



Research Article:

Music and Peace-making in Zimbabwe: An Analysis of Victor Kunonga's Songs

Lazarus Sauti¹

Independent Researcher, Harare, Zimbabwe

Abstract

Music has the power to promote peace in the society as evidenced in this study. The paper adopts the Ubuntu Journalism Theory to analyse Victor Kunonga's songs that activate and sensitise people about peace, human rights, human dignity, social justice, and social cohesiveness in Zimbabwe. The paper adopts qualitative research methods to explore the relationship between Kunonga's songs and peace-making. Using discourse analysis, the paper finds out that Kunonga uses the power of language to promote a sense of togetherness. He uses ChiShona, English, and IsiNdebele to support the concepts of human rights for peace, non-violence, peace sensitivity, justice, culture of peace, and peace education. The paper concludes that Kunonga exploits the reach, spread, as well as acceptance of his music among Zimbabweans to preach the need for peace and co-existence. His music acts as a peacemaker, mediator, and the voice of the voiceless.

Keywords: *conflict, culture, development, human rights, nonviolence, peace-making.*

Introduction

Victor Kunonga is a Zimbabwean lyricist, composer, and storyteller (Charamba, 2021). He was born on 25 October 1974 in Shurugwi but grew up in Hwedza (Kangondo, 2014). The musician, a self-taught acoustic guitarist, formed the Peace band in 2004 (Charamba, *ibid*) and he rose to fame with his first two albums, namely 'Such is Life-Ndanyengetedzwa' (Persuaded) (2003) and 'Uyo' (2006). In 2006, Kunonga was awarded the Best Traditional Contemporary Group/Artiste by the Zimbabwe Music Awards (ZIMA) for his album titled 'Uyo'. His music, inspired by Zimbabwean traditions, is home-grown, smooth, and pure (Butete, 2013). It is a mixture of jazz elements proficiently combined with echoes of the *mbira*, *mbakumba* and *katekwe* drumbeats and it appeals to all age groups (NewsDay, 2012). The Afro jazz singer croons mostly in ChiShona and IsiNdebele, and this means that his music covers languages that are not only simple, fresh, and unsophisticated, but full of life and easily accessible to most Zimbabweans (Charamba, 2021). His messages also reflect that he is a social commentator who uses the power of music to promote peace, human rights, non-violence, and social justice (Butete, 2013).

Kunonga's music carries an intensity of what the written word sometimes misses (Ramson, 2015). For instance, his tracks like 'Peace', 'Ruvengo', 'Kana', 'Mufaro Rudo', 'Kusadzidza Hurombo', 'Mwari Baba Toita Sei?', 'Next', 'Marunjeya', 'Mamurega', 'Maramba

¹ Corresponding author email: lazarussauti@gmail.com



Kukura, *'Mayidarirei?'*, and *'Pfungwa'* are full of emotions that words alone can never put across. This solidifies the affirmation of Vail and White (1997) that a musician is the voice of the voiceless – a safety valve through which he or she can release his or her emotions. Just in few lines, Kunonga's music catalyses emotions and gives them shape and expression. In one of his interviews with the *NewsDay* – a daily private newspaper in Zimbabwe – in 2012, Kunonga said that *"I love making music; it is an enthralling art form to draw, to paint my ideas, and to express a message through rhythm and melody"* (*NewsDay*, 8 June 2012).

Kunonga uses the power of lyrics to "communicate common problems most people face in their daily lives" (Butete, 2013: 207). His music covers family values, social norms, non-violence, gender, and respect for children (Charamba, 2021). Kunonga's songs are social commentaries to shore up concepts of human rights for peace, non-violence for peace, gender peace, justice for peace, a culture of peace, and peace education in Zimbabwe.

Accordingly, this paper analyses Kunonga's songs that promote peace. Most musicians in post-colonial Zimbabwe, including Thomas Mapfumo, Alick Macheso, Chiwoniso Maraire, and Best Mukundi Masinire sing on peace, governance, rights education, and non-violence. Thomas Mapfumo's song *'Corruption'* castigates the social vice that is stalling economic development in Zimbabwe and thus, encourages good governance. Alick Macheso's track *'Chikuru Kurarama'* chastises violence against women (VAW). Chiwoniso Maraire's song *'Iwai Nesu'* promotes children's rights because it is a plea to God to protect children from human security threats. Best Mukundi Masinire's *'Vakatadzei?'* also calls the political elites in Zimbabwe to consider and fulfill children's rights. Kunonga's music fits well into this peace and human rights discourse and the researcher chose him because he is a social critic (Butete, 2013) who always strives to work towards peace, justice, and social change through his music (Charamba, 2021).

This paper first explores *Ubuntu* journalism as the theoretical framework underpinning this study. It explains the role of musicians in society and the significance of the *Ubuntu* journalism theory. Second, the paper unpacks conflict and its causes in Zimbabwe. It also puts forward the concepts of peace and peace-making as alternatives to conflict. The paper further explains the nexus between music and peace-making, an area that is not adequately researched in Zimbabwe. Focusing on the impact music has on Zimbabwe's political and socio-economic environment, this paper argues that music can play a huge role in promoting peace and fostering conditions of peace-making. The paper also explains the methodology used in this study. Qualitative research methods were adopted to scrutinise Kunonga's selected tracks that promote peace. The songs were purposively sampled, and discourse analysis was used to interpret the meanings of the songs. The study presents the findings using the qualitative narrative approach.

Theorising music and peace-making

Musicians in Africa are not just entertainers; they are also journalists (Mano, 2011). They provide 'news' through music and also inform and educate people on peace and human rights (Mano, *ibid*). Consequently, this paper is underpinned by the *Ubuntu* journalism theory, which



is informed by values salient in Africa (Dandala, 2009; Metz, 2015; Tutu, 1999). The theory assumes that journalists (musicians) should be responsive to societal demands for peace, social justice, human security, social cohesiveness, and development. (Makamani, 2019). Advocates of this theory like Chasi (2016), Chasi and Rodny-Gumede (2019), and Mare (2019) aver that journalism, of which music is part of (Mano, *ibid*), should attend to the needs of people and expedite social harmony more effectively. Biko (1978) confirms this, arguing that music in the African context is a source of *Ubuntu/hunhu* or 'humanness'. The *Ubuntu* journalism theory is thus, suitable for this study because it positions musicians as active members of the society, mediators, peacemakers, and voice of the voiceless. The theory empowers musicians to be the eyes and ears of the society and to be providers of news and information that keep alive the hopes of many people.

