

“CRUSHING THE ANTHILL”
ESSENTIALS OF ARTS EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: THE CASE
OF ZAMBIA

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Abstract

Arts education training in Africa has lagged behind other continents largely because of the absence of appropriate policies and, where policy exists, lack of the political will to implement the content. Few African countries have formulated clear policies on arts education training, let alone cultural policies. This fact was spotlighted at the 1st Regional Conference on Arts Education in Africa held in Johannesburg, South Africa, 11-13 March 2015, organised by NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development). It was, in fact, the realisation that Africa lacks arts education training policy, and accompanying cultural policy, that necessitated the gathering meant for countries of the southern African region – the first of several regional conferences planned by NEPAD. While acknowledging the need for arts education training policy in Africa, however, this article argues that such policy needs to be both backward-looking and forward-looking. That is to say, it should not only help improve the state of arts training for a better future, but also draw from the African past in terms of experiences as well as training in the arts. This is because, as the article argues, the arts and education existed in Africa even before the dawn of colonialism or mission schools. For arts education training policy to work in Africa, it must include traditional art forms alongside western art forms, and, for implementation, must draw from both traditional and western forms of education. This article stresses the importance of Africa’s Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs) and anchors its arguments around five P’s: Pedigree (what have we done?), Practice (what are we doing?), Potential (what can we do?), Policy (what is the role of government?), and People (what have ordinary citizens done and what can they do?). Ultimately, this article argues that effective arts education policy must not only involve all the stakeholders in both formulation and implementation, but must also be able to target learners from early childhood to adulthood; that is, it must encompass all levels of education, both formal and informal. Further, this article argues that arts education training should ensure that the recipients are able to contribute the development of the cultural industries of African countries, and that African countries should share experiences and resources as a way of developing arts education training.

Keywords: arts education training, indigenous knowledge systems, NEPAD, cultural industries, pedigree, potential, policy, practice, people

1.0 Introduction

The focus of this article is on arts education in Africa and how it can be developed through policy and practice. Be that as it may, it is important to interrogate the place of arts and education in this context in order to come up with the appropriate policies and best practice. In other words, what is art, and what is education, in the context of Africa? Crucial to such definitions should be the realization that the arts and education existed in Africa before the coming of colonialism or western forms of artistic expression and the western education system.

This article recognizes the fact that few African countries have developed, let alone implemented, clear arts education and training policies. This fact was acknowledged at the 1st NEPAD Regional Conference on Arts Education in Africa held in Johannesburg, South Africa, 11-13 March 2015. According to the conference report, the aim of the conference was “to develop a Policy Framework to formulate, strengthen and harmonize Arts Education and Training Policies in Africa as a strategic intervention and contribution in regional

integration, social cohesion and sustainable development in the continent” (NEPAD Report , 2015, p. ix). The conference, which was targeted at member countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was attended by participants from Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. It was held under the theme, ‘Towards Policies and Practices.’

While acknowledging the absence of arts education policies in most African countries, this article, however, recognizes the fact that the absence of policy does not mean the absence of arts education. Since the arts and education existed in Africa before the coming of western formal education, and indeed western artistic forms of expression, then, as this article argues, traditional forms of African arts and education must not be ignored in the formulation of forward-looking arts education policies and training programs. In light of this, it might be appropriate to invoke the wisdom of two proverbs of the Tonga people of Zambia. The first one says *Cuulu cibomba aakudinkilwa* ‘An anthill is softened by repeated crushing.’ And the second one says *Insy ncenjezu njiiccija kiicebuka* ‘The clever buck looks back while running.’ The former stresses the idea that persistence in pursuing a goal leads to reward, whereas the essence of the latter is that we need to occasionally look back at our efforts and actions and evaluate them with a view to identify and overcome the mistakes.

