

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW: Indigenous and pupils' Own Music**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

To understand how the Baganda relate to the phenomenon of music, the teaching and teaching structures in which they are involved, it is crucial to obtain a true picture of how they perceive music. Interviews and observations are reliable methodological approaches through which this can be achieved; however even more so are the explanations, associations and the delineation of the development process. It is crucial too, to understand the structural contexts in which the Baganda find themselves now and previously. This chapter focuses on the cultural outlook, framework factors, cultural heritage, current indigenous practices for pupils and the wider community, environment and ideologies of teaching music in Buganda.

Buganda's rich and varied traditions of music and dance have received very little attention from scholars for the past twenty five years. This was mainly because of the political turmoil that the country went through from 1971 to 1985, the time of the military government of Idi Amin and subsequently Godfrey Binaisa, Paulo Muwanga, Brigadier Tito Okello Lutwa and Milton Obote. The political scene during these times deterred international scholars from visiting Buganda and Uganda as a whole, in addition to preventing local scholars returning fresh from the West with their PhDs, from fulfilling their dreams of carrying out research into their own traditions. Several talented Ugandans who found the means to get formal musical training overseas were compelled to stay overseas where they could earn a lot more through giving workshops and courses. Examples of such people are Sam Kasule in the UK, Godfrey Mpungu in Germany, Ssempeke Junior in Sweden, Samuel Kyobe and Samite Mulondo in USA, Samuel Kimuli in the UK, David Sebulime and Patrick Kabanda both in the USA.

## 3.2 Local and indigenous music practices in Buganda

During the reign of Idi Amin in 1970s, the economic situation in Uganda worsened. Ugandans reverted to a subsistence economy. Rural musicians could hardly afford small commodities like batteries for a transistor radio, which initially could be heard in nearly one of every five houses in places like *Kasalirwe*, my rural home, in the east of Kampala. The influence of the popular music ideology of the West was minimized because many people could not afford a radio from which to access Western music (Kasule & Cooke, 1999). Occasionally, music and dance would be performed during important rituals and affairs of life, like weddings, birth rites, funeral ceremonies and in churches and schools. The times of political insecurity and the absence of Western music influences were fruitful in that traditional forms of music-making were strengthened. Local groups continued to operate since their activities were occasionally recruited by various governments to disseminate political messages. The Heartbeat of Africa was used by the government up to 1980, the Dancing Cranes were used during Obote's second regime, and the Ngaali Ensembles were engaged by the National Resistance Movement. The Ngaali Ensemble, which began with students and lecturers of Makerere University Department of Music, Dance and Drama in collaboration with the cultural section of the NRM Secretariat, aimed to represent Uganda through dramatized music and dance.

### 3.2.1 The Kiganda orchestra

Semi-professional instrumental groups have enlarged their instrumental ensembles to include more instruments from neighboring societies (Kasule & Cooke, 1999). Large instrumental ensembles for public performances in Buganda include drums, xylophones, tube fiddles, panpipes, and lamellophones. The diversification of instrumentation was initiated by the former National Ensemble under the direction of Evaristo Muyinda, a distinguished muganda musician.

This kind of ensemble, which was later referred to as a 'Kiganda orchestra', is very common in Uganda and a lot bigger now. It is modeled on the Western ensemble, with groups of instruments providing contrasted tone colours. The instruments in the orchestra are currently tube fiddles, lyres, flutes, panpipes, and a zither, contrasting sounds with xylophones, drums, and rattles. Even though it is a 'Kiganda orchestra', the composition of members is ethnically mixed, with the Baganda and the *Basoga* forming the majority. The Department of Music, Dance and Drama of Makerere University adopted a similar instrumental combination for their productions including 'Mother Uganda' by the late Rose Mbowa and People's Theatre performances. The ethnically blended ensemble serves as a symbol of what most Ugandans would wish for '... a harmonious existence with all Ugandans playing together like musicians' (Kasule 1993:206).

