baakisimba* music and dance of the Baganda is taught to BA music students during the second semester in their first year. As Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2005) has noted, *baakisimba* denotes drums, music, and dance among the Baganda. Both the *kabaka*'s (king's) palace and occasions such as weddings and graduation parties outside the palace are the contexts in which *baakisimba* dance music is performed. Despite contemporary Baganda women also playing drums during the *baakisimba* performance, women's traditional role in *baakisimba* performance is to dance. The men play drums, conforming to their traditionally ascribed identity of being strong and energetic.

Likewise, MUS 1107 (performing "ethnic" musics and dances from western Uganda) encompasses learning the music and dance styles of the Banyankore, Bakiga, Bakonzo, Banyoro, and Batooro. Dances and accompanying musics from this region include *kizino* (an entertainment dance music of the Bakiga), *ekitaguriro* (dance music of the Banyankore), *runyege-ntogoro* (courtship dance music common among the Banyoro of north-western Uganda) and the Bakonzo dance music known as *kikibi*.

The last region in the study of Ugandan musics and dances is northern Uganda, which is studied in the MUS 2207 course offered during the second semester of year two. Despite other socio-cultural groups such as the Langi existing in this region, the musics and dances of the Acholi are the most performed items. Moreover, while *bwola* (a royal dance which contemporary Acholi perform during most social events other than funeral rites) is the most common dance, there are other dances, including *larakaraka* (courtship dance) and *dingi dingi* (a traditional children's dance performed during merry-making occasions). *Larakaraka* performers carry large calabashes which they beat with bicycle spikes. Figure 1 is a photograph of second year students during *larakaraka* dance rehearsals at PAF.

The purpose of teaching these courses is to have students learn the basic instrumentation and accompaniments for the dances from a specific region. Students also learn the accompanying songs and the basic dance motifs, in addition to acquiring information about the history of the dance in question, issues related to the contexts of performance, and changes and continuities manifested in the dance. The student is required to choose an instrument from each of these regions and to learn and play it during the dance performances. Students are exposed to these courses as a way of enabling them to appreciate the musics (and dances) from the different communities of Uganda. Lastly, as part of the cultural renaissance project mentioned by Nannyonga-Tamusuza (2006), Kagumba and Sekalegga (2018), and Mabingo (2020, 9), the teaching and learning of Ugandan musics and dances at different educational levels is an implicit effort towards the revival, preservation, and promotion of the country's musical and dance heritage, which had been considered "satanic" by the British colonialists.

One important issue relating to these courses is the manner of instruction.

Figure 1. Second-year Bachelor of Arts (Music) students during *larakaraka* dance rehearsals at PAF. A member of the Watmon Cultural Troupe is instructing the students. Photograph by the author, 8 June 2023.

The music (and dance) lecturers do much of the teaching. Drawing on their earlier experiences, they demonstrate the dance steps, teach the songs, the accompaniment, and information relating to the performances. Lecturers also use pre-recorded materials to enhance the teaching and learning of these musics and dances. Finally, most of the teachers have found it necessary to engage in collaborative teaching with community musicians, who are invited to conduct workshops on these musics and dances.

As this article deals with community musicians as living archives who can be harnessed for the teaching and learning of Ugandan musics at university, several questions can be asked, including: Why should they serve as mediums for teaching and learning in the university context, and how can they be mobilised for this purpose? I address the first question in the section that follows and the second question later.

Towards the harnessing of community musicians for "sustainable" teaching and learning of Ugandan musics at university

Sustainability is a concept that has pervaded disciplines such as agriculture, environmental and political sciences, economics, and sociology, among others, since the late 1980s. The term is generally used to denote "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 1987, quoted in Fargion 2012, 49). Since the late 1980s, there has been a

proliferation of scholarly work on sustainable education, with scholars discussing what it entails, and the nature of the teaching and learning to be adopted to attain this type of education.

According to Sterling (2010), besides engendering integrity, justice, respect, and inclusiveness, sustainable education should enable people to harness the environment for their day-to-day survival. Flen (2006), Brew and Cahir (2014) and Geitz and De Geus (2019), have examined how sustainable education can be achieved when universities align their programmes and courses with the demands of the job market. As an example, Brew and Cahir (2014) examine how resources developed for instruction at university can be tailored with the intention of reusing them when policies for the nation's development agenda change in the future.

While universities in Uganda continue to align their curricula with the dictates of the job market, the last two decades or so have seen Ugandans, especially political elites, question the quality of the graduates produced. That there are graduates who cannot execute hands-on tasks has been blamed on the nature of their instruction, which emphasises theory over practice. The lower secondary school curriculum, rolled out in 2021, addresses concerns such as nurturing a generation of Ugandans who can create instead of seeking jobs.

