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Female Participation in the Post-Independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry: A Case Study of Edith Katiji (Weutonga) and Sandra Ndebele

By

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A dissertation submitted for the degree of Master of Arts(Music)
in the Wits School of Arts, Faculty of Humanities,
University of the Witwatersrand

DECLARATION

Student number : 693256

I, Agnella Viriri, declare that, **Female Participation in the Post-Independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry: A Case Study of Edith Weutonga Sandra Ndebele**, is my work and that the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Agnella Viriri

March 2014

ABSTRACT

Female Participation in the Post-independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry: A Case Study of Edith Katiji (Weutonga) and Sandra Ndebele

In her study of the post-independence Zimbabwean music industry, Angela Impey notes that women now constitute a hidden yet sizeable force in the music industry (1992:17). The current study examines the socio-political, cultural and economic factors that have led to the significant increase in the number of female musicians in the post-independence Zimbabwean popular music industry. The study also seeks to bring to the fore the longstanding issue of the dynamics in the relationship between male and female musicians in the industry. Applying a feminist approach to the study of popular music, the current study seeks to shift the focus of research from the presentation of women as victims in the industry to that of celebrating the female successes in the popular music industry. Through a case study approach the study sets out to describe and analyse the careers of Sandra Ndebele and Edith Weutonga who have become successful in the once male dominated industry.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Advice and our children Anesu Dephine, Advice Rukudzo, Anotida Blessing and Ropafadzo Grace

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Background and Personal Motivation

It has been generally noted that female musicians in the Zimbabwean popular music industry are scarce. Various reasons for this situation have been presented by many scholars, among them Jenje-Makwenda (2005), Jenje-Makwenda (2009), Zindi (1985), Makore (2004), Palmberg (2004) and Chitauro et al. (1994). Significantly, as Nhamo Mhiripiri puts it, "lingering colonial attitudes and dominant male patriarchy guised as 'traditional' culture have been strongly implicated in discouraging women from professionally recording music or performing in public" (2011:66).Women's issues in music have turned out to be a popular area for scholarly deliberations in post-independence Zimbabwe. I became motivated to carry out this study after realising that most of the studies that already existed in the area were either negatively portraying women, giving them a victim status or highlighting problems that are being encountered by those women who are already in the industry.

As a female musician who has encountered and interacted with a lot of successful women musicians, I felt compelled to embark on the current study in an effort to highlight the lives and successes of women in the industry. The study was encouraged by theoretical statements by some prominent African female writers such as McFadden (1992), El Saadawi (2007) and Ama Ata Aidoo (2006) who believe that women's creative works are deliberately understudied in male-dominated academic institutions. I also chose this topic because of the view that I share with Patricia McFadden (1999: preface). She says that "[w]hen women write from a positionality that is built through solidarity and inclusiveness, they conjure up new intellectual products …". I therefore write as an insider; as a feminist activist, a music educator and a female musician trying to make my mark on this fight against patriarchy. As a music teacher I have realised how intimidated most of my female music students are during electric band practice sessions on campus. Most of them run for the microphone just to sing; not even making an effort at playing the instruments which proves their acceptance of the stereotype of women being too weak to play instruments. The chosen case studies would then highlight how some female musicians have

become successful in the industry and enlighten my students and other female musicians on the changes and improvements taking place in the industry.

My interest in the topic under study began when I was still a little girl staying with my mother at our rural home in Buhera in the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe. As the breadwinner of the family, my father was working in Bulawayo and was sharing a room with a male workmate which made it difficult for my mother to visit him regularly. My mother had to take care of the eight children she had given birth to and three others from the extended family in the rural home. In order to supplement the little salary that my father was earning and sending home, my mother joined a women's club where they would knit jerseys and crotchet mats and bake cakes and scones. The women would sell whatever they had made to the community and share the proceeds. As they did their club business the women would sing; among them were very good singers and my mother was one of them. We could only hear them sing at their club competitions and parties but considering how well some of them could sing, I asked my mother why they were not moving around in the neighbouring villages to sing and raise some money for their clubs that way. My mother's reply was:

> *Izvo hatiiti mwanangu nekuti tikangotanga zvekufamba tichiimba club yedu yotoparara nekuti hapana angazotenga zvinhu zvedu nekuti tinenge totonzi nzenza dzinongoswerokwira nekudzika dzisingachengeti vana.*
>
> That we can't do because the moment we start moving around singing that will be the end of our club because no one would ever buy our products for the society would consider us to be loose women who just move around without taking proper care of their kids.

