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An evaluation of Music Education in
Elementary Schools in Buganda:
a way forward

by

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*Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
degree*

Doctor of Music

in the

Faculty of Humanities

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

2008



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

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Summary

Music education in Buganda, and indeed Uganda as a whole, must re-define its role and nature by essentially changing its structure and character. Currently it is not adequate and relevant enough to cater for the real needs of the learners. This document entails the research undertaken to evaluate music education in elementary schools in Buganda, its historical developments, current status and a possible way forward. In ascertaining and gathering data for this empirical study, ethnographic as well as phenomenological methods were employed. Evidence was collected through literature search, recent publications, questionnaires, interviews, personal experiences and observations.

Music at primary level of education in Uganda is categorised under the syllabus of Performing Arts and Physical Education (PAPE). This has become extremely problematic when classroom teachers and specialist teachers are required to implement the music component of PAPE. With the above in mind, a research question was formulated on the basis that a perceived problem existed in the dispensation and delivery of music education in schools in Buganda.

The study evaluates the existing government policies on primary education that include the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP), Universal Primary Education, Uganda Primary School Curriculum (UPSC), Uganda Syllabus of Primary Education (USPE), Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC), Education Statistical Abstract (ESA), and Complimentary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE). In addition, the study analyses the education structure as well as the PAPE syllabus in relation to learners' own music outside the prescribed school curriculum, teacher training programs and the available resources. Finally a comparative analysis of music and the arts education of various countries and the African perspectives was carried out.



Findings reveal that the mission of the MoES through the ESIP is to support, guide, co-ordinate, regulate and promote quality education and sports for national integration, individual and national development. It further indicates that UPE was adopted to address the principle of equity as regards the education access amongst households, without exacerbating the gap between the rich and the poor. The study acknowledges that even though some educators have high qualifications, generally music is perceived as an area in which teachers have a low level of teaching efficacy as a result of inadequate training, lack of music resources and the irrelevance of the music content. The learners' response to music as a classroom subject is influenced by their own music outside the school.

The results presented in this research offer crucial insights for music education, its future role, nature and character. It is evident that among others, the insufficient funding, limited content knowledge and lack of resources remain key factors that inhibit the development of music education in Buganda. The study culminates into recommendations that offer direction and vision for music education. The recommendations set out in this research should enable the music education discipline to survive and transform itself into an autonomous key player in the education dispensation.

Key words

Music, music education, teacher training, research, Buganda, curriculum, educators' skills, learners, resources, primary school, Uganda, music educators

Acknowledgements

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the following:

1. The Almighty God for giving me the wisdom, strength, courage, time and life to work on this research and see a dream come true.
2. My dear wife Julia who, 17 years ago 'prophesied' that I would one day accomplish a doctorate in Music. Thank you sweetheart for helping me realize my potential and for supporting and encouraging me all the way.
3. My dear children, Jason, Jonathan, Bellise and Beverly for the patience and support all throughout. Jason thanks for always setting up my computer, pushing me to persevere through this project.
4. Prof. H M Potgieter for your ever excellent professional and academic support for the last six years in addition to teaching and supervising me, and sourcing all the scholastic materials that I needed in form of articles, papers, chapters, etc.
5. Prof. C. Walton for your precious time, guidance, encouragement and supervision all the way through.
6. Prof. C. van Niekerk for your professional, academic and moral guidance at each level for the last six years.
7. Prof. R. Murapa for the moral and financial support without which I would never have been able to accomplish the tasks that I have in this project.
8. Prof. A. N. Mphuru and Prof. J. Quarshie for the advice all the way through.
9. Prof. H. Sengendo for the moral support especially during my study leave.



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