Conceptualising notable conflicts in Zimbabwe since 1980 to date

The word conflict is derived from the Latin axiom *confligere*, which means to 'strike together'. Durojaye (2010: 2) characterises conflict as "disagreement arising from differences in ideas, perceptions, beliefs, interests, ideologies, orientations, as well as tendencies". To Onekalit (2005), conflict is a disagreement through which individuals or parties involved perceive a threat to their interests, needs, or concerns. For Osita (2006), conflict arises from disagreements over values, views, ideas, needs, or motivations mostly held by two or more individuals or groups.

The Institute for Economics and Peace (2018) states that conflict can be positive (constructive) or negative (destructive). Positive conflict leads to healthy relationship while negative conflict leads to harmful relationship (Diehl, 2016). Conflicts are expected; therefore, learning to deal with them in a healthy way is crucial (Anderson, 2004). Well-managed conflicts provide an opportunity for growth while mismanaged conflicts fuel violence and damage relationships (Davenport, Melander, and Regan, 2018).

Researchers like Fitiwi (2018) and Moyo (2017) posit that conflicts in Zimbabwe are caused by human action and can only be solved by human action. The scholars assert that the country has experienced political, economic, and social conflicts since attaining independence in 1980. Approximately 20 000 people were killed between 1982 and 1987 in the state-sanctioned genocide well-known as *Gukurahundi*, which ended with the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987 (Gusha, 2019; Killander and Nyathi, 2015). Furthermore, the 1998 Food Riots, triggered by deepening poverty and increases in food prices, led to violent response from the government and thousands were arbitrarily imprisoned, tortured, beaten, or abused (Besada and Moyo, 2008). The land reform programme in 2000 also fuelled violent conflict were people were killed while others were displaced in the country (Mkodzongi and Lawrence, 2019; Thomas, 2003).

Following a resounding election victory by the Zimbabwe African National Unity-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) in 2005, over 700 000 people were displaced after the government launched 'Operation *Murambatsvina*' (Operation Restore Order) (Benyera and Nyere, 2015).



Furthermore, Mutero and Kaye (2019) confirm that all the elections (2000, 2005, 2008, 2013, and 2018) in the country have been stained by political violence. Soldiers and anti-riot police were implicated in the death of six people and serious injuries of more people when violent demonstrations erupted on 1 August 2018 before the preliminary results of the July 30, 2018, elections were announced (Matyszak, 2019). Girls and women suffer the brunt of electoral violence and other forms of conflicts as they are raped or forced into early marriages (Dube, 2013).

For Moyo (2017), the roots of conflicts in Zimbabwe are linked to the struggle for maintaining the status quo, corruption, deepening poverty, authoritarianism, inept leadership, political polarisation, and differences in cultural values. She believes that the causes of conflicts in the country are interconnected and interrelated ranging from individual to group violation, to structural inequality, and injustice (Moyo, *ibid*). The same scholar declares that the promotion of peace is the only alternative solution to end conflicts in Zimbabwe.

Unpacking peace and peace-making

The concepts of peace and peace-making are solutions to ending conflicts and building positive peace in Zimbabwe (Besa, 2017). The word peace is fluid, and different scholars define it in various ways. Deriving from the Latin *pax*, peace is normally deemed a contractual link that implies shared recognition and agreement. Miller (2005: 55) unpacks peace as “a political situation that guarantees justice and social stability through formal and informal institutions, practices, and norms”. To Ilesanmi (2014), peace includes the maintenance of an organised and just society where people enjoy basic human rights.

There are various concepts on peace, namely human rights for peace, non-violence for peace, gender peace, justice for peace, a culture of peace, and peace education (Saritoprak, 2005; Webel and Galtung, 2007). The concept of human rights for peace postulates that peace and human rights connect (Cahill-Ripley, 2018). Human rights are indispensable rights and freedoms to which all individuals are entitled. Mishra (2000: 4) believes that human rights are intrinsic in “our state of nature and without which we cannot live as human beings.” For the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR (1948), human rights are rights derived from the inherent dignity of the human person. These rights should be protected at all the times to achieve durable peace, human security, and sustainable development. Citizens can only be said to be living peacefully if their rights are protected, promoted, and safeguarded; human rights cannot be attained in the absence of peace (Webel and Galtung, 2007).

Scholars like Saritoprak (2005) and Sharp (2011) profess that the concept of non-violence for peace denotes a perspective of refraining from any form of violence. They further maintain that non-violence is a significance step in the process of upholding peace, human security, social justice, and development. To Saritoprak (2005), the goal of this concept is to create love and understanding between people.



Another important concept is that of gender peace, which concerns gender relations (Björkdahl, 2012). Organised violence in Zimbabwe and other developing nations is primarily a result of gender imbalance and patriarchal social relations (Dube, 2013; ZimFacts, 2019). In Zimbabwe, girls and women are victims of all forms of violence, suffering dehumanisation and the loss of their homes (International Commission of Jurists, 2020; Sithole, 2019). This concept is based on equal relations between boys and girls, and men and women in the society.

The concept of justice for peace is also worthy explaining. Konow (2003) affirms that this concept is based on principles of unity, fairness, religion, equality, or equity. The concept is all about the correct ordering of things within the society. This concept helps in the promotion of peace in society. Without justice, there will be no peace in society and without peace, there will be no justice for all (Cannon, 2009). The concept of justice for peace supports a culture of peace, which takes in all issues to do with human security. The idea is to promote respect, inclusiveness, harmony, integrity, and healing (of self, family, community, nation). A culture of peace symbolises an everyday approach of non-violence, along with willpower to uphold human dignity (Cahill-Ripley, 2018). This concept is anchored on *Ubuntu* principles of tolerance, responsibility, solidarity, open mindedness, hope, sustainability, inclusiveness, persistence, and morality.