### **3.2.2 Ancestral worship**

In addition to using music for entertainment and livelihood, the Baganda use their music for spiritual and healing purposes. For many of the rural inhabitants, Christianity is perceived to provide inadequate health support. The breakdown in the national health infrastructure in the face of a tremendous rise in ill-health enhanced the activities of traditional healers. Their work is rooted in the framework of ancestral worship and spirit appeasement, and demands the use of mediums and various types of trance (Kasule & Cooke 1999:10). In Buganda, music and dance are vital and at the core of ancestral worship. Since traditional culture and traditional beliefs work hand in hand, there are ancestral cults whose leaders subsequently assume the role of guardianship of traditional culture and extend their patronage to local performing groups. The ancestral cults, also known as *abasamize* in *Luganda*, the local language of the Baganda, usually have two drummers, a xylophone, and a chorus of cult members wielding large calabash rattles and singing in mirltons. They have a large membership and are well organized on a national basis in the association called The Uganda Traditional Healers and Cultural Association.



### 3.2.3 Buganda court music

During the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Buganda was the most powerful among the kingdoms in the Lake Victoria region and, as elsewhere in the region as well as among other kingdoms in many parts of Africa. Court and ceremonial music in Buganda developed at an early stage because the number and size of musical ensembles patronized by a ruler was an index of his power. For many years, various *Kabakas* had appropriated a number of musical styles and musical instruments for their own use at the palace commonly referred to as *olubiri*. In 1950s and 1960s, *Mengo* palace, the home of *Kabaka* Mutesa II, was a veritable Mecca for musicians and dancers (Kasule & Cooke 1999:11). In addition to the drums, various other instruments were kept in the court.

Court music in Buganda included the following ensembles which fulfilled their roles within the *Kabaka's* palace.

- ✚ *Abalere ba Kabaka* (The King's Flautists)
- ✚ *Entamiivu za Kabaka* (The King's Xylophone Ensemble)
- ✚ *Amakondeere* (Horn Ensemble)

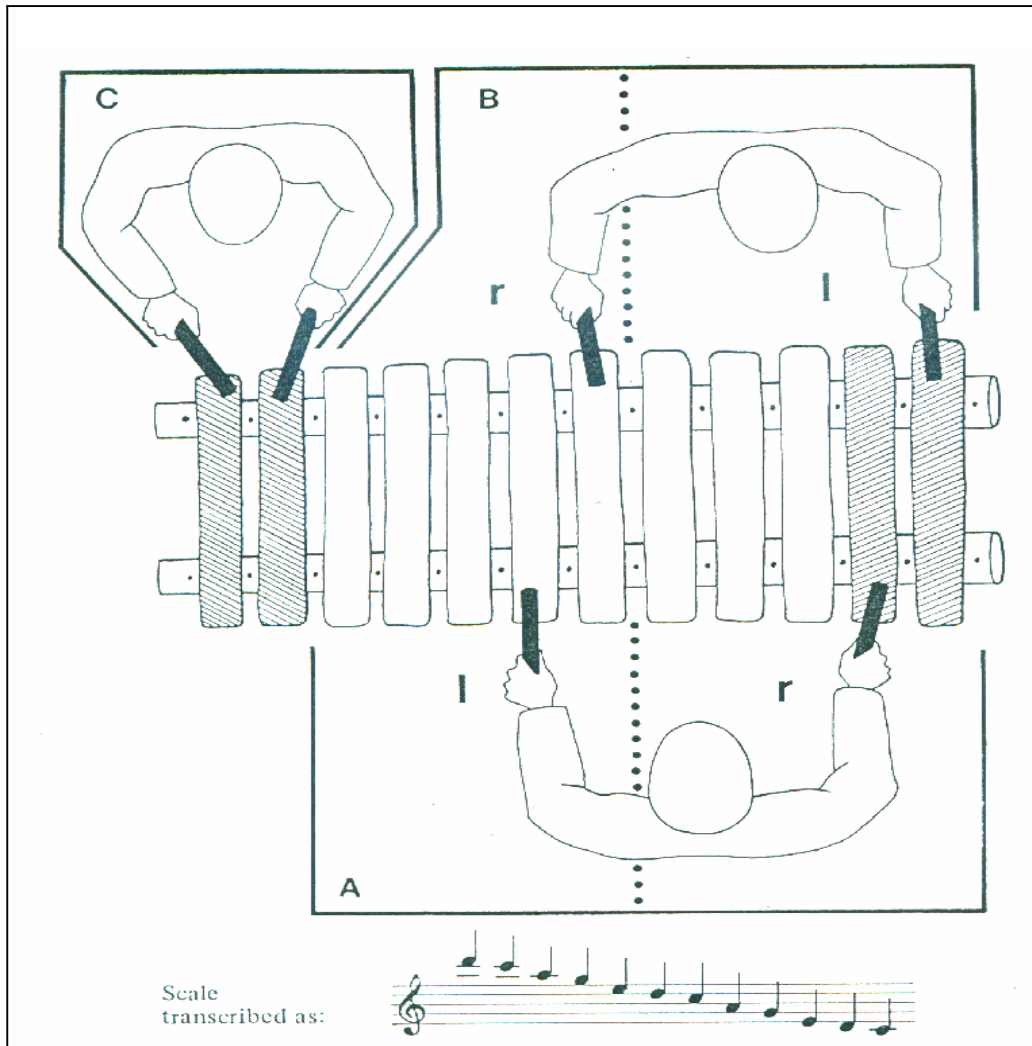
(Kubik 1994:51).