It was acceptable for men to stay in town for months without coming home to their families but it was wrong for my mother and her female colleagues to explore their talents and make a living out of them. Women could sing as long as it was within their defined social boundaries but would be castigated for any effort to move out of that boundary marked for them by patriarchy. Miriam Makeba is highly respected for being among the pioneer women popular musicians in South Africa. Confirming how difficult it was for women to enter into the popular music industry and the negative treatment that those in the industry received she had this to say:

> Being a young woman on stage and late-night performances in clubs and dance halls were always associated with prostitution or something

> bad…Good families did not allow their children to become performers. It wasn't proper for a woman to be on stage. (Makeba 2004:28)

Women in Zimbabwe also experienced and are still encountering the same kind of intimidation. This has really reduced the number of women who were willing to risk being labelled and enter the music industry in pre-independence Zimbabwe. Women in post-independence Zimbabwe have realized that the reinvention of what is customarily or decently appropriate behaviour on the part of women, appears to be a "convenient ideology recalled to both lessen the competition within the industry…and to ensure the ongoing control of men in the society" (Impey 1992:121-2). They have taken agency to rectify this imbalance in the music industry and together with some socio-political changes that have taken place in the country, their numbers have significantly increased.

When I completed my Diploma in Education in which I specialised in music at Hillside Teachers College, I enrolled with The Zimbabwe College of Music for a National Certificate in music. During this period, when Joyce Jenje-Makwenda was taking us for a module on history of popular music in Zimbabwe, the conversation I had with my mother as a little girl came to mind. We learnt how culture and the colonial government collaborated in restricting women's entry into the cities and how this led to the minimal contribution that women had to the development of popular music. The Zimbabwe College of Music at the time housed the offices for the Zimbabwe Musicians' Association, and so it is the centre in Harare where musicians would meet to share their challenges and successes in the industry. It is also during this period that I realised that there were more females in the music industry than were known to the public. There were women in most positions in the industry ranging from musicians, promoters, publishers, producers, engineers to managers. I became interested to find out why these women were not known and not as active as their male counterparts in this industry. This interest led to my Music Honours dissertation topic which focused on the problems that female musicians are facing in the Zimbabwean music industry. The current study builds on my Honours study. As I was in the field collecting data for my Honours dissertation I realised that although they were facing numerous problems, the number of female musicians in the industry was increasing since the time I had studied for my National Certificate in Music. With this background I became eager to find out what really was encouraging women to join the industry in post-independence Zimbabwe.

1.2 Central Aims

The central aim to the current study is to explore the factors that have led to the significant increase in the number of female musicians in the post-independence Zimbabwean popular music industry. I also aim to assess how women musicians in the Zimbabwean popular music industry are expanding or redefining the boundaries of their professional space and establishing definitions of female music-making. The performances and creativity of female performers such as Edith Weutonga, Sandra Ndebele, Duduzile Manhenga, Fungisai Zvakavapano, Prudence Katomeni and many others steal the musical charts. These female musicians are not only prospering in what Mhiripiri (2011:103) calls "socially acceptable gospel music", but also in secular genres such as Jazz and *Sungura,* which they previously shunned for fear of stigmatisation (ibid.:103). This increase of female musicians in the Zimbabwean popular music industry is the premise of my argument which explores reasons behind this notable increase. In order to examine this phenomenon, I have selected two musicians, namely Edith Weutonga and Sandra Ndebele as the primary case studies for this dissertation.