Community musicians are some of the resources PAF can draw on to enhance the teaching and learning of traditional musics and dances. The term "community musician," as applied in this article, refers to an artist based in a particular village or township. The musician composes and performs music in the various sociocultural, political, religious, and economic contexts in which he or she resides. Okpewho (1992, 21–41) enumerates the different types of these artists, their role in society, and how they acquire apprenticeship and training. He observes that the status of these artists depends on the nature of the art they practise, something that also informs the type of training they receive or that to which they are exposed. For those designated to practise an elaborate chore, such as that related to ritual, their period of apprenticeship and training is long. It may span several years, which includes being attached to a senior musician who supervises them.

These are the types of musicians I refer to in my discussions. Including such musicians in teaching programmes and considering them living archives is a consequence of the need to take advantage of their skills and knowledge at university. My research reveals that engagement with community musicians during the teaching and learning sessions on Ugandan musics at university generates several advantages.

The first advantage relates to their sharing their practical skills in making, repairing, and playing instruments, designing costumes, and choreographing dances. Students who participated in this research acknowledged that their teachers have limited practical experience of Ugandan musics and dances—their involvement in different activities (teaching, supervision of dissertations, conducting their own research, and execution of administrative roles) makes it

difficult for them to fully concentrate and acquire the practical experience that can be applied during teaching. For their part, community musicians perform the same songs and dances repeatedly, making them well-placed to assist teachers based at university. Using the case of Nigeria, Adeogun asserts that the environment in which community musicians thrive can be likened to an "oral university" (2021, 469). What this means is that community musicians undergo training which unfolds through complex apprenticeship systems, initiation schools, and music-borrowing practices, all embedded in the social systems to which they belong.

Although his research does not discuss school or university contexts, Mabingo (2019) acknowledges that community musicians (and dancers) who usually lead instruction in dances in non-academic settings have accumulated knowledge of the dances they teach. As he observes, "content knowledge of the dances [they teach] is constructed experience and reality that entails embodied, reflexive, and conscious agency that the learners as knowers, thinkers, doers, and innovators [can draw on]" (2019, 312).[6] As such, the years one spends learning the art (in most cases, taking an entire lifetime) implies that the three or five years a student spends studying music or dance at a university may not be enough to acquire the knowledge and skills the community musician has accumulated over time. On the other hand, it is worth remembering that many of the students at university are also community musicians.

The other advantage associated with collaborative teaching is what students referred to as a diversion from the daily norms of the university. In other words, working with community musicians enhances a shift from the typical daily routine entrenched in universities where learners report for lectures, visit libraries, make class presentations, and write tests and examinations, with every task calling for strict adherence to a timetable. These rules and regulations may be instituted within the framework for creating academic order. However, my interaction with students revealed that maintaining such rules and regulations impedes learning.

Inviting community musicians to teaching, and learning sessions restores morale. Students observed that the invited artists are usually friendly. Learners can ask questions in a relaxed manner. Though there is prestige involved in using English, most students agreed that the contexts where they work with community musicians during their music and dance lectures at university make learning more enjoyable since local languages are not prohibited. As such, if well harnessed, the teaching and learning approach involving community musicians can become a platform where different techniques of instruction may interact to create a hybrid style of not only imparting knowledge but also sharing it.

Furthermore, the harnessing of community musicians as living archives with material for teaching and learning was seen to increase students' chances of being

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6. See also Virkkula (2016) who shares similar viewpoints based on a study conducted in Finland.

hired upon their completion of the programmes. This idea was captured by a student as follows:

> When they come, we are exposed to them. They connect us to places where we can easily get jobs. The university needs to give these musicians a space to teach us since this will be a platform for them to identify us and train us for the same jobs we usually ask for when we meet them out there (BA music student during a focus group discussion on 1 November 2023).

The BA (Music) programme[7] at Makerere University prepares graduates for teaching opportunities (to work as teachers of western and "African" musics) at different levels of education. Choir training for Ugandan "ethnic" dances, instrumental compositions, folk singing, and Western music is another area in which most music (and dance) graduates enrol. Moreover, besides seeking job opportunities in music creation, production, and dissemination, numerous music (and dance) graduates perform traditional music and dance at weddings, political rallies, and other social gatherings. In Uganda, schools, churches, studios, cultural troupes, archival centres, museums, and media houses such as radio and television stations are places where most music graduates find employment.