While the African continent cannot boast of effective policies on arts education training, it needs to continue the efforts to address the vacuum because eventually the obstacles and challenges can be overcome. There is need for African nations to reflect on the past as they grapple with the present and shape the future. There is need to occasionally pause and evaluate the past and current efforts aimed at developing arts education training even as we seek a better future. While heading forward we must not forget to look back; while running into the future we must not abandon the past. Hence this article argues that arts education policies in Africa must not only harness contemporary knowledge but also glean from the wisdom of the past in order to develop workable and rewarding policies on arts education training. While embracing western forms of art and art education training, African countries need not abandon their traditional forms of cultural and artistic expression. Arts education policies that focus on western forms of artistic expression at the expense of, or to the detriment of traditional African forms of cultural and artistic expression are doomed to fail, if for no other reason, then at least because they are not rooted in the fertile soil of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs) of African societies. In traditional African society, and indeed every other society, teaching and learning are both formal and informal.

In view of the informal nature of education in Africa, arts education training must not only be formal but also informal for it to be effective and respond to the unique circumstances of African nations. There are many African artistic forms of expression that are not taught in formal classrooms, and indeed may not be taught in formal classrooms. They may however be taught in other contexts outside the classroom. This article, therefore, advocates a holistic approach to arts education, starting with the child and developing them until they become adults, or from primary school all the way to tertiary level.

In the course of discussing the subject at hand, this article will, where necessary, draw examples from the Zambian experience. Part of the discussion will be weaved around the five P’s: Pedigree (what have we done?), Practice (what are we doing?), Potential (what can we do?), Policy (what is the role of government?), People (what have citizens that are not part of government done and what can they do?). This paper argues that arts education cannot be achieved by government alone; it has to invest in infrastructure and human resources, but it also has to encourage private citizens and NGOs to contribute to the development of arts education.

2.0 Definition of art

There are various definitions of art. It may be defined as “All forms and traditions of dance, music, visual arts, crafts, design, literature, film and theatre, which serve as means for individual and collective creativity and expression” (Forbes, 2011, p.7). It is apparent, from this definition, that all these forms of art are present in every country on the African continent, to varying degrees, and in varying forms. It is equally apparent that in every African country there are three forms of art: the traditional or indigenous, the western, as well as syncretistic forms. The problem, therefore, is not the absence of artistic or cultural forms of expression in Africa, but the absence of policies on how best to promote and improve them, both formally and informally.

That Africa as a continent lacks a unified position on arts development policy and practice came to the fore at the 2nd UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education held in Seoul, South Korea, in 2010, when the continent could not present its position on the matter. But there can be no unified continental position in the absence of clear national and regional positions. In order to develop meaningful cultural and art development policies, it is imperative to settle the matter of the meaning and nature of arts on the African continent. Here, arts must be understood and developed in all its three forms: the indigenous, the western, and the eclectic forms. The African continent had its own arts before the dawn of colonialism, and even without the infusion of western concepts of art.

3.0 Definition of education

Just as it is imperative to have a clear understanding of the arts in the context of Africa, it is equally imperative to contextualize the concept of education so that the best approaches to arts education are adopted. Arts education must not only be understood in the parochial western sense of schooling.

Mosha (2000, p.195), who argues that the concept of education in African traditional society was holistic, provides an insight into the concept of education.

An in-depth study of the words *educate* and *education* in the English language indicates that the ‘indigenous’ English people have a similar holistic approach to education. The *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates that the word *education* actually is two Latin words: *e* and *ducere*. *E* means out, as in *exit*, and *ducere* means to lead. *Educe* therefore signifies to *bring out*, to *lead out*, to develop from a condition of latent, rudimentary, or merely potential existence. A related Latin term, *educare*, means to rear, to bring up a child or young animal.

In other words, education is a process that must start in early childhood and continue into adulthood. If arts education is to succeed in Africa, the continent must implement policies that are anchored on teaching arts to children from an early age until they are grown. In fact, in the school context, arts education must start even at the early childhood learning stage. Kelly (1999, p.1) distinguishes between formal, non-formal and informal education, and also takes the stance that education is a lifelong process starting at the formative stage of life.