I had a preliminary interview with Norman Tapambwa, a producer at Gramma Records, one of the leading recording companies in the country. Tapambwa confirmed that the number of female musicians with recording contracts was on the increase and he had twenty women musicians signed up at his company at the time of our discussion. This is a significant increase considering the fact that there are other record companies besides Gramma Records. This confirms what Rwafa and Vambe meant when they said that "female popular stars of the post-independence Zimbabwe have gone beyond crying to be heard" (2007:84). They are now fully committed to the making of music and are generating a musical culture that is becoming more and more tough to ignore (ibid.:84). My goal therefore is to explore the reasons which have seen women move from being ordinary band members to becoming bandleaders.

Even though the majority of scholars have focused on highlighting the under-representation of women, nevertheless, female musicians remained as part of the history of popular music in Zimbabwe. Women such as Laina Mattaka and Evelyn Juba were pioneers in the industry alongside their male counterparts in the 1930s, something not often mentioned (Jenje-Makwenda 2005:140). With female musicians having featured that early in the industry, their low numbers and minimal representation in most ethnographic works on Zimbabwean music becomes

worrisome. In a related comment on world music, Sheila Whiteley notes that "… direct confrontation with the established codes of feminised representation became more explicit in the 1980s" (2000:122). Since the number of female musicians in Zimbabwe started to rise in the 1980s, this study examines factors that facilitated this confrontation by women in their battle to find "space for economic fulfillment in a male dominated society" (Vambe 2000:84). I am going to use the music and lives of Sandra Ndebele and Edith Weutonga to investigate the various strategies that women musicians are using to negotiate and gain access to become bandleaders in the male domain of artistic control.

The study also considers the ways in which the chosen cases of Ndebele and Weutonga's identities may be "disruptive, transgressive and subversive in terms of patriarchal, hetero-normative ideologies" (Jooma 2012:10). I strive to understand and expose the deeper, implied and intentionally constructed ideas and connotations that the chosen case studies' music and life signify and communicate. The study also aims to critically engage with a segment of artists, "hidden, overlooked and taken for granted" in the popular music industry (Jooma 2012:10). It therefore aims to make the invisible (women) visible by investigating beyond the generally accepted depiction of women in the popular music industry.

1.3 Research Questions

The central aims of this study will be achieved through answering the following research questions through the evidence obtained from my case studies of the musicians Edith Weutonga and Sandra Ndebele:

What are the performance strategies that are being used by women musicians to gain access into the popular music industry?

Which subversive traits are portrayed by some women musicians as a way of challenging patriarchy?

How did the changing socio-political climate in independent Zimbabwe promote the inclusion of women into the music industry?

How are the various stakeholders contributing to the milage that women are gaining in the industry?

What changes are taking place in the operations of the popular music industry that has seen women being attracted to join?

How are female musicians contributing to the redefining of gender roles in the music industry?

1.4 Rationale of the Study

There is evidence from most published work in this area of the lack of realisation of the context within which society was and still is changing in Zimbabwe. As Rudo Gaidzanwa puts it "there are a lot of reasons why the society no longer operates as it used to traditionally" (1985:94). The current study would therefore reveal certain changes that are taking place in the operations of some sectors in the country and how they are positively impacting on female participation in the music industry. The research would also become a stepping stone from a state of mourning about how women are being disadvantaged into a new chapter of acknowledgement of the positive steps towards the emancipation of female musicians.

The study is also important for it will demonstrate why it is necessary to avoid the depiction of women as victims, as it would be unfair to those women who have triumphed against victimization and marginalization in the music industry. Gaidzanwa supports this as she states that "accepting a victim status may lead women to overestimate the power of the system against them thus underestimating their potential for struggle to change and liberate themselves and their society" (1985:98). The study is important as it would expose how female musicians are viewed by raising a number of pertinent issues of historical importance on and relevance to the upliftment of female musicians in the face of overwhelming denigration. This study is of significance as it interprets the extent to which selected women musicians exploit their opportunities and potentialities to the full. As Gaidzanwa (1985:13) aptly states, "it is the kind of calculations and choices a woman creates that are the mark of liberation and freedom".