The last concept is that of peace education, which sensitises people with the knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes necessary to promote peace. This concept encourages people to manage conflict and to support peace and security (Harris and Synott, 2002). For Page (2008), peace education is an obligation to endorse durable peace, social justice, and sustainable development. The above-explained concepts are key pillars of peace-making – an approach of resolving conflict, averting violence, and ending injustice (Miller, 2005). Peace-making employs cooperative and constructive processes to solve human conflicts, at the same time restoring relationships (Miller, *ibid*). It is an effective strategy of promoting unity, facilitating peace, and supporting social interest, social harmony, and social development (Durojaye, 2010).

The nexus between music and peace-making

Music is journalism (Mano, 2011). It provides ‘news’, and also inform and educate people on peace and peace-making. To Boyce-Tillman (1996), music is powerful multi-faceted art, which can unite people with others and the natural world. Music plays an important role in nurturing concepts of human rights, non-violence, gender peace, justice, a culture of peace, and peace education. It is an influential vehicle through which peace-making accounts and social cohesion interventions are shared to listeners (Adelman, 2011). The scholar further argues that music provides an exceptional approach to peace-making because it lifts the spirits of listeners and allows them to access a deeper emotional angle that they otherwise may never approach (Adelman, *ibid*).

Scholars like O’Connell and Castelo-Branco (2010) also explore the nexus between music and peace-making, underlining that music is a connector. It is not only a powerful tool



to expose injustices (Butete, 2013), but a bridge between conflicting groups. O'Connell and Castelo-Branco further argue that music can be used as a medium for cross-examining conflict, for nurturing tolerance, and for appraising the quality of peace-making processes. They believe that music helps individuals and groups to move together, create and sustain new relationships, and to raise their self-esteem.

For Godbout (2018) and Pruitt (2011), music is cathartic. It is well known for its potential in trauma healing. Beyond the scope of peace-making, music helps people to return from the depths of various forms of distress. The objectives and effects of music are in sync with those of peace-making, focusing more on giving voice to the oppressed, relationship-building, healing, and improving the quality of the life of ordinary people.

Although music plays a crucial role in peace-making, it has also the power to perpetuate conflict (Hintjens and Ubaldo, 2019). Some musicians, for instance, use songs to spread hate and incite violence as evidenced by the disastrous genocide that ravaged Rwanda in 1994. A popular Rwandan singer-songwriter, Simon Bikindi was convicted for a crime against humanity during the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda that ensued after the genocide. His charges included a deliberate, intentional, and well-orchestrated conspiracy to fuel genocide with his music (Gowan, 2011). Bikindi composed music that incited hatred for the Tutsi people, leading to their annihilation in 1994. One of his songs, '*Njyewe nanga Abahutu*' ('I hate these Hutus') contained lyrics that explicitly called on Hutus to eliminate Tutsi minorities. The song, according to Cloonan (2006: 22), "contained overt hatred for Tutsis and moderate Hutus".

Methodology

This study adopted qualitative research methods to analyse the nexus between music and peace-making, using Victor Kunonga's songs. It used qualitative content analysis to collect data from Kunonga's four albums, namely '*Such is Life*' (2003), '*Uyo*' (2006), '*Handinete*' (2010), and '*Kwedu*' (2014). The population included 12 songs purposively sampled from these albums. These songs are '*Peace*', '*Mayidarirei?*' (*Such is Life*, 2003); '*Kana*', '*Next*', '*Mamurega*' (*Uyo*, 2006); '*Mufaro Rudo*', '*Kasadzidza Hurombo*', '*Mwari Baba Toita Sei?*', '*Marunjeya*', '*Maramba Kukura*', '*Pfungwa*' (*Handinete*, 2010), and '*Ruvengo*' (*Kwedu*, 2014). These songs were selected because they speak directly to peace, social justice, and human rights.

To capture all the necessary data from the sample, the researcher listened to all the selected songs. At least 15 minutes were allocated for every song. The researcher used a pen and notebook to transcribe data that were relevant for this study. Data were categorised using the concepts on peace, namely human rights for peace, non-violence for peace, peace from a gender perspective, justice for peace, a culture of peace, and peace education.

The researcher selected lyrics and verses that were relevant for this study. These were translated from ChiShona to English for the purposes of the analysis. Discourse analysis, a perspective on the nature of language and its relationship to the central issues of the social sciences (van Dijk, 1985), was used as an analysis technique to scrutinise how Kunonga used



language in promoting peace. Secondary sources such as newspaper articles, journals, and books were also utilised to support study findings.

Ethical considerations

Data were collected from Kunonga's songs and not from the musician himself. Consequently, the collected data were not fabricated (faked) and falsified (manipulated) for the purposes of fulfilling the objective of this study. Fabrication and falsification of data or findings infringe the fundamental objective of research ethics and render the study unreliable.

Findings and discussions

In post-colonial Zimbabwe, musicians like Thomas Mapfumo, Alick Macheso, Chiwoniso Maraire, Winky D, and Best Mukundi Masinire have used their music to promote human rights, gender equality, peace and good governance. Kunonga's music fits well within this music landscape. His discography is full of songs that support peace and human rights thus, contributing towards peace-making in the country (Charamba, 2021). Unlike other post-colonial musicians who randomly sing about peace, human rights, and governance, Kunonga is also a social activist who is dedicated to upholding peace and peace-making (Butete, 2013). Most, if not all, of his songs promote concepts of human rights, non-violence, gender peace, justice, a culture of peace, and peace education as evidenced in this section. Accordingly, study findings are qualitatively presented and analysed using the aforementioned concepts.