What is education? It is not the same as schooling, but is a lifelong process conducted by many agencies. The word has many meanings. It could refer to a system or institution (e.g., a school system), to certain activity (“Education is the action exercised by the adult generations on those who are not yet ready for social life”), to content (the curriculum and syllabuses), or to the product (as when we speak of ‘an educated person’). . . . The distinctions between formal, non-formal and informal are also important. Formal education is the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded system that runs from primary school to university or other forms of higher education. Non-formal education is any organised educational activity outside the

established formal system that is intended to serve identified learning clientele and learning objectives. Informal education is the lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes and values through informal education, in the home, from the media, on the street. UNESCO definition of education as ‘An organised and sustained communication process designed to bring about learning,’ refers mainly to formal and non-formal education.

Forbes (2011, p.9) has a similar view of education, although her view argues that education should not only lead to an appreciation of the learner’s cultural identity but also acceptance and appreciation of other people’s cultures, or foreign cultures:

Education is a continuous process in which a society and a nation passes knowledge skills and values from one generation to another. It is formal, institutionalized and informal, occasioned by various social dynamics within the society. This also includes research and training in higher institutions of learning. Education should lead to the appreciation and strengthening of one’s cultural identity as well as the appreciation and acceptance of other cultures. It should also be designed and tailored in a manner that it becomes a carrier and transmitter of knowledge, appropriate skills, values, identity and outlook that enables people to survive and prosper within their own environment and culture. Education should aim at promotion of the varied and rich cultural diversity in Kenya.

Effective African policies on arts education need to take into account the three forms of education. In addition, they need to proceed from the premise that Africa had its own forms of education before the coming of western schools, and that these forms should not be ignored in the formulation and execution of cultural and arts education policy.

4.0 The five P’s

This article will explore the topic in three dimensions: the past, the present and the future. Quite pertinent, perhaps, is the proverb *Insya ncenjezu njiiccija kiicebuka* ‘The clever buck looks back while running.’ As mentioned earlier, while it is necessary and imperative to make progress or pursue the future of arts education with focused determination, it is equally imperative to take a backward look at things as they were in the past. Taking the past into account ensures that policy makers give context to their efforts and evaluate their work. Arts education policies that ignore the past, with its achievements, failures and worldview, are bound to fail.

It is apparent that past efforts at arts education in African countries have generally not achieved the desired results, in part or largely because of the lack of appropriate policy direction. Be that as it may, African countries must continue to work towards the production of appropriate arts education policies that will help ensure success in the promotion of arts education. There is no reason to give up because of past failure; rather, the past failure must provide the impetus and determination to frame arts education policies that will provide fertile ground for best practice. With persistence and consistency, improvement is assured. The lesson of the proverb *Cuulu cibomba aakudinkilwa* ‘An anthill is softened by repeated crushing’ is that we must continue to crush the anthill of obstacles that have hindered the framing and implementation of appropriate arts education policies in Africa.

One of the reasons why past efforts at having effective arts education policies might not have worked is because of the lack of regional and continental cohesion. Most African countries have either not been working on a workable and effective arts education policy, or have worked in isolation. However, in matters of policy, there is no shame in learning from each other, for there is strength in unity, and greater wisdom in numbers. There is no shame in borrowing or learning from others – for the greatest nations on earth have indeed been the

greatest borrowers of ideas. As another Chitonga proverb says, *Simweenda alikke kaamutola kalonga* ‘The lone traveller was swept away by the river.’ When you travel with others, they will be there to pull you out of the river when the current of opposition intensifies.

In discussing the topic this paper will weave its points, in part, around the five P’s. Pedigree (Where are we coming from and what have we done? What did we have before the dawn of colonialism?), Practice (What is the state of arts education at the moment? What are we actually doing?), Potential (What are we capable of doing? What resources do we have?), Policy (What measures can be undertaken to improve the situation?) and People (How can we use our human resources to enhance arts education?)

4.1 Pedigree

As indicated earlier, African society practised the arts and had its own form of education before the coming of colonialism. They were part of the indigenous and endogenous cultural norms or what are also referred to as the Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKSs). As Carmody (2004) notes, traditional education was not formal in the school sense but informal, passed on from generation to generation. It passed on the traditions which embodied religion and morality and functioned as a means of social continuity. The transmission of the ways of life was informal, such as when people gathered together to share their stories around a night fire. As Mwanakatwe (1968, p.4) argues, the people living in what is today Zambia had evolved their own system of education long before Europeans penetrated the interior of the African continent. Carmody (2004, p.xi) sheds more light on traditional Zambian education:

Traditional education focused on the systematic socialization of the young into the norms and lore of society. It was essentially life centred and practical. It was not exclusively cognitive. It recognized the power of the family and the local environment to shape behaviour. From direct experience of symbols which were lived out in the community was born the value system. Stories, rituals, laws and life presented the younger generation with cultural symbols which helped to create a sense of pride, group identity, and the values that tended to give the society some cohesion.