The scarcity of specific studies on women's achievements in music leave a knowledge gap in Zimbabwean music which is also severely limited by the lack of data. My personal observations of Zimbabwean women and the limited literature I found that did not pathologise African women, prompted me to believe that there had to be a "counter-narrative", one that celebrated the women's resiliency and resistance in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges (Amadiume 1997; Baker 1998; Bennett 2005; Chandler &Wane 2002). As a woman writer, one

obvious purpose of this study is to reclaim women's history in Zimbabwean popular music. It acts as a counter to the "dearth of writings that shifts our eyes from the so-called 'Big man' " (Gqola 2013). Popular music history has been largely written by men and much of women's presence and involvement has been rendered invisible or downplayed in the process. In traditional written versions, the few prominent names crop up time and again, giving the impression that far fewer women have been involved in the medium than is in fact the case. This study will therefore act to reverse those misconceptions and representations by placing at the centre of the politics those that are often imagined as mere spectators in the music industry (Gqola 2013).

In documenting performance strategies and the socio-political changes that are being experienced in popular music currently, this study embraces cultural currency, significance and novelty. Predominantly, most other academic literature on female musicians in Zimbabwe has been published in the last three years. This serves to highlight the cultural relevance and importance of studying female musicians and their achievements in post-independence Zimbabwean music industry. It also makes the study useful for it situates itself in an existing social context and serves to be relevant to the present time. This study would also add to the available literature on Zimbabwean music and it would act as reference source for future studies in the same research area. Policy makers would benefit by being enlightened about the need to create a democratic context for both sexes in the industry which would bring diversity to the end product—the music.

Additionally the study uses cases of young female musicians with unique traits, who have joined the music industry during the period under study. This makes the research fresh and reflective of current undertakings of women in the popular music industry. Thus this research appropriately tackles issues of the period and documents a potential transformation in the landscape of popular music through Weutonga and Ndebele as sites of discourse. The use of two unique female musicians proves that "women artists are not the same person, carbon copies of each other, but they are products of this time and offer immense possibilities to think transformatively about ourselves and this time, on this part of earth that we live in" (Gqola 2013:3).

1.5 Research Methodology

I used the term "popular music" in my study to refer to the secular genres like Jazz, *Sungura*, urban grooves and *Chimurenga* whose performances, as Impey puts it, "occur in uncontrolled public environments, where women openly compete within a male domain or subculture" (1992:25). I have excluded Gospel music since I observed that more women were involved in this genre to operate within established protected professional spaces, which have long been considered respectable for women. The acceptance of Gospel musicians is also high because they come from churches with a ready-made following, unlike other genres where women are performing in the spaces in which they are not accepted. The study focuses on popular music as an integral part of contemporary African culture in which traditional cultural values are changing due to the influences of globalisation and other social changes. It captures the impact of independence on music performances and highlights several changes that it brought about in the music industry which benefit female musicians. Since the study focuses on the post-independence era, I chose cases of two young musicians who joined the industry and were born in the period under study. They therefore represent the increase which is the focus of this study. The post-independence cases made it possible for me to hear their lived experiences without any comparison, which would have been the case if I had chosen musicians who had been in the industry before independence.

This research project used a qualitative method of data gathering through the medium of case studies. McLeod (1994:78) describes qualitative research as a "process of systematic inquiry into the meaning which people employ to make sense of that experience that guides the actions". This is supported by Prisca Ndanjeyi (2009:24) who believes that since qualitative data is presented in words, it is usually richer, vital, in-depth and therefore more likely to present a true picture of a way of life of a people's beliefs, attitudes and experiences. Since the focus of my study is on the lives and performance styles of female musicians, a qualitative research design is best.

My research approach involved two kinds of work, field research and "desk work". Bruno Nettl differentiates the two where he says that, "Fieldwork denotes the gathering of recordings and the first-hand experience of musical life in a particular human culture, while desk work includes transcription, analysis and the drawing of conclusion" (1964:62). As part of the "desk work" analysis and interpretation processes, I consulted various written sources such as the available