Promoting the concept of human rights for peace

In the song '*Mayidarirei?*' of the album '*Such is Life*' (2003), Kunonga promotes the concept of human rights for peace by castigating rape. In the track, he sings: '*Mayidarieiyee?*' ('Why did you do that?'); '*Tsotsi mairivanzireiyee?*' ('Why conceal a criminal?'); '*Zvinonyadzisa*' ('It's disgraceful'), '*Mochiona baba masungwa*' ('See now father, you are jailed'), '*Mayidarieiyee?*' ('Why did you do that?'); '*Mochitongwa kubatabata vana*' ('You are now being charged for molesting children'); '*Mochitongwa mujere*' (You are charged in jail').

The track '*Mayidarirei?*' addresses social tendencies dominant in the country whereby atrocious offenses such as rape committed by family members, guardians, and friends are concealed as disclosing them is tantamount to defiling the family name. The musician queries the silence by probing why child molesters are protected at the expense of the violated victims.

Through the song, the jazz crooner singles rape or child molestation and warns society that the long arm of the law will eventually catch up with child molesters and jail them (Butete, 2013). This song advocates for justice, responsible parenthood, and guardianship. Kunonga identifies close family members, especially fathers and uncles as the major culprits and perpetrators of rape and child molesting. However, he should have also mentioned girls and women as they are also molesting boys and men.



Rape cases by boys and men, and girls and women are on the rise in this country (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, 2019). However, girls and women are bearing the brunt of this scourge (Dube, 2013). The Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC) reports that 22 women are raped daily in the country, one every 75 minutes (*ZimFacts*, 2019). On average, 646 girls and women are sexually abused monthly, with one in three girls raped or sexually assaulted before they reach the age of 18 (Sithole, 2019; *ZimFacts*, *ibid*). The majority of the sexual offences are committed by men against women, children and other men (International Commission of Jurists, 2020).

The track '*Mayidarirei?*' is thus, in sync with the tenets of *Ubuntu* journalism, which assume that the role of musicians is to castigate social ills such as rape in society. The theory views rapists as wicked, a fact supported by Gyekye (2010), who argues that rapists are individuals who utterly fail to exhibit human (moral) excellence in the society.

Another song that promotes the concept of human rights for peace is '*Maramba Kukura*' of the '*Handinete*' (2010) album. In this song, Kunonga reminds older people to mind their business and leave the youths alone as he croons: '*Babamukuru kuramba kukura*' ('Brother-in-law, you have refused to age'); '*Nangananga nenyaya dzevana*' ('You are busy pursuing children's issues'); '*Pane pwere pese muripo*' ('Where there are kids, you are also there').

The theme of the song '*Maramba Kukura*' is to discourage older people from interfering with the affairs of the youth. Foner (2000) believes that there are some older people who are in the habit of interfering with the youths and their affairs. He argues that this interference causes conflict in the society.

'Ruvengo': a threat to nonviolence for peace

Kunonga also supports the concept of non-violence for peace through his music. In the song '*Ruvengo*' from the album '*Kwedu*' (2014), he discourages people from hating others. The musician clearly said hatred is a bad thing. He sings: '*Kudada neruvengo kunge chinhu chakanaka iwee*' ('Being proud of hatred as if it is a good thing'); '*Ruvengo rwako rwunobvepiko?*' ('Where does your hatred come from?').

Hate is the emotion of dislike so strong that it demands action of violence. It is 'poisonous' (Benesch, 2008: 523) and 'toxic' (Richter, 2010: 20), and it stimulates social vices such as assault, insult, and violence. In '*Ruvengo*', Kunonga urges people to shun all forms of hatred, and this is in tune with the tenets of the *Ubuntu* journalism theory, which promote the concept of non-violence peace.

One more song that promotes the concept of non-violence for peace is '*Kusaziva Hurombo*'. In this song from the album '*Handinete*' (2010), Kunonga equates ignorance to a physical disability, darkness, and poverty. He chants: '*Kusaziva kwangu hurema*' ('My ignorance is a disability'); '*Kusaziva kwangu irima*' ('My ignorance is darkness'); '*Kusadzidza kwangu hurombo*' ('My ignorance is poverty'). Kunonga further sings: '*Mandituma kunorova*' ('You sent me to beat'); '*Mandituma kunotuka*' ('You sent me to curse'); '*Mandituma kunoponda*' ('You sent me to kill').



The song encourages people to exhibit *Ubuntu* and to live harmoniously with others. It is in line with the *Ubuntu* philosophy, which supports harmony, love, and friendliness. Beating, cursing, and killing are against the aforementioned principles of humanness and should be avoided like the plague. Former chairperson of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Desmond Tutu asserts that "social harmony is for us the *summum bonum* – the greatest good. Anything that subverts this sought-after good is to be avoided like the plague (Tutu, 1999: 35).

The song '*Kusaziva Hurombo*' is relevant to many Zimbabweans because politicians sometimes send jobless youth to assault the supporters of opposition political parties (Maringira and Gukurume, 2020; Mude, 2014). Assaulting and insulting others also contravene Section 52 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which guarantees the right to personal security. Part (a) of the same Section provides that "every person has the right to bodily and psychological integrity, which includes the right to freedom from all forms of violence from public or private sources".

Endorsing the concept of peace gender

Kunonga also upholds the concept of peace from a gender perspective in his song titled '*Kana*' (No Ways!) of the album '*Uyo*' (2006). In the song, he sings: '*Unondidarireiko?*' ('Why are you doing that to me?'); '*Unondivengeriko?*' ('Why do you hate me?'); '*Unonditukireiko iwe?*' ('Why are you insulting me?'). Kunonga further chants: '*Hunzi ndinoona*' ('He says he is clever'); '*Hanzi ndinofamba*' ('He says he travels'); '*Hunzi ndinotuka ini*' ('He says he is insulting'). The musician goes on: '*Handiende kani*' ('I'm not leaving'); '*Zirume rinorova*' ('A man who assaults'); '*Zirume rinoponda*' ('A murderous man'); '*Zirume rinoshusha iro*' ('A niggling man'); '*Ngariende zvaro*' ('Let him go').