Snelson (1974, p.1) description of traditional Zambian education paints a similar picture:

Traditional or tribal education had five main components. First, there was instruction in the history and traditions of the clan and of the tribe, the heroic deeds of the ancestors, the myths, rites and ceremonies; the songs and wise sayings and their hidden meanings; the dances and games, customs and beliefs. This instruction, largely conducted by the elders, developed the sense of loyalty and pride in membership of the tribe. Well-loved and often repeated stories told around the fire in the evening, and repeated by youngsters among themselves, ensured the continuity of the language and took the place of grammar books and written comprehension exercises.

Kerr (1998) categorises the traditional arts in Zambia before the coming of colonialism into five loose categories: Religious arts, life cycle performances, instrumental performances, political performance, and entertainment performance. Religious arts refers to dance forms of a religious nature such as masquerades and spirit possession dances, including the *makishi* of the Luvale people and *gulewamkulu* of the Ngoni as masquerades, and *vimbuza* of the Tumbuka and *masabe* of the Tonga as spirit possession dances.

Life cycle performances are performed at special luminal periods in a person’s life such as birth, puberty, marriage and funerals. Instrumental performances include performances with a specific end in view such as war dances and work songs. The Ngoni have a war dance. Political performances refer to rituals such as the installation of chiefs, re-enactments of

important events in the history of the community or those which symbolise significant cycles in the economic life of the people. Entertainment performances are those which are meant for entertainment such as courtship dances and oral narratives. However, with the coming of colonialism, which in part fostered the colonialist's cultural agenda, the African traditional arts and the education system that sustained and promulgated them became eroded. The colonial powers, and the missionaries before them, imposed the western form of education which had no place for the traditional forms of artistic expression. Carmody (2004, p.xii) lends weight to this argument: "With the advent of the school and the education linked to it, there was an erosion of traditional education and values."

The erosion of Africa's IKSs went into high gear from about 1880 when the missionaries started penetrating the interior of Africa. It was during this period that the missionaries began to establish western-type schools. Thus, for example, the first school in Zambia was a mission school established in 1883 by Fred Arnot, a Plymouth Brethren missionary of the Christian Mission in Many Lands. The main purpose for the establishment of the mission schools was to use them as a means of evangelisation or Christianisation. However, the schools also became a means of imposing western culture – and in the process the indigenous culture suffered. The missionaries, in part through the schools they established, discouraged traditional art forms and their propagation, for they branded them heathen and evil. Carmody (2004, p.xii) states: "...it is argued that missionary Christianity attempted to reverse traditional practices in ways that mutilated and undermined positive forces in the traditions...."

However, what the missionaries did was only a precursor of the large scale mutilation of African cultural forms of expression that occurred with the coming of colonialism. In this regard the missionaries and the colonial administrators colluded for the simple reason that the colonial enterprise was mutually beneficial to them. The missionaries and colonial authorities saw each other as partners in the efforts to at once Christianise and colonise the indigenous people of Africa. Hence the gospel was presented in the same package as the colonial enterprise and westernisation. The biggest casualty was African culture. As Boahen (1987, p.60) argues in his seminal work, *African Perspectives on Colonialism*, the colonial administrations "condemned everything African in the cultural field and tried to produce Africans in their own image". In fact, the French and Portuguese colonisers emphasised the doctrine of assimilation of the African people, going as far as conferring citizenship and legal rights on those who managed to pass the acculturation test. The French called such Africans *evolués* while the Portuguese called them *assimilados* or *nãosindigenas*.