The above ensembles fulfilled their functions independently of each other. At this time, the most striking of the instruments used in the palaces were the two xylophones, the large 27 key *akadinda* and the smaller 12 key *entala* or *amadinda*. The ensemble *abalere ba Kabaka*, received considerable attention from Western scholars above the others.

#### 3.2.3.1 *Amadinda* and *akadinda*

For the purposes of this study, I will comment on the xylophone playing of *akadinda* and *amadinda* that is central in court music. There are basically two kinds of xylophones in Buganda, the *akadinda* and the *amadinda*, the 17-key xylophone and the 12-key xylophone respectively. The xylophone keys are made of wood and they are struck at their extremities. The *amadinda* is usually played by three musicians, whereas the *akadinda* is played by five musicians. They are both tuned to a pentatonic scale.

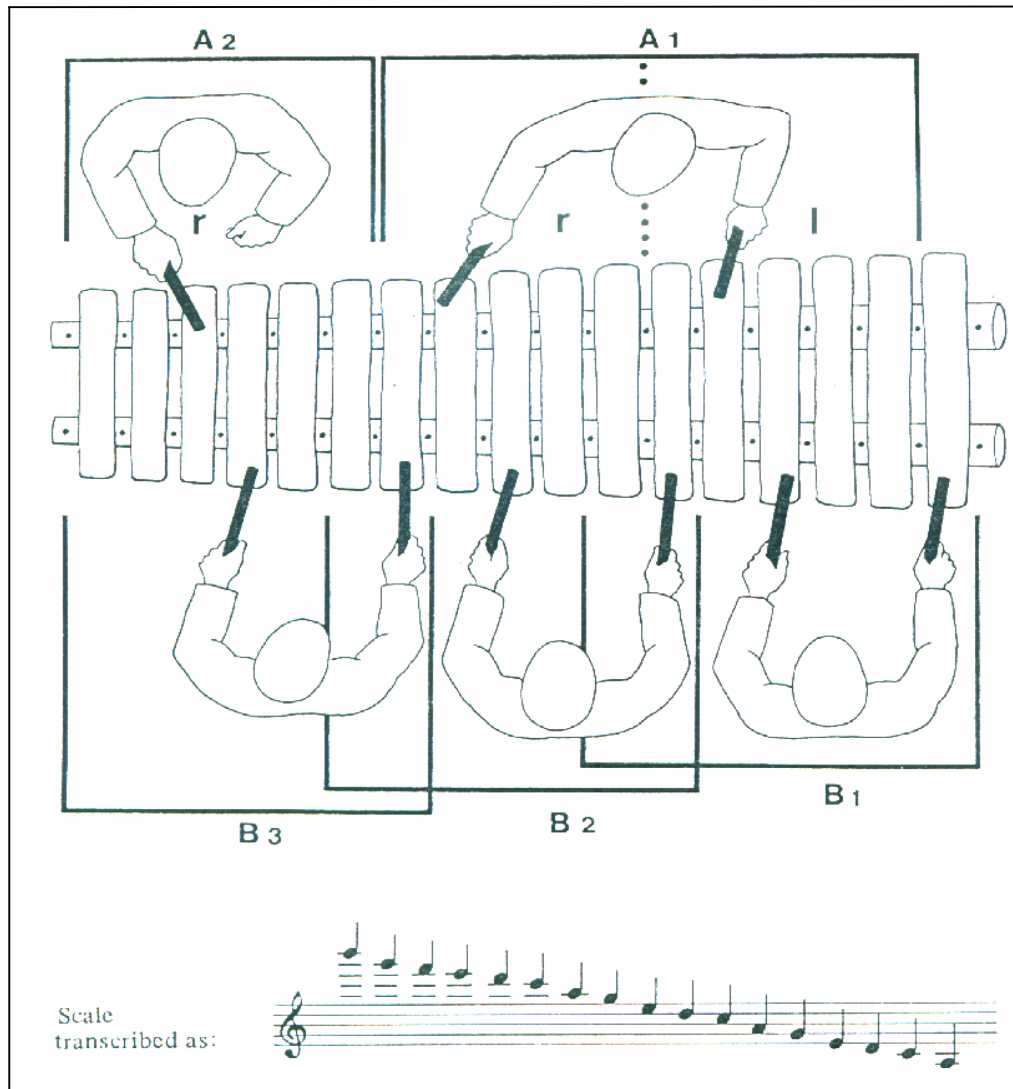
**Figure 19** Performance on *amadinda* (12-key xylophone)