When students argue that engaging community musicians in teaching and learning is an explicit way of securing future employment opportunities, they present these musicians as a bridge between the university and the job market. Community musicians use the former as a site for training and mentorship of future musicians who can execute their duties, bearing in mind the demands of employers such as schools, studios, and cultural troupes. This view of community musicians using university spaces as sites for the training and mentorship of the musicians who will answer to the dictates of the job market fits in with Brew and Cahir's (2014) framework for how universities should work to create course content that relates to the aspirations of government development agendas and the university. Over the past two decades, the ambition of the Ugandan government has been to link the training it offers in various academic institutions with the demands of the job market. This situation also defines the university as a mediator of employment opportunities.

While the employment of traditional musicians in university music (and dance) departments is seen as a key factor towards decolonial music education in Uganda (Kagumba and Sekalegga 2018), debates on the qualifications of these musicians have always existed. How qualified do community musicians need to be and what academic experience should they possess for them to "qualify" to work in university spaces? What about their ability to engage in academic discussions as befits those occurring at a "modern" university of the calibre of Makerere?

With regard to the aim of employing Ugandan citizens (including community

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7. The BA (Music), BA (Drama and Film), courses on dance, and the Diploma (Performing Arts) are all rich in both theoretical and practical content, thus readying graduates to numerous job opportunities in these areas.

musicians), Kagumba and Sekelegga (2018, 132) argue that the continuous recruitment of university music faculty based on "western-earned qualifications" has reproduced the very colonial infrastructures post-independent Uganda set out to dismantle. The example of Robert Kijjogwa can be recounted to illustrate this experience. Kijjogwa, who obtained a diploma in music, dance, and drama in the mid-1990s, was employed by PAF as an African instrument instructor in 2006. Kijjogwa's experience as a musician, someone engaged in making and repairing traditional Ugandan musical instruments, adjudicator, and music trainer for festivals makes him stand out as a person with a very comprehensive curriculum vitae. However, Kijjogwa told me that he could not continue working with Makerere University as he was looked down upon due to his lacking the necessary minimum academic qualification of a master's degree. By the time I conducted this research, numerous music and dance lecturers were inviting Kijjogwa to their lectures via private arrangements.

As the above shows, colonial epistemologies have continued to occupy a central position in determining who should participate in the process of knowledge production, dissemination, and sharing at Makerere University. Indeed, this experience raises several questions, including: should the "modern" university system be relied on when someone such as Kijjogwa finds it difficult to use its space to share knowledge? Why should "intellectuals" interview community musicians such as Kijjogwa and use their ideas in their academic reports, while these musicians are classified as not "qualified" when it comes to imparting the same knowledge to students in university teaching and learning contexts? These and other questions augment the power yielded by the "modern" African university in determining who holds knowledge.

The other advantage of collaborating with community musicians in teaching and learning Ugandan musics at university is their ability to facilitate the lesson as a performance, as opposed to enforcing the completion of course content, which is usually the case with conventional lectures. This approach entails changing many of the conventions that call for adhering to the choreography, accompaniment, and performance during a teaching and learning session. For example, the lecturer usually has it as a rule that particular songs should be aligned with specific dance motifs. He or she may be accustomed to sustaining a certain dance motif for specific minutes before changing to the next one. However, during Kijjogwa's workshop on *tamenhaibuga* dance, many of the songs he had taught students during the previous lecture were not ideal for some of the motifs in the *tamenhaibuga* dance performance, and he had to change them. Moreover, after noticing that students could not cope with the prolonged motifs associated with the *irongo* section of the *tamenhaibuga* dance, he had to quickly change to an idea that could work. The technique of the musician changing something spontaneously and leaning on his practice and knowledge to create music is a necessary and useful adaptation that may not have occurred had he not been present.

What should we do to "sustainably" use these living archives, and how?

There are two important ways in which these "living archives" can be effectively utilised by a university. At Makerere University, as in most academic institutions, the norm is for academic staff to develop, write, and review academic programmes for their respective departments. During the teaching phase, lecturers rely on course outlines to prepare teaching and learning materials. While PAF regularly organises workshops with stakeholders to discuss programmes in music, dance, drama, and film, these sessions are typically consultation-driven. They focus on the demands of the job market.

However, this research has established that engagements where the university consults and involves communities in its programmes should begin during the preparation of courses and continue through the teaching and learning phase up to the stage of assessing students. Kijjogwa iterated this issue when he noted the following:

> I may not participate in the writing process of the programme — because this may be a bit technical. However, I can come in at the time you make the course outline. We can arrange the topics to be taught together. Here, I can also suggest the material to be used during class teaching and learning. As a person who has performed music for many years, trained choirs, organised music workshops, made and repaired musical instruments, I have a lot of experience [and even material] that I can bring to these classes. While examining students, lecturers can invite me to participate. But I must be told that I will be part of these activities from the very beginning (Interview 2 November 2023).