Boahen also argues that the missionaries and the colonial administrators were collaborators or allies in the efforts that bled African cultural norms: "The colonial administrators and their allies, the European missionaries, condemned everything African in culture – African names, music, dance, art, religion, marriage, the system of inheritance – and completely discouraged the teaching of all these things in their schools and colleges. Even the wearing of African clothes to work or school was banned." Kerr (1998, p.30) sums up what transpired when he states that colonialism "had a sudden and overwhelmingly destructive effect on indigenous culture". Ngugi refers to the process as "dismemberment of Africa" (2009, p.3).

What colonialism sought to do in Africa was to establish a new beginning—a new era which refused to respect whatever had existed before then. It was almost as if whatever had existed prior to colonisation did not matter. They were only interested in a new beginning with a new Africa and a new African. It is not surprising, therefore, that historians such as A P Newton and Hugh Trevor-Roper once argued that Africa had no history before the coming of the Europeans since, according to their argument, history only begins when a society begins to write (Fage, 1970, pp.2-3). In other words, this school of thought refused to acknowledge that history can be transmitted, and indeed has been transmitted, orally, even in European civilisations.

All that people need in order to have history is language, not a writing system. However, in essence the attack on indigenous African cultures was also an attack on African languages. No form of education can occur without language, and traditional education in the arts was conducted in indigenous languages. Hence any meaningful arts education policy should include the use of indigenous African languages as media of instruction – it should not just focus on the use of the colonial languages.

4.2 Practice

The mutilation of African culture, along with the traditional arts as expression especially in the indigenous languages, created a challenge for African governments that took power after independence. To their credit, most African governments made effort to address the erosion of culture. However, not enough has been done, particularly with regard to the teaching of arts in the education system. This, as has already been established, is largely due to the lack of an effective policy framework. An assessment of the prevailing state of affairs underlines the fact that there is still a lot to be done in terms of establishing the appropriate policies and infrastructure for the promotion of arts education. There is generally speaking a focus on western arts at the expense of, or to the detriment of, indigenous arts. A lot still needs to be done to restore the place of traditional forms of art at the core of African society, not just for the purpose of reviving or promoting traditional cultural ceremonies, but more importantly in order to improve the teaching of arts in both formal and informal institutions of learning. Wilks (1970, p.9) calls this effort the “decolonization of African history”. In advocating the promotion of an education system that redresses the wrongs brought about by colonialism, Ngugi (1986, p.87) argues that Africa must engage in what he calls, in his seminal work *Decolonising the Mind*, “the quest for relevance”.

Indeed, the quest for relevance and a conscious effort at decolonisation are critical to arts education policies in Africa. The continent needs policies and practices which are not only relevant to its cultural and creative industries, but are essentially tailored to home conditions and meet the needs of the local population in its various manifestations. Presenting a paper at the 1st NEPAD Regional Conference on Arts Education held in Johannesburg in 2015, Stephen Chinfunyise (NEPAD Report 2015, p.16) noted the absence of what he terms “intergenerational transmission of intangible cultural heritage” in African school systems.

In Zambia the quest for relevance has been on-going since independence. Some achievements have been made, but there is still a lot to be done. A number of factors have militated against the efforts to make Zambian education relevant to the people. At independence African governments faced the question of whether to change the inherited education system; so did Zambia. Coombs (1985, p.70) illustrates this dilemma:

Should they adhere to and expand the imported model, or should they develop a home grown model that might adopt selected elements from those of other countries? The pressure toward rapid educational expansion determined their choice. There was no better time tested alternatives available and no time, it was felt, to design and experiment with new, untried models. Moreover, the imported colonial models carried prestige and had served well historically in their countries of origin; therefore, why should they not serve the newly independent countries just as well? To ask that question was to answer it in the affirmative. *In any event, the developing countries, virtually without exception, clung to their respective imported systems, hoping in due course to make necessary adaptations to the local conditions.*

Thus, at least in the case of Zambia, the quest for relevance, the effort to decolonise the education system, was not fully pursued upon the attainment of independence in part because the need for mass provision of education was considered more critical than changing

the content of what was taught in the classrooms. It was a question of priorities. Hence, the first opportunity to make arts education relevant to the needs and culture of Zambians was not fully exploited.