scholarly literature and secondary material including traditional media and online material. I used the triangulation method of data collection in this study. Triangulation is defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of certain aspects of human behaviour. The use of different methods (triangulation) in a research project helps to provide different perspectives on the research topic (Chari 2007:37). The case studies of Sandra Ndebele and Edith Weutonga were used for this study. The cases were chosen on the basis of them being uniquely outstanding in their performance in the popular music industry. According to Denzin (2009:301), this can be identified as triangulation within methods for it concerns the replication of a study as a check on reliability and theory confirmation. The two cases were then used to investigate the increase in female representation in the music industry. Ndebele is a very controversial musician who has generated much media discussion about her sexually explicit dancing and style of dress. Choosing her was a way of critically investigating this media discourse. Weutonga on the other hand, although not controversial, plays the bass guitar which is never expected to be professionally played by a woman in Zimbabwe. This makes her a very relevant case. These two women I have chosen to profile because they have provided substantive evidence of what they have done independently that makes them the warriors that they are. They were also chosen because they represent two of the major ethnic groups in Zimbabwe and live in areas that are accessible to the researcher. I live in Gweru in the Midlands Province, a town situated between Harare and Bulawayo. Ndebele originates from the Ndebele ethnic group and lives in Bulawayo; and Weutonga is from the Shona group and is based in Harare. This afforded me more room for comparison than if the two were from the same ethnic group and city. I intentionally chose cases from Harare and Bulawayo because of the fact that Harare is the capital city of Zimbabwe and Bulawayo is the largest city in the country. This means that they are cosmopolitan cities where most business and musical activities in the country take place. The two cities have similar facilities that a musician would need and therefore the two musicians enjoy the same exposure to these facilities. This would not have been the case if one or the other came from a small remote town. As Ruth Finnegan asserts,I have used, "specific case studies to lead to the kind of illumination in depth not provided by more thinly spread and generalized accounts" (1989:4).

Data was collected from the two musicians through in-depth interviews. An in-depth interview is an unstructured personal interview that uses extensive probing to get the respondent to express

their beliefs on the topic in detail. Interviewees are given as much freedom to express themselves as is necessary but remaining within the topic of discussion (Muranda 2004:56). The advantages of using such an interview include that it is flexible, the researcher can seek further clarification and additional information can be deduced from nonverbal communication. This is supported by Reinharz who states that:

> Interviewing offers researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher. This assertion is particularly important to the study of women because in this way learning from women is an antidote to centuries of ignoring women's ideas altogether or having men speak for women. (1992:119)

I had one main and formally arranged interview with Weutonga at her home in Eastlea in Harare. Having the interview in her own familiar home environment was advantageous in that it may have put her more at ease. I later emailed her several times with follow-up questions and she responded to all my emails. I also had a few informal interviews with her at the two shows that I attended, both of which were at the Book Café in Harare. At these shows, Weutonga introduced me to several female musicians whom I later interviewed. I had very fruitful interviews with all the female musicians who were very open and I concluded that it was so because I had been introduced to them by a musician they trusted had their interests at heart. Even Weutonga was a bit skeptical at first as to the motive of my interviews. She wanted to know if I was not going to take her story to the media but I assured her and made it clear that the interviews were all for educational purposes. I perfectly understood why she didn't want her story to be taken to the media. As Patricia Macfadden notes accurately "the media tend to play an active and often misogynist role in the construction and perpetuation of… sexist stereotypes" which are mostly negative on the part of women (1992:173). When I explained my research ethics and showed her the interview consent form for her consideration and signature, she then became comfortable to speak openly to me and we had an excellent discussion. I used a skill that I had learnt from Russell, who emphasizes that creating a good rapport and establishing trust are essential strategies when entering the field (2006:211). I told Weutonga that I am a musician, student, music educator and a feminist who is also fighting for the emancipation of women and thereafter she gave me an easy to follow account of her musical life. Even with Weutonga's acceptance of my status as a fellow black woman and a musician, I still had to work hard to bring out a document that is a true representation of the Zimbabwean music industry. This was so because of

Lara Allen's observation that "shared identity does not furnish the ability to effectively research and represent others; only the development of investigative analytical and writing skills can assure this" (2006:52). My interview with Weutonga also illuminated a very important aspect in the music industry which I later followed up. This led to the build-up of the fifth chapter of this research which focuses on organizations that supported women musicians, including Weutonga and Ndebele.