The song '*Kana*' ('No ways!') warns men that abusing their partners is wrong and socially unacceptable. Men are expected to be friendly and guardians of their families. The theme of this song is to expose abusive partners and address marriage related problems. Manyonganise (2015) affirms that women in Zimbabwe bear the brunt of abusive marriages because of the saying '*musha mukadzi*' ('women make the home'). The title of this track confirms the willpower of the wife to serve her marriage. At first, she refused to be overawed by her insulting spouse. The wife holds on to her matrimony even when her spouse bragged about his immoral behaviour. However, the abusive nature of her partner forced the woman to surrender and leave the marriage.

This song rejects violence against women (VAW) – a threat to peaceful co-existence in societies (Mashiri and Mawire, 2013). VAW in Zimbabwe is primarily a result of gender imbalance and patriarchal social relations (Zengenene and Susanti, 2019). It is putting the lives of women and children in great danger (Benyera and Nyere, 2015). Data from a Demographic Health Survey (DHS) conducted in 2015 show that about 35 percent of women in Zimbabwe had experienced physical violence from the age of 15, and 14 percent had experienced sexual violence once in their lifetime (Mukamana, Machakanja and Adje, 2020). The report also revealed that 32 percent of married women had experienced spousal



emotional abuse. The same report noted that almost a quarter of married women who experience domestic violence also experience sexual violence (Mukamana, Machakanja and Adje, 2020).

Violence against women is against the tenets of *Ubuntu*, which values human life, respect, love, forgiveness, and dignity (Wanjeri, 2017). The theory treats people who abuse others and lack *Ubuntu* (or humanness in the Nguni languages of southern Africa) “as animals” (Pearce, 1990: 147; Bhengu, 1996: 27).

‘Mufaro Rudo’: an endorsement of justice for peace

Kunonga also supports the concept of justice for peace in the song ‘*Mufaro Rudo*’. The theme of this song, from the album ‘*Handinete*’ (2010), centres on happiness in societies. In the song, Kunonga uses words and metaphors of peace like ‘*mufaro*’ (happiness), ‘*rudo*’ (love), and ‘*nditambirei nerudo*’ (welcome me with love). Part of the song goes: ‘*Ndauya nemufaro, nditambirei nerudo*’ (‘I come with happiness, welcome me with love’).

The song ‘*Mufaro Rudo*’ supports a famous African maxim, “*imba ine mufaro ine rudo*” (a happy home is full of love). It is also in sync with unity, the sense of togetherness, and co-existence (Dandala, 2009; Tutu, 1999). The song encourages Zimbabweans to welcome others and live with them harmoniously (Menkiti, 2004). The message in this song is rich and clear: happiness promotes peace and social justice in societies (Killelea, 2020). Social justice is essential in creating peace in families, communities, and the country at large (Killelea, 2020).

‘Next’ and ‘Marunjeya’: marriage counsels

Findings also revealed that Kunonga uses the power of his voice to support harmony and co-existence. The song ‘*Next*’ from the album ‘*Uyo*’ (2006), for instance, warns society to shun people who ruin marriages. He croons: ‘*Nditerere, terere iwe*’ (‘Listen to me’); ‘*Munyengetedzi, chenjera iwe*’ (‘She is a deceiver, beware of her’); ‘*Mungwarire uyo shamwari*’ (‘Beware my friend’); ‘*Mungwarire uyo hanzvadzi*’ (‘Beware my sister’); ‘*Dzapera mhuri dzawanda*’ (‘Many marriages are destroyed’); ‘*Yako is next*’ (‘yours is next’). In the song, Kunonga advises his sister to be careful about the counsel she gets from her friends. He cautions: ‘*Anonyepa uyo*’ (‘she is a liar’); ‘*Kupunza dzevamwe ichampion*’ (‘She is a champion of destroying marriages’).

In ‘*Marunjeya*’ from the album titled ‘*Handinete*’ (2010), Kunonga continues with his gospel of rebuking people who misbehave and ruin marriages. In the song, Marunjeya destroyed her marriage due to her naughtiness as evidenced by Kunonga when he sings, ‘*Marunjeya aparadza musha wake*’ (‘Marunjeya destroys her marriage’). Marunjeya also destroyed her neighbours’ homes as well as shown by Kunonga as he chants, ‘*Marunjeya aparadza misha yevavakidzani*’ (‘Marunjeya destroyed her neighbours’ marriages’).

In ‘*Next*’ and ‘*Marunjeya*’, Kunonga warns people to worry about people who wreck friendships, families, and marriages. True to these songs, there are toxic people in the society



who are on a habitual mission to ruin other people's marriages (Carter, 2018). These people are not only callous, but adversaries of peace and unity in the society.

Associations build or destroy people

Kunonga's song '*Mamurega*' of the '*Uyo*' (2006) album reminds people about the power of association. The song advises children not to associate with rogues. Kunonga sings: '*Mamurega achitamba nematsaga*' ('You left her associating with misfits'); '*Mamurega nematsotsi*' ('You left her with thieves'). He also encourages society to protect children from 'sugar daddies' as he chants: '*Mamurega nemasuggar daddy*' ('you left her with sugar daddies').

Charamba (2021) posits that '*Mamurega*' is a timeless agonising tale of morality that sees Kunonga going to the deeper depths of reminding society about the power of association. For Carter (2017), friendship with rogue elements causes problems. He also argues that intergenerational relationships cause conflicts and contribute towards high cases of domestic violence. Carter further avers that young people in Zimbabwe in sexual relationships with older men are exposed to diseases, especially the high risks of infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) (Carter, *ibid*).

The track '*Pfungwa*' from the '*Handinete*' (2010) album is also a plea for inner peace. In the song, Kunonga pleads: '*Munondiuraya nepfungwa*' ('You kill me with stress'); '*Kuonda kudai sandi kushaya kudya*' ('Being this reedy is not due to lack of food'). The persona in the song appeals for peace of mind, '*Ndinzwireiwo tsitsi*' ('Have mercy on me').

Inner peace is essential and commonly considered as true peace – the real base of peace in society (Miller, 2005). For Becker (2016) and Wanjeri (2017), inner peace is at the core of conflict management and peace-making. Evidence from study findings also shows that Kunonga used his music to promote inner peace and transform relationships in Zimbabwe.