That is not to say there were no efforts made; the point being made is that whatever efforts were made were not enough. In short, no clear policy on arts education emerged from the new African government which was in a hurry to provide more classroom space than to change the content of what was being offered to children in the schools. Thus, for example, the Zambian government of Kenneth Kaunda introduced the Zambia National Dance Troupe, consisting of members from the various ethnic groups of Zambia, whose main purpose was to promote indigenous dances. It also established cultural hubs such as the Kabwata Cultural Village in Lusaka and similar ones elsewhere to promote traditional crafts and performing arts. However, the efforts were largely politicised in the sense that they were meant to achieve a political agenda. The quest for relevance was therefore more a relevance to the political agenda than the cultural agenda, as was illustrated, in part, by the rise of the poet Chitwansombo, who was not only a member of Kaunda's ruling party, United National Independence Party (UNIP), but was engaged mainly to compose poems in praise of Kaunda and his party and government.

Kaunda introduced the philosophy of Humanism as a means of social, political and economic development. Even the attitude of the UNIP government to cultural traditions was closely related to the philosophy. As Kerr (1998, p.34) argues, what evolved in Zambia was a "convergence of cultural and ideological policy". Cultural policy, which of course included arts education, was meant to serve the purpose of advancing ideological policy. Zambia, in fact, did not draw any national cultural policy until much later under the rule of Frederick Chiluba's Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). Currently, there is a new, more comprehensive cultural policy which is still being worked on.

Arts education in Zambia, without a clear national cultural policy and arts education policy, has still not become fully and truly relevant to the needs and aspirations of Zambia and its creative and cultural industries. Zambia's education system has remained largely cognitive in nature, while arts education is not just cognitive but also, and largely, practical. The infrastructure for practical arts education is largely absent at all levels of education: primary, secondary and tertiary. Music and visual arts have for a long time been taught at the Evelyn Hone College of Applied Arts and Sciences in Lusaka. The University of Zambia, established in 1966, two years after independence, has been associated with the teaching of the arts particularly under the Department of Literature and Languages. The ambitious vision of promoting arts education through the Centre for the Arts collapsed with the demise of the Centre in the dawn of restructuring and re-strategizing at the university. It ought to be noted, however, that when the University of Zambia was established, the emphasis was on agriculture, the sciences and the training of teachers (Carmody, p.28).

In essence, therefore, the first major opportunity for Zambia to develop mechanisms to produce best practice in arts education, at independence, was not fully utilised. By the 1970s, however, there was growing discontent with the structure and products of the Zambian education system. This led to the growth of a movement for education reforms, culminating in the Educational Reform document of 1977. Once again, however, the political agenda captured the reform agenda because the reform movement emphasised socialist ideals rather than ideals that would decolonise the system and make it more relevant to the unique needs and aspirations of the Zambian people. The reforms, therefore, did not produce any ideas to substantially change arts education. There was no policy on arts education and no cultural policy. In the end, the reform movement "substantially retained the pre-reform system" (Carmody, p.xiv) of education which was more academic than practical. One of the biggest reasons for this was that "academic schooling was still seen to be central to national development" (Ibid., p.xiv).

The next major opportunity to change the status quo presented itself when the UNIP government of Kenneth Kaunda was replaced by the Chiluba government after the 1991 elections which UNIP lost. When the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) of Chiluba came to power, they tried to change the orientation by focusing on primary education, further developing the system of basic schools whose propagation had started in 1982. This ensured that children were in school up to Grade 9 before proceeding to the secondary part from grade 10-12. They did not do much to promote the development of arts education.

When the Patriotic Front (PF) government took over from the MMD in 2011, they introduced some systemic changes into the education system, but not much on arts education has actually been implemented. They also started the process of transforming the National Arts Council of Zambia into the National Arts, Heritage and Culture Commission, which however has not been established yet, with the bill yet to be discussed into parliament, since the National Arts Council was established by an act of parliament in 1994. The new national cultural policy has also not yet been finalised and implemented.