(Kubik, 1994:60)

Player A stands for *omunazi*, B stands for *omwawuzi* and C stands for *omukoonezi*. The above positions and playing areas on the *amadinda* are the same for all compositions. Musicians can exchange seats, thus A can sit in B's place and vice – versa. C can sit next to A if he is to play his patterns left or right with hands reversed. Playing simultaneously on the same instrument is identical for the two xylophone styles. It is an interlocking way of playing, where A and B, opposite each other strike the same keys at different intervals and alternately, one being in the act of striking and the other at the end of the stroke. The patterns of players A and B players consist of a series of equal-spaced notes that fall in between one another, combining like cog wheels.

Figure 20 Performance on *akadinda* (17-key xylophone).



(Kubik, 1994:62)

On the *akadinda*, the positions and playing areas of the five musicians is as indicated above. A1 and A2 are referred to as *abanazi* while B1, B2 and B3 are called *abawuzi*. The *akadinda* music requires triple interlocking with the *abawuzi* inserting two notes between the strokes of the *abanazi*. The tuning for both the *amadinda* and the *akadinda* is pentatonic as shown on the scales above. The *akadinda* has a wider range which expands upwards with the high notes. Measurements have been made with excellent equipment, which resulted in vibration numbers coming on average close to the ideal of an equidistant pentatonic scale (Kubik, 1994).

Notable musicians in the field of indigenous Buganda music include Evaristo Muyinda, a xylophone expert; Albert Sempeke, a traditional musician and versatile harpist; and Sulaiti Kalungi, a Muganda master drummer.

Buganda's court music ceased in 1966 when Milton Obote, Uganda's Prime Minister, dissolved the Buganda Kingdom amidst political problems. However, in 1993, with the agreement of President Museveni and the NRM government, Ronald Mutebi was installed as the 36<sup>th</sup> Kabaka of Buganda. Palace musical traditions have not been revived, however, and knowledge of the unique court repertoire and unique playing techniques now rests with a small number of musicians within the Buganda region in and around Kampala.