Upholding the concept of peace education

Kunonga also upholds the concept of peace education, which empowers listeners with the knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes necessary to promote peace. Kunonga's song '*Peace*' from the album '*Such is Life*' (2003) mobilises and sensitises Zimbabweans on the need to live peacefully with one another. The song encourages people to live in peace and unity as evidenced when he hums, '*Tinoda kugara murunyararire*' ('We need to live in peace'). In the song, Kunonga also discourages war as it destroys countries: '*Aiyoyo nayo hondo*' ('With the war'); '*Yaparara nyika*' ('The country is destroyed'). Significantly, in '*Peace*', Kunonga uses both Shona and Ndebele – the two most used local languages in the country, to spread the gospel of peace to all Zimbabweans.

Wars disturb peace and stability in societies. They inhibit sustainable political, economic, social, technological, gender, and environmental development. Wars also violate fundamental human rights. The conflict in Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique, for



instance, has killed and displaced thousands of citizens (Morier-Genoud, 2020). It has also exposed people to poverty, food insecurity, diseases, and gross human rights violations.

A different song which promotes peace education is *'Mwari Baba Toita Sei?'* of the *'Handinete'* (2010) album. The song is an appeal to God for a peaceful world. In the song, Kunonga asks God on what people should do to be safe in this cruel world where wars are ravaging the lives of innocent people. Kunonga asks: *'Mwari baba toita sei?'* ('God what should we do?'); *'Nyika yatipedza'* ('The world is devouring us'); *'Nyika yatimedza'* ('The world is swallowing us'). Kunonga continues to ask for help from God: *'Mwari baba toita sei?'* ('God what should we do?'); *'Mwari baba hona tochema hama'* ('God we are mourning our beloved ones'); *'Mwari baba hona tochema nhamo'* (God we are crying because of poverty').

In this song, Kunonga is yearning for a peaceful world, a world free of violence, poverty, and hatred. Evidence from these findings corroborates the assertions by Mutero and Kaye (2019) that music creates peace by touching the soul and enlightening people about peace and human dignity. Commenting on the role of music in peace education, Wanjeri (2017) notes that music not only creates awareness on conflict emerging issues, but it provides alternative solutions to conflicts.

Conclusion and recommendations

As evidenced above, the paper brings to the fore the power of Victor Kunonga's music in peace-making. The musician uses his music to connect people, heal emotional wounds, promote the sense of belonging or the 'we feeling', and to enthuse social change. In sync with the principles of *Ubuntu* journalism theory, the jazz crooner is playing his role as a mediator and peacemaker by harnessing his music towards peace and justice. Songs such as *'Peace'*, *'Ruvengo'*, *'Mufaro Rudo'*, *'Kusadzidza Hurombo'*, *'Mwari Baba Toita Sei?'*, *'Next'*, *'Marunjeya'*, *'Mamurega'*, *'Maramba Kukura'*, *'Mayidarirei?'*, and *'Pfungwa'* promote, protect, and uphold the peace concepts of human rights, non-violence, peace from a gender perspective, justice for peace, a culture of peace, and peace education.

Kunonga sings mostly in ChiShona and IsiNdebele – languages of the majority of people in Zimbabwe. They can easily comprehend and identify with these languages. This study concluded that the musician exploited the reach, spread, as well as acceptance his music enjoyed among Zimbabweans to preach the need for peace and co-existence in the country. The music mobilises, educates, and sensitises people about peace, human rights, human dignity, social justice, and social cohesiveness. This study recommended more action research in this field of music and peace-making in Zimbabwe to enrich the discourse.

References

Adelman, E. (2011). *The Process of Music and Peace Building*. Available from: <https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/music-peacebuilding>. [Accessed 2 January 2020].

Anderson, R. (2004). A Definition of Peace. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 10(2), 101-116.



Becker, K. M. (2016). *The Nile Project: Creating Harmony through Music in the Nile Basin Region*. Unpublished thesis (PhD), The University of Vermont.

Benesch, S. (2008). Vile Crime or Inalienable Right: Defining Incitement to Genocide. *Virginia Journal of International Law*, 48(3), 485-528.

Benyera, E. & Nyere, C. (2015). An Exploration of the Impact of Zimbabwe's Operation Murambatsvina on Women and Children. *Gender & Behaviour*, 13(1), 6522-6534.

Besa, S. T. (2017). *The nexus Between USAID-Funded Food Security Programs and Positive Peace: A Case of Ensure Program, Buhera*. Unpublished Thesis (BA), Midlands State University.

Besada, H. & Moyo, N. (2008). *Zimbabwe in Crisis: Mugabe's Policies and Failures*. The Centre for International Governance Innovation Working Paper 38. Available at: <https://blogs.cranfield.ac.uk/library/i-reference-working-paper>. [Accessed 23 September 2021].

Bhengu, M. J., 1996. *Ubuntu: The Essence of Democracy*. Cape Town: Novalis Press.

Biko, S. (1978). Some African Cultural Concepts. In: A., Stubbs, ed. *I write what I like* (pp. 40-47). Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers.

Björkdahl, A. (2012). A gender-just Peace? Exploring the Post-Dayton Peace Process in Bosnia. *Peace & Chang*, 3 (2), 286-317.

Boyce-Tillman, J. (1996). Getting Our Acts Together: Conflict Resolution through Music. In: M., Liebmann, ed. *Arts Approaches to Conflict* (pp. 234-235). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Butete, V. B. (2013). "Diffusionism" and its Effects on Traditional Music: A Case Study of Contemporary Traditional Music by Victor Kunonga. *The Dyke*, 7(1), 201-232.

Cannon, M. E. (2009). *Social Justice Handbook: Small Steps for a Better World*. USA: Inter Varsity Press.