One major characteristic of the MMD government, however, was its determination to reorient government policy from the commandist-socialist approach of Kaunda's UNIP to a more liberalised approach. Hence the government introduced liberalised economic policies which also meant a change in education policy. Thus, for example, the door was opened for the establishment of private universities. Zambia currently has over 55 registered universities, most of them private. However, most of them do not deal with arts education, apart from perhaps literature. Apart from the University of Zambia (UNZA), the only other university which deals with theatre is the Zambian Open University (ZAOU). The University of Zambia now offers music and visual art for primary school teachers. There are many other tertiary institutions falling under the Technical Education and Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA), most of which are private and do not offer the arts although they offer a host of practical qualifications aimed at the promotion of entrepreneurship. Lacking in the TEVETA approach, however, is the recognition of the fact that the arts are part of the creative and cultural industries which, just like any other forms of entrepreneurship, can also greatly contribute to employment and economic growth; hence the invention of the terms 'artpreneur' and 'artpreneurship'.

It is the failure to recognise the importance of arts education that has contributed more than anything else to the relegation of arts education to the periphery of the improvement of educational systems and in particular funding to the arts and arts education. Building a science lab, for example, is considered more important than building a cultural space. Funding the arts and arts education is always at the bottom of priorities.

There have been some positive developments, however, although still inadequate and not guided by a clear policy on arts education. One of the major developments at tertiary level has been the introduction, by the University of Zambia, of the Zambian Cultures and Ceremonies (ZCC) degree programme, whose main purpose is to produce teachers who are well versed in Zambian cultures and ceremonies and are able to teach students in the schools. This is an important step in the efforts to decolonise the teaching of the arts and in the pursuit of the agenda for the quest for relevance. Still, such efforts are random and isolated rather than borne out of a deliberately framed cultural policy or, more importantly, a clear arts education policy. It is an initiative framed and implemented by the University of Zambia, although, of course, it had to consult the Ministry of Education and convince it of the relevance and significance of the programme. Other efforts to promote arts education at the University of Zambia have come through cultural exchange programmes such as the *Tili Tonse* programme which ran from around 2003 for a period of about six years. Its aim was to promote theatre arts through a North-South cooperation programme with some universities in Finland. This was followed, later, by the expanded Umodzi programme which was structured on a North-

South-South basis, bringing on board universities in Tanzania and Kenya apart from the initial institutions from Zambia and Finland.

However, these efforts were also isolated and random initiatives which had their own weaknesses, such as the fact that funding came from the North and therefore meant that the implementation was largely tilted in favour of the participants from the North. There was an assumption that the North was there to not only provide the funds but also the lessons, while the South was there to receive the money and the lessons. Thus, it would appear the North had little, if any, to learn from the South. The assumption that knowledge comes from the western world to the developing world has not helped the efforts to decolonise arts education. Hence, at an international forum in one European city, a South African presenter posed a question to the audience: “Are you telling me you have nothing to learn from me? That for all the centuries my ancestors existed, they knew absolutely nothing? “Arts education policy must therefore spring from a position of recognising not only the relevance but also importance of indigenous forms of artistic and cultural expression. Arts education policy must not only look to the west, but also to its own past. Africa needs to learn from foreign cultures, but it also needs to learn, more importantly, from its own cultures, when developing arts education policies that can produce best practice.

4.3 Potential

Is it possible for African countries to develop arts education and make it relevant to local needs and aspirations? The answer is yes. Although what has been achieved so far is not adequate, it still goes to demonstrate the fact that African countries, if well focused, can improve the provision of arts education at all levels: pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary level. In Zambia, the growing emphasis on the use of local languages at primary level is key to the realisation of the dream of promoting arts education.

4.4 Policy

The efforts to develop arts education cannot achieve much without the involvement of government. The role of government is to ensure that the country has the appropriate arts education and cultural policies and that these policies are implemented. If the lessons of the past in Zambia are anything to go by, then the government must avoid politicising the policy-making process. The objective goal must be to provide an enabling environment for the promotion and development of arts education. The government also needs to build the requisite infrastructure for the propagation and development of arts education. Whatever policies are framed must not only target the formal but also the informal sectors of arts education. The development of clear arts education policy is critical and urgent.