Bringing community musicians on board from the outset engenders an environment conducive to streamlining topics, engaging in discussions about the course layout, sharing materials, delivering lectures, and how evaluation should be realised. This process also decolonises university teaching and learning activities as it allows community members to be engaged as stakeholders and not merely as spectators.

The other way of harnessing these living archives is by making recordings of the music workshops community musicians organise and keeping these materials in institutional archives such as MAKWAA. Lobley (2012) points out how archives have historically acted as spaces in which certain material is held against the will of the communities from which it was collected. The role of the archivist is highly valued in maintaining such archives. He or she not only decides what users should "see" but also how they should use material in the archive holdings. Considering that MAKWAA is on the campus of the university and has been engaged in exhibitions (see Nannyonga-Tamusuza and Weintraub, 2012), this archive can be easily accessed by music and dance lecturers who may want to use such items in situations in which community musicians are unavailable.

As I ponder these activities, there are practical implications to consider. Caution should be applied with regard to copyright and ethical issues. Torkornoo (2012, 1) argues that many of the musics artists create may not be attributable to any individual

author because they may draw from folk songs and other materials owned by the local community. In such a situation, how do musicians and community members share proceeds from such musics? Moreover, many scholars have been accused of knowingly taking material from the people they interact with during fieldwork (Phyllis 1999). As Seeger (2004) also observes, ethical issues have become more complicated with advances in technology. In order to ensure sustainable teaching and learning, scholars and archivists need to be aware of such issues to effectively mitigate conflicts that may arise between the university and communities.

Conclusion

This article has advocated engagement with community musicians in the processes of teaching and learning Ugandan musics at Makerere University. While the university has historically stood as a centre where intellectuals engage in activities of knowledge production and dissemination, this article shows how other stakeholders can be included. It concludes that the twenty-first-century university as an exclusive space should be dismantled and refocused as a site where students, lecturers, and local communities interact. By collapsing boundaries that continue to define the colonial university, other forms of knowledge, including those enshrined in living archives, as the case of community musicians has shown, can be used to enrich its curriculum.

As Muller (2002) has observed, the oral archive has been ignored because it relies primarily on memory to organise its material. This archive is usually presented as a site where incoherent ideas exist — views that may not be relied on to advance "modern" knowledge. Conversely, because it hinges on written sources, the written archive is credited as being a "reliable" source and something that could be sustainable. However, since both types of archives are "engaged in generating as well as opening frontiers of knowledge" (Ssempijja 2022, 107) — they should all be equally valued. As this article argues, the oral knowledge held by community musicians is tantamount to writing as it ensures the ongoing availability and use of the material.

Scholarly debates on sustainability have indicated that it usually becomes difficult to track how something can be sustainable over a specific period (Titon 2009). This article concludes that sustainable teaching and learning at university should be manifested through continuous appreciation by university lecturers and students that they have gained from the activities of community members. Similarly, sustainable teaching and learning also occurs when community members appreciate that they have contributed to the development of the human resources that will return to the community upon the student's graduation from the university.

Furthermore, musicians and the material they create and perform come with numerous ethical and copyright issues; for example, with regard to ethics, musics that feature in secret initiation rituals may find their way into university contexts. With the proliferation of recording technologies, students and their lecturers may be

tempted to record the musics performed by these musicians during workshops and use the material in other contexts. Therefore, lecturers engaging with community musicians must find ways to mitigate copyright and ethical issues that may accrue from these interactions. More importantly, the lecturers need to appreciate that the careful management of these musicians and the materials they create is a strategy to avoid conflicts that may arise between the university, the musician(s), and the community.

Despite students usually keeping a low profile during such collaborative projects, they need to be perceived as active collaborators. As many of them are community musicians, they occupy a significant position in the processes of production, transmission, and sharing of knowledge in school or university contexts. Engaging students as partners not only blurs the boundaries inherent in teaching and learning situations but also validates the knowledge produced and shared through such associations.

The colonial image of Uganda as a homogenous whole is partly perpetuated through English, a language spoken throughout the country. The idea of homogeneity is also perpetuated via Luganda (the language of the Baganda of Central Uganda) as a language that *all* Ugandans speak. However, Uganda has several socio-cultural groups, each speaking its own language. Sustainable teaching and learning may fail if it glosses over the complexities of multilingualism. The fact that indigenous musics, languages, power, and identities are inseparable implies that they must all be accounted for in any meaningful university programme.

Author profile
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