My second case was not easy to get hold of and I only managed to speak to her and arrange for our first meeting in February 2013 after she had returned from a month-long tour of Europe. I managed to have two interviews with Ndebele mainly because I had to cut short our first interview as she needed to attend to other personal business. She is a very busy person and our interview was interjected by several phone calls, with the result that I felt I had not established sufficient information. I was very grateful however that she agreed to have a second interview which we arranged so that it coincided with one of her shows. I then met her for the second time on the afternoon of the 25th of September 2013 before her performance at the Rainbow Hotel which I also managed to attend. Between the two interviews I tried to get hold of Ndebele through her email, Facebook, LinkedIn and even WhatsApp but got no response. I only managed to get answers to the questions I had on the day of our second interview.

Additionally, ethnographic techniques were employed through participant observation. I attended selected shows or performances by the chosen musicians and this afforded me an opportunity of seeing them in action and how the audience reacts to them as they perform. Participant observation is the best means of obtaining a valid picture of social reality because as said by Chari "[i]t is when the researcher takes on the role of the participant observer and participates fully in the situation under investigation" (2007:43). At these events I also talked to audience members to gauge their responses. Two of Weutonga's shows were attended; the first one was on the anniversary of the Sisters Open Mic, a Pamberi Trust project for female musicians. On the second show I attended, I was not interested in observing how she performed but how she interacted with other musicians in the industry, both male and female. I was going to judge this from the level of attendance of the other musicians. The show was a sad one, it was a fundraising show for Weutonga's youngest son, Madhalitso, who needed a life-saving heart operation and those who performed at the show did not expect payment. Some very prominent musicians

graced the show. Weutonga managed to raise the money needed for her son's operation – which was later performed and truly saved his life. What touched me most on that show was when Weutonga as part of the fundraising, auctioned her bass guitar which was generously bought. It was a moment that made me realize the value that women attach to motherhood; she had sacrificed the only thing she cherished and survived on, to save her son.

Ndebele's shows that I managed to attend, on the other hand, were all money-making gigs. One was the corporate gig at the Rainbow Hotel mentioned earlier where I also had the opportunity to interview Thandeka, one of her dancing girls. Ndebele had informed me that she had groomed Thandeka and was at the time in the process of recording her own album. The other show was in Harare at the Commissioner General's Fun Fair. There were several performers but judging from the crowd's responses to the performances, Ndebele outshined all of them. In contrast to the Rainbow Hotel show, where my respondents were mostly drinking men and women, the Fun Fair show featured audience members with different personalities ranging from children, mothers, wives to husbands. I mostly benefited from the latter show since it was a setup I was more relaxed and identified with, although I obtained interesting insights at both events..

In addition to the two main cases several other female musicians were interviewed, among them Rute Mbangwa, Duduzile Manhenga, Tariro Ruzvidzo and Rudo Chasi. I however failed to fulfill one aspect of my sample. I had planned to interview at least two female musicians who joined the industry in the pre-independence era but failed to locate any one of them. The oldest of them, Dorothy Masuka and Stella Chiweshe, the two most popular Zimbabwean women musicians were all in the diaspora at the time of the study. I managed however to interview a woman music writer, Joyce Jenje-Makwenda, who has enormous knowledge of the pre-independence Zimbabwean music industry. She was of great assistance to this study. An opportunity also presented itself to interview people from a recording industry. Sonboy Sibindi from Metro studios was one of them. Emanuel Vori, the Executive director of Gramma Records together with his producer Taimon Mabaleka were also interviewed. Gramma Records is the oldest recording company in Zimbabwe and the two gentlemen above joined Gramma before independence in 1974. The two men were very useful in that they supplied me with the statistics of female musicians who recorded with them in the pre- and post-independence Zimbabwe. These statistics strengthened my hypothesis that the number of female musicians has increased in

the post-independence era. People with other active roles in the industry were also interviewed, from journalists, managers to event coordinators.