#### **3.2.4 Choral music**

Kampala is a cosmopolitan city and attracts a number of expatriates from Europe, America, Asia and other African countries. Foreigners as well local people engage in music making and performances that include choral music and band music both secular and sacred. Choral activities centre on church choirs in and around the city, where the repertoire is built on western foundations. Some of the notable church choirs in the region include the Namirembe Cathedral Choir (NCC) and Christ the King Church Choir (CKCC). The NCC, in which I sang for 17 years, is a male choir whose objectives are both sacred and musical. The choir engages in full time Christian outreach programs at the cathedral and in the wider community and in addition, seeks to develop confident competent and skilled musicians who value music in their lives and believe that music can have a positive effect on the lives of others. NCC recruits young boys (with an average age of 8) directly from Mengo Primary School, a missionary primary school, and they are trained through all the voice groups and choir ranks. In a bid to promote music and spur enthusiasm amongst the boys, the choir provides, as an incentive, school fees for the choir boys for the rest of their primary education. NCC is the breeding ground for prominent choral directors, organists, pianists and other calibres of musician all around the city.

CKCC shares the same mission as the NCC, except in that it recruits members from anywhere at any stage in life and does not give incentives of the same nature. Its composition is mainly of working class men and women who have a love for singing. The choir ministers mainly at Christ the King Church in the centre of Kampala. Apart from church choirs, there are homogeneous choirs including Kampala Singers, Nyonza singers, and the Eschatos Brides. The Kampala Singers comprise both foreigners (especially expatriates) and local members who know how to read and sing music in four parts as a result of the work of expatriate missionary teachers. The choir performs oratorios and other local works and puts on major performances twice a year, during the Easter and Christmas seasons. The Nyonza singers comprise civil servants and various professionals who perform a mixture of indigenous Kiganda music, folk dances, Afro-American spirituals and other songs based on Western styles. And finally, there are the Eschatos Brides, an acapella singing group comprised of purely Baganda members. Their repertoire is based on sacred music of the Christian faith. None of the above-mentioned homogenous groups has a home base or church from where to operate from. However, they put on their performances in public venues and churches in Kampala, including Makerere University Main Hall, St. Francis and St. Augustine Chapels of Makerere University, the Sheraton Hotel in Kampala, National Theatre, Namirembe Cathedral and Rubaga Cathedral.

### **3.2.5 Indigenous Dramatic Societies**

Because of the rapid growth of a lively tradition of popular theatre in which music, dance and drama play a central role, there are various dramatic societies that have sprung up in Kampala. These include the *Bakayimbira Dramactors*, the Kampala Amateur Dramatic Society (KADS), and the Ebonies. These societies engage full time dramatists, most of whom are products of Makerere University's department of Music, Dance and Drama. In addition to these, they also have a music crew that plays music which goes along with the plays. Music is also played live on stage and it very well punctuates the performance from beginning to end.



They perform fully integrated musical plays, with a holistic approach, and they pull massive audiences in and around Kampala because of their entertainment value to the community. Their performances are plays full of music and dance, usually based on real life situations. The Ebonies are a dramatic group with a peculiar brand of music, and even though they have a strong church background, their repertoire is extremely topical and blends with music, dance and drama. Because their music relies heavily on western musical forms and instruments such as electric keyboards, synthesizers and guitars, the Ebonies' repertoire lacks an indigenous traditional flavour.

### 3.2.6 Band music

Night life in Kampala is very lively and people stay out as late as 11.00 p.m. during the week and up to 3.00 a.m. to 4.00 a.m. on weekends, as long as there is beer, *nyama choma*, and the music is booming. While the young generation goes out to dance in modern night clubs to Western dance music played by the famous DJs in *Ange Noire* and the Silk Club, the older folk prefer to converge at places like *Club Obligato*, 'Pork Talk' in *Nakulabye*, 'Half London' in *Kansanga*, '*Wndegeya*', '*Bwaise*' and '*Kireka*'. Here they drink and eat *nyama choma* as they chat away with friends and watch the live bands play. There are many live bands of all sizes in Kampala. They range from trios to huge bands that even have up to eight *queen dancers*. Bars and nightclubs in Kampala host a variety of bands that play mostly '*Zairwa*' styles of music, which very much appeals to many in the local community. The nightclub scene is dominated by bands like the Afrigo Band and the KADS band, playing Rumba and Zairwa styles of dance music. The Afrigo Band is composed of musicians from various backgrounds including Zairwa musicians as well as local Baganda members. Their styles reflect very well their diverse backgrounds. This, together with the lively beat, topical and humorous lyrics, accounts for their popularity (Kasule & Cooke 1999:12). Even though the expatriate community loves band music, and sometimes one would see a few white people in Afrigo performances, they mostly prefer other styles of live music like jazz, blues and western pop music.