4.5 People

Government, however, cannot develop arts education on its own. It depends on the contributions of individual members of the society in both public and private capacity. The culture of the Zambian people, as well as their creative abilities, must be brought to the fore if the development and implementation of arts education policy is to succeed. The government must involve the people at every stage—the conception of the arts education policy to the implementation. If arts education policy threatens or weakens the culture of the local people, they will not cooperate in its implementation, and this will make the whole effort null and void. Arts education policy must allow the people to contribute ideas and participate in the process of implementation using both the formal and informal avenues. If arts education policy is limited only to the classroom or formal education set up, then it will not succeed. It will end up alienating the very people it is intended to help.

5.0 Conclusion

Having discussed the subject of arts education training in Africa, this article has arrived at a number of conclusions. Firstly, since most African countries do not have education policies, the development of such policies is not only necessary, but an urgent need. Arts education must be at the core rather than on the periphery of African education systems, and must not only be crafted around formal educational institutions but also include informal and traditional institutions. Thus arts education policy must recognise the indispensability of the past: the past is as important as the present, and there is a lot to learn from it. This means that measures must be taken to ensure that the existing arts and cultural infrastructure is able to offer appropriate spaces to both western-type and traditional art forms. It is, for example, not enough to just have structures with the proscenium arch stage design; there is also need for spaces that cater for traditional art forms that cannot be performed in western-style venues.

Secondly, drawing knowledge from Africa's past does not mean being stuck in the past. The continent must look forward while looking back, and look back while moving forward. Looking back means absorbing forms of cultural and artistic expression that are important to the people, including local languages. Best practice in arts education is only possible when the past and the present are recognised in the efforts to address the challenges and needs of the future. Arts education must be engaged in a quest for relevance to the African contexts in which they will be applied. There must be a conscious decolonisation process.

Thirdly, arts education policy should target people from a young age, from the pre-primary stage, through the primary and secondary or high school stage, to the tertiary level and beyond. It must make arts part of the way of life for Africans. In traditional African society, one did not need to go to formal school to be able to learn or teach the arts. Thus, arts education in Africa must not assume that only people who have been to school in the formal sense can teach the arts. There are some art forms that are best taught by people, many of them elderly, who have no or no formal education. They do not have a college or teaching certificate, but they are best qualified to teach some traditional art forms than the "educated". A way must therefore be evolved to allow the traditional cultural animators to teach the practical aspects of the traditional art forms not taught in schools.

Fourthly, arts education training should be such that it enables the arts to contribute to the socio-economic agenda of a nation. Thus, arts education policy must ensure that the arts, both traditional and modern, contribute to the development of the creative and cultural industries. The arts are a major part of cultural tourism and can contribute significantly to any nation's income generation. A good example is how Nigeria's film industry, Nollywood, has contributed to the growth of the nation's GDP.

Fifthly, for arts education training to be effective, productive and economically viable, it is critical for all the stakeholders to play their roles —this includes not only the artists and arts trainers, but also the government. However, the role of government must not only be limited to policy formulation and implementation, but must also include deliberate measures to support the arts and arts education in every conceivable way: material and financial support, as well as provision of appropriate and adequate infrastructure. Some nations have been known to develop very high-sounding and impressive policies which they however neither implement nor support fully. Government has a critical role to play in the framing and implementation of cultural and arts education policies. However they must consult the relevant experts both in the formal and informal sectors of the cultural industry. Arts education policy must spring from a position of acknowledging the importance of the government and the people working together for the good of the country, thus the government must not place ideological concerns above the need to produce workable arts education policy.

Sixthly, Africa nations must recognise the need to share ideas and experiences

with each other regarding the formulation and implementation of arts education training programmes and policies. Indeed they must learn not only from each other but also from other nations outside the continent which have working arts education policies. That is, as long as they adapt what they learn to their own peculiar circumstances. There is need to situate arts education policy within the context of globalisation because of what Baylis et al. (2017, p.16) call “world interconnectedness”.

And finally, African nations must not give up effort to develop arts education policies despite past failures because, as the proverb referred to at the beginning states, continuous crushing of the anthill softens it. Persistence and focus lead to success.

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