Carter, H. (2018). Whisper Homewreckers on Ruining Someone's Marriage. *Daily Mail* [online]. 15 January. Available at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-5259413/amp/confessions-women-torn-apart-marriages.html> [Accessed 25 September 2021]

Carter, M. (2017). *Young Women in Zimbabwe in Sexual Relationships with Older Men Have an Especially High Risk of Infection With HIV*. Available at: <http://www.aidsmap.com/news/jun-2017/young-women-zimbabwe-sexual-relationships-older-men-have-especially-high-risk> [Accessed 26 September 2021]

Charamba, C. (2021). 30 Days of Iconic Zimbabwean Jazz: Mamurega by Victor Kunonga. *Enthuse Magazine* [online]. 8 April. Available from: <http://enthusemag.com/30-days-of-iconic-zimbabwean-jazz/30-days-of-iconic-zimbabwean-jazz-mamurega-by-victor-kunonga/> [Accessed 24 September 2021]

Chasi, C. & Rodny-Gumede, Y. (2019). An Ubuntu approach to Peace Journalism. In: A. Mare, ed. *Conflict-sensitive Journalism: A Practical Handbook for Journalists in Southern Africa*. (pp. 23-28). Windhoek: Namibia University of Science and Technology, Social Science Research Council/African Peacebuilding Network (APN).

Chasi, C. T. (2016). Provisional Notes on Ubuntu for Journalists Covering War. *International Communication Gazette*, 78(8), 802-817.



- Cloonan, M. (2006). *Popular Music Censorship in Africa*. Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Cramm, J. M. & Nieboer, A. P. (2015). Social Cohesion and Belonging Predict the Well-Being of Community-dwelling Older People. *BMC Geriatr*, 15(30), 1-10.
- Dandala, M. (2009). Cows Never Die: Embracing African Cosmology in the Process of Economic Growth. In M. F. Murove, ed. *African Ethics: An Anthology of Comparative and Applied Ethics*. pp. (259–277). Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Davenport, C., Melander, E. & Regan, P.M. (2018). *The Peace Continuum: What It Is and How to Study It*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Diehl, P.F. (2016). Thinking about Peace: Negative Terms versus Positive Outcomes. *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, 10(1), 3-9.
- Dixon, M. (2002). UK: Music and Human Rights. In J. Sutton, ed. *Music, Music Therapy, and Trauma*. (pp. 131). Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Dube, R. (2013). *She Probably Asked for It!* A Preliminary Study into Zimbabwean Societal Perceptions of Rape. Harare: Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU).
- Durojaye, O. B. (2010). *Understanding Conflict and War*. Lagos: National Open University of Nigeria.
- Durojaye, O. B. (2012). *Peace Research Methods*. Lagos: National Open University of Nigeria.
- Fitiwi, M. (2018). *Zimbabwe Peace Insight*. Addis Ababa: Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa University.
- Foner, A. (2000). Age Integration or Age Conflict as Society Ages? *The Gerontologist*, 40(3), 272-276.
- Godbout, R.P. (2018). *Music in Peacebuilding: Examining Music within the Peacebuilding Discipline*. Unpublished thesis (MA), Dalhousie University.
- Gowan, J. (2011). Fanning the Flames: A Musician's Role in the Rwandan Genocide. *Nota Bene: Canadian Undergraduate Journal of Musicology*, 4(2), 49-66.
- Gusha, I. (2019). Memories of Gukurahundi Massacre and the Challenge of Reconciliation. *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 45(1), 1-14.
- Gyekye, K. (2010). African Ethics. In E., Zalta, ed. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved from: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/african-ethics/> [Accessed 26 September 2021]
- Harris, I. & Synott, J. (2002). Peace Education for a New Century. *Social Alternatives*, 21(1), 3-6.
- Hintjens, H. & Ubaldo, R. (2019). Music, Violence, and Peacebuilding. *Peace Review*, 31(3), 279-288.
- Ilesanmi, O. A. (2014). *International Law and Peace*. Lagos: National University of Nigeria.
- Institute for Economics & Peace. (2018). *Positive Peace Report 2018: Analysing the Factors That Sustain Peace, Sydney*. Available at: <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports> [Accessed 26 September 2021].



International Commission of Jurists. (2020). *The Case for Reform: Criminal Law and Sexual Violence in Zimbabwe A Briefing Paper*. Geneva: International Commission of Jurists. Available from: <https://www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Zimbabwe-Sexual-violence-Advocacy-Analysis-brief-2020-ENG-1.pdf>. [Accessed 22 September 2021].

Kangondo, F. (2014). Kunonga Makes Huge Splash. *The Herald* [online]. 19 December. Available at: <https://www.herald.co.zw/kunonga-makes-huge-splash/> [Accessed 24 September 2021]

Killander, M. & Nyathi, M. (2015). Gukurahundi Atrocities in Zimbabwe Thirty Years On: Prospects and Challenges. *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, 48(3), 463-487.

Konow, J. (2003). Which is the Fairest One of All? A Positive Analysis of Justice Theories. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 41(4), 1188.

Makamani, R. (2019). Peace Journalism, Conflict Management, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems: An Afrocentric Perspective. In A. Mare, ed. *Conflict-sensitive Journalism: A Practical Handbook for Journalists in Southern Africa*. (pp. 29-38). Windhoek: Namibia University of Science and Technology, Social Science Research Council/ African Peacebuilding Network (APN).

Mano, W. (2011). Popular Music as Journalism in Africa: Issues and Contexts. In H. Wasserman, ed. *Popular Media, Democracy and Development in Africa*. (pp. 91-104). Oxon: Routledge.

Manyonganise, M. (2015). Oppressive and Liberative: A Zimbabwean Woman's Reflections on Ubuntu. *Verbum et Ecclesia* [online], 36 (2). Available at: http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2074-77052015000200004 [Accessed 26 September 2021].

Mare, A. (2019). The Urgent Need for Conflict-Sensitive Journalism in Southern Africa. In A. Mare, ed. *Conflict-sensitive Journalism: A Practical Handbook for Journalists in Southern Africa*. (pp. 1-9). Windhoek: Namibia University of Science and Technology, Social Science Research Council/ African Peacebuilding Network (APN).