MusiConnexions Jazz was formed 6 years ago to bridge the gaps between the various styles. It is a quintet of two singers, a pianist, a bassist and a guitarist. The MC Jazz as it is popularly known, plays live jazz and blues styles, weaving in the indigenous local styles as well as some Western pop music. In addition to being the resident band at Nile Hotel in the heart of Kampala, MC Jazz is occasionally engaged by diplomatic missions to entertain at their high profile cocktail parties in celebration of their national days, farewell parties, Christmas parties, Caledonian dinner parties, inauguration of embassies, and other special days and celebrations.

### **3.2.7 Kadongo Kamu**

*Kadongo Kamu* is the local indigenous style of music that is very important on Kampala's music scene. Music in this style is readily available everywhere in the country because it is affordable by the vast majority of the people. The style was initiated by one performer playing his single string instrument and accompanying himself as he sang during Radio Uganda's annual talent festival. *Kadongo Kamu*, which means one small instrument, in Luganda, has developed into the most influential and popular music genre within Buganda and beyond. *Kadongo Kamu* has been enlarged into a full band with instruments including a steel-stringed folk guitar, Kiganda traditional drums, a bass guitar, a western drum kit, traditional stringed instruments including a tube fiddle, lyre and *Adung*. The style combines the traditional Kiganda musical styles with Western popular styles to form a unique and entertaining indigenous style. It usually comprises a solo or duet of a man and a woman narrating a story in music, based on real life situations in Buganda. The performances are always in Luganda, the local language, and the costumes are the indigenous traditional dress, which is the *kanzu* for the men and a *busuuti* for the women. Because the *Kadongo Kamu* troupe varies between one and five performers, it allows for mobility and illustrates the interaction amongst travelling musicians. *Kadongo Kamu* musicians are known to take their performances out into the community. They perform in trading centres, streets, slums around Kampala, schools and in abandoned bars where no other performers would easily venture.

Having sprung up during difficult times of political insecurity, *Kadongo Kamu* groups are economically equipped with appropriate props and instruments and can vacate a venue within just minutes in case of any problems. *Kadongo Kamu* has hit the recording industry in Kampala more than any other styles, and the music is readily available on audio cassettes (but not on CDs), which is what is affordable to most consumers. Because of their topical and social issues as relayed in their repertoire, and by their comedy and hyperbole as portrayed on stage, *Kadongo Kamu* has become more popular than any other musical genre in Uganda today.

### **3.2.8 Fusion**

Resemblances and differences between African and Western music, both traditional and new, have prompted musicians to marry the two and to create a style currently known as the 'fusion'. The growing amount of listening time and the growing proportion of lovers of this music lead to the conclusion that it is the African music of the future. Another sign of the growing importance of 'new African music' is the proportion of press coverage given to it in African countries. For example, Kampala's *New Vision* devotes a page every day to current musical entertainment, in addition to adding lists of the Top Ten in African and Western pop music. Nairobi's '*Daily Nation*' and Harare's '*The Herald*', devote a page in Saturday's issue to the same theme, and important features and articles on this page are invariably about new pop music and pop bands. Because of that, local musicians adopt western styles and fuse them with the indigenous. The forces behind this development include urbanisation, change agents including the church, schools, and Western technology. The effects of these developments are difficult to ignore in any study of music in sub-Saharan Africa. The fusion has been greatly advanced by various local musicians that have fled the country in search for greener pastures and are currently living abroad. Musicians living abroad and are actively involved in music making, take common Ugandan music and edit it to suit the market where they are. At the moment there is a massive misrepresentation of Uganda's music abroad at the popular end of the music market.

In the process, they are compelled to employ various other Western instruments, rhythms and beats and forms of performance. The late Philly Bongoley Lutaaya, who contributed a lot to the Ugandan music scene, lived in Sweden, and his music had a strong inclination towards Western forms. However, having died of AIDS, his music was, and still is, very appropriate in sensitizing the masses, especially the young generation, about the dangers of HIV and AIDS. Samite Mulondo and Godfrey Oryema are two musicians who have also engaged in such enterprises. Living abroad in the USA, both musicians have taken Ugandan music and fused it with Western styles. Such productions are unattractive projects to Ugandans at home though they are very attractive to the foreign market. Samite plays to full houses in the USA. However, on his CD liner notes, he points out that:

At first I was somewhat hesitant to let people from other parts of the world with different musical backgrounds have any input into my music. Fearful that my original ideas would get swallowed up or lost, I was surprised to find the final interpretation of my music was much richer, enhanced by the multi-cultural elements each player brought to my Ugandan material (Samite 1992: CD 65008).

This has become the kind of music that represents Buganda and Uganda overseas. Lutaya's music, based on traditional folk tales, was edited and played with a heavy beat aimed at attracting the young generation to listen to the message on HIV and AIDS. There are various musicians at home in Kampala that are into fusion. They play and record indigenous Ugandan music in Western pop styles, including R&B, pop, rap and jive. Garufalo illustrates that Uganda is to some extent experiencing cultural imperialism (Garufalo 1993).

### **3.3 Pupils' own music**

Developments of the twenty-first century indicate that stake holders of African music should begin to reckon seriously with the music that is created in this century. The Western-type modern school has introduced new tastes to African young people; new ways of viewing their world, and techniques of implementing newly adopted ideas.

The first thing that young people do, as soon as they can afford it, is to acquire records with the latest African hits and pop music from the Western world. In many parts of Africa, a young person's first homemade toys include musical instruments, among which are: the guitar, banjo, while the snare and bass drums also occur frequently. This twenty-first century manifestation of interest is as a result of the influence of Western pop music in Africa. Subsequently, musical syncretism is taking place in Buganda as a result of many radio stations in competition with the official state radio station, popularly known as Radio Uganda. There are more than ten new radio stations that broadcast Western music in various styles. These radio stations include Radio Buganda, commonly known as CBS or Central Broadcasting Station, Top Radio, Sanyu Radio, Capital Radio, Radio One, Power FM, Radio West and many more. Because of the ever-increasing influx of electronic goods in Kampala, including CD players and CDs, DVD players and DVDs, TV sets, video players and videos, and the absence of a policy on cultural protection, more and more Ugandans are being subjected to the attractions of the music of the West. Erlmann recounts that music in Uganda has been much influenced by the West and their electronics industries such as Sony and others. He says, 'we can no longer talk about music of ... [the] African village without taking into consideration the corporate strategies of Sony, USA domestic policy and the price of oil' (Erlmann 1993:4). Buganda's increasing access to Western musical traditions has led to a proliferation of styles rather than an enrichment and consolidation of our indigenous musical traditions. As in most parts of the world, pupils in Buganda and at all education levels separate the taught school music from their own music. The Following are some of the interviews I conducted amongst school children:

Interview with Kagimu, a P.6 pupil at City High School in Kampala.

**Interviewer:** What kind of music do you really enjoy?

**Kagimu:** I like my home music better than at school, because at school we do not sing songs of R. Kelly. We only dance and play drums.

**Interviewer:** Do you enjoy R. Kelly more than your music at school?

**Kagimu:** Yes.

Interview with Matovu, a P.7 pupil at Matugga Primary School in June 2003.

**Interviewer:** *Onyumilwa eby'okuyimba?* (Do you enjoy music?)

**Matovu:** *Yye mbinyumirwa* (Yes I do).

**Interviewer:** *Ki kyosinga okunyumilwa?* (What do you enjoy most in music?)

**Matovu:** *Okuba engoma n'okuzina, naye bwenva ku somero ne nenda ku kaduuka ka soda wali endongo eyamaanyi. Eyo yesinga okunyumila.*  
(I like playing the drum and dancing, after school I go to the trading centre where there is heavy metal music playing, that I enjoy most).