Maringira, G. & Gukurume, S. (2020). *Youth Patronage: Violence, Intimidation, And Political Mobilization in Zimbabwe*. Social Science Research Council. Available at: http://ssrc-cdn1.s3.amazonaws.com/crmuploads/new_publication_3/youth-patronage-violence-intimidation-and-political-mobilization-in-zimbabwe.pdf. [Accessed 23 September 2021].

Mashiri, L. & Mawire, P. R. (2013). Conceptualisation of Gender Based Violence in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(15), 94-103.

Matyszak, D. (2019). *The Results of the Inquiry into the 1 August 2018 Shootings Reveal Zimbabwe's Lack of Reform*. Institute for Security Studies. Available at: <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/the-motlanthe-commissions-anniversary-of-shame>. [Accessed 23 September 2021].

Menkiti, I. A. (2004). On the Normative Conception of a Person. In K., Wiredu (Ed.), *A Companion to African Philosophy* (pp. 324-331). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Metz, T. (2015). African Ethics and Journalism Ethics: News and Opinion in Light of Ubuntu. *Journal of Media Ethics: Exploring Questions of Media Morality*. 30(2), 74-90.

Mieder, W. (2004). *Proverbs: A Handbook*. London: Greenwood Press.



Miller, C. E. (2005). *A Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Peace and Conflict Studies*. 2nd ed. San Jose: University for Peace.

Mishra, P. (2000). *Human Rights Global Issues*. Delhi: Kalpaz Publications.

Mkodzongi, G. & Lawrence, P. (2019). The Fast-track Land Reform and Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 46(159), 1-13.

Morier-Genoud, E. (2020). The Jihadi Insurgency in Mozambique: Origins, Nature and Beginning. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 14(3), 396-412.

Moyo, T. P. (2017). *Examining the Causes of Intra-state Conflicts in Zimbabwe and their Impact on Human Security Agenda*. Unpublished thesis (BSc). Midlands State University.

Mude, T. (2014). Political Violence: Major Socio-Political Consequence of Urban Youth Unemployment in Zimbabwe. *Review of History and Political Science*, 2(1), 107-139.

Mukamana, J. I., Machakanja, P. & Adje, N. K. (2020). Trends in Prevalence and Correlates of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in Zimbabwe, 2005–2015. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 20(2), 2-11.

Mutero, T. & Kaye, S. (2019). Music and Conflict Transformation in Zimbabwe. *Peace Review*, 31(3), 289-296.

NewsDay (2012). All that Jazz: Kunonga a Rare, Passionate Musician. 8 June. Available at: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2012/06/2012-06-08-all-that-jazz-kunonga-a-rare-passionate-musician/> [Accessed 24 September 2021].

Nowak, M. (2005). *Human Rights: A Handbook for Parliamentarians No 8*. New York: Inter-Parliamentary Union, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

O’Connell, J. M. & Castelo-Branco, S. E. (2010). *Music and Conflict*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Olanrewaju, I. P. (2013). The Conceptual Analysis of Peace and Conflict. In K, Soremekun, ed. *Readings in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution*. (pp. 6-14.). Ota, Nigeria: Department of Political Science and International Relations, Covenant University.

Onkalit, C. (2005). The Frightful Actuality: Girls Tools of War in Africa.’ In D.R.E. Natukunda-Togboa, ed. *Gender and Peace Building in Africa*. (pp. 59-72.). Costa Rica: University for Peace.

Osita, A. (2005). *West Africa’s Trouble Spots and the Imperative for Peace Building*. Dakar: The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).

Page, J. S. (2008). *Peace Education: Exploring Ethical and Philosophical Foundations*. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing.

Pearce, C. (1990). *Tsika, Hunhu and the Moral Education of Primary School Children*. *Zambezia*, 17 (2), 145-160.

Potter, S. (2018). Music, Identity and National Cohesion in Mali: The Role of Music in the Post-Colonial Era. *Contemporary Voices*, 1-24.



- Pruitt, L. (2011). Creating a Musical Dialogue for Peace. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 16(1), 81-103.
- Ramson, T. F. (2015). *Message in the Music: Do Lyrics Impact Well-being?* Unpublished thesis (MA). University of Pennsylvania.
- Richter, E. D. (2008). *Incitement to Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect*. *Opinio Juris*. Retrieved from: <http://opiniojuris.org/2008/04/22/incitement-to-genocide-and-the-responsibility-to-protect/> [Accessed 25 September 2021].
- Saritoprak, Z. (2005). Peace and Nonviolence: A Turkish Experience. *The Muslim World*, 95(3), 413-423.
- Sharp, G. (2011). *Sharp's Dictionary of Power and Struggle: Language of Civil Resistance in Conflicts*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sithole, S. (2019). 22 Women Raped daily: Gender Commission. *NewsDay* [online]. 21 November. Available at: <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019/11/22-women-raped-daily-gender-commission/> [Accessed 23 September 2021].
- Thomas, N. H. (2003). Land reform in Zimbabwe. *Third World Quarterly*, 24(4), 691-712.
- Tutu, D. (1999). *No Future without Forgiveness*. New York: Random House.
- Wallensteen, P. (2002). *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System*. London: Sage Publications.
- Wanjeri, N. A. (2017). *The Role of Music in Peacebuilding and Reconciliation: A Case of Kenya's 2007/2008 Post-election Violence*. Unpublished thesis (MA). The United States International University – Africa.
- Webel, C. & Galtung, J. (2007). *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Zengenene, M. & Susanti, E. (2019). Violence against Women and Girls in Harare, Zimbabwe. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 20(9), 83-93.
- Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency. (2019). *Quarterly Digest of Statistics*. Available at: http://www.zimstat.co.zw/sites/default/files/img/publications/Digest/Q_1_2019_Final.pdf. [Accessed 23 September 2021].
- ZimFacts. (2019). *Yes, 22 Women Are Raped in Zimbabwe Daily*. Available from: <https://zimfact.org/are-22-women-raped-in-zimbabwe-daily/> [Accessed 23 September 2021].