Interview with Jason, a former pupil of Kampala Junior Academy in May 2005.

**Interviewer:** I know you love music, what is your favourite style of music?

**Jason:** I like all good music but I prefer to play the piano and saxophone.

**Interviewer:** Why do you prefer to play the piano and saxophone?

**Jason:** Because it is interesting and I see most singers also use piano and the saxophone and guitar. I like the saxophone because of Kenny G.

It was clear that what is taught at school is not exactly what they enjoy most in terms of music. They enjoy pop, Zairwa, R&B, Jazz and several other styles outside the school's music theory. In most cases, as ascertained from interviews, adults are not continuing to play the instruments they studied as students in school and they are not listening to the classical music they may have heard in their music classrooms.

Whatever has been and is being taught in schools as music, it has not been resonant with learners' musical tastes as is what they consume outside the school environment. This implies that the system of education is not adequate for the actual musical needs of the learners. Most respondents indicate that the music studied in schools is not exactly needed in adult life, as a result of the conflict between school music and what the community consumes. When adults who have attended many years of school cannot apply their classroom learning to situations outside of the classroom, the educational system has failed.

### 3.4 Summary

Would applying popular music in the school curriculum eradicate the disconnect that exists between music that is learned at school and what is consumed outside it? Pupils in Buganda prefer popular music, the music that they access outside the school environment. Popular music is the only style of music that various pupils admit to liking. This is because it is the only kind of music they have learned to like as the only kind of music they have been exposed to in depth. Music that pupils encounter when they are growing up, be it in the form of active or receptive participation, accumulates to form a depot of experience. Currently, pupils in Uganda are more acquainted with R&B, Zairwa, rock and pop music than with any other style of music including the traditional folk and Western styles that are prescribed in the curricula.

The socio-cultural contexts, in which the encounters with music occur, cause different emotions associated with the particular type of music in question (Stalhammer 2000:38). This leads to the emotional depot of experience, representing the transverse aspect. In music teaching and learning in Buganda, there is a conflict between the schools' didactic intentions and the pupils' own considerable capital of experience.

Pupils choose what they want to play and also the methods of their music making (Nsibambi 1969:24). Therefore, didactic orientation, choice of method and choice of material have a decisive effect on what the form and structure of the teaching should be. Pupils are not comprehensively prepared to face their musical environments, and their musical expertise is not adequately developed by teachers in order for them to evaluate and enjoy many kinds of music styles. If pupils are to achieve goals in music and be able to evaluate it for themselves as they develop into adulthood, they should be exposed to objectivity when they are young. However, the Ministry of Education and Sports has certainly not attuned the teaching, its content and its level of progression to pupils' longitudinal depot of experience.

Because music is linked to the person and to the interaction with the world around us, young people judge it directly on the basis of their own experience and practical everyday knowledge. When their own experience comes into conflict with the formal process of knowledge offered by the school, it is understandable that they will begin to form their own values, their own attitudes, and their own practices. These are values, attitudes and practice, which are not to be found within the established institutions.

Most ethnomusicologists and other music practitioners appreciate the fact that change is inevitable within any given culture. Music traditions never stagnate, because musicians are creative; they have imaginations and are inspired by novel ideas. Currently, musicians in Buganda have resorted to enriching their musical palettes with anything they can get hold of, especially in taking advantage of any new technology that comes onto the market. This has been the greatest reason for the support of 'fusion'. The younger generations, and professional Ugandan musicians abroad, like the 'fusion' because of its contemporary rhythms and synthesised instruments. However, apart from attempts to teach bi-musicality within the state education systems, there has been no attempt to completely institutionalise traditional music making and the fusion which one sometimes finds in Europe and America.

It is clear that Buganda has many rich and varied musical traditions that are still not properly researched. There seems to be a lot more room for international alliances in musical training, as well as in research in music and music education in Buganda.