Content analysis on both primary and secondary sources was also employed. According to Fraenkel, "content analysis is a technique that enables researchers to study human behaviour in an indirect way through analysis of their communications" (2003:35). Recorded radio and television interviews of the two artists was analysed as well as their web pages and their music on YouTube. All this added to the information about the artists and how they interacted with their fans. The social networks also allowed me an opportunity to view their fan bases and the different comments from the people and how they accepted these female musicians and their music. An evaluation of articles by entertainment reporters in popular newspapers such as *Herald, Chronicle, Sunday Mail* in archives had been planned but was not achieved. I only managed to evaluate those articles that were posted on the online newspapers and stations among them, *Nehanda radio online, Bulawayo news 24*, and the *Zimbabwe news online*. All this was done to evaluate the acceptance of these female musicians in the country and also identify the major factors that have contributed to the increased number of women musicians in the industry.

The first interview held with Weutonga made me realise the importance of preparedness when one is going into the field. Assuming that everything was in place I asked a friend, Vimbai Chamisa, to accompany me to Weutonga's place. Chamisa was going to record my interview with Weutonga with a video camera. With only 30 minutes into the interview Chamisa started acting in a strange manner. I asked what the problem was and she told me that the camera memory was full. That is when I realised that the memory card in the camera had been used at another function at home and I had just assumed that it still had enough memory to capture that interview. It was a significant advantage that I was also recording with my laptop as a backup; this then instantly became the main recording source for the interview.

Fortunately for me the language issue was not a major problem as most of my interviews were carried out in English. Most of my respondents were comfortable with English, with the exception of a few elderly men and women and one pastor from Gweru, who preferred to use either Shona or Ndebele. The Shona interviews did not present any problems for I am also Shona; however for the Ndebele ones I needed an interpreter. Although this worked in the sense that I managed to collect data, the problem arose in translation. Some meaning may have been

lost in translation because "some words and ideas simply cannot be translated directly" (Patton 2002:392). Consequently, the information becomes "contaminated". It then becomes difficult to tell whose perspectives are being represented, the respondent's or the interpreter's. For this reason, although direct Ndebele quotations from the interviews were used, it is important to indicate that these translations may have made the information second-hand (Madalane 2011:11).

1.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethics impacts on all forms of research. In this research all interviewees and other informants were told of a set of moral principles that guided the researcher's views on confidentiality, anonymity, legality, professionalism and privacy in conducting research. With the sensitivity of the study area which focuses on human subjects and their behaviour, especially aspects of Ndebele's performance, the interviewees were assured of professionalism and confidentiality. When I attended Ndebele's shows, I decided not to use a video camera although Ndebele herself had no problem with it. I realised that the camera was not going to be a true reflection of what was taking place. Whenever I focused on people in the audience who would have been dancing, they would stop as if to show that they did not want to be captured. It made me realise that I might spoil the evening for some people and so I turned my camera off and just watched as people enjoyed themselves. This then cements the observation by the Sagepub.com that"Participant observation is in some ways both the most natural and the most challenging of qualitative data collection methods [for] it connects the researcher to the most basic of human experiences, discovering through immersion and participation the hows and whys of human behavior in a particular context" (Online).The challenge that I mostly faced was most probably because I failed to fulfil the "immersion and participation" aspects of this data harnessing process. The setup was different from what I was used to because of my religious beliefs and so I could not drink and dance in the clubs. As a result, I became an observer in a more formal sense, and the audience members most likely perceived this difference in behaviour and level of immersion and modified their own responses accordingly. The biggest moral lesson I learnt as a participant observer is that you should be discreet enough about who you are and what you are doing that you do not disrupt people's happiness and their normal activity, yet should be open enough that the people you observe and interact with do not feel that your presence compromises

their privacy. The research interviews were conducted after initially obtaining the interviewee's explicit permission through the signing of consent forms. I ascertained the schedule of people's routines so that the interviewees were not disturbed in their daily routines to answer questions, but were interviewed when and if they were free to do so.

Confidentiality was also respected. Ndebele clearly told me that she did not want her family to be involved in her career or anything to do with it. Although I had certain questions that I wanted to ask her husband as follow-up to some discussions I had with Ndebele, I had to respect her wish for privacy and did not interview her husband. One woman from the Seventh Day Adventist Church insisted on anonymity and so I did not record her name. One respondent (Sanboy Sibindi) refused to be recorded and I switched off my voice recorder, although it disadvantaged me by delaying the interview process as I had to write everything down with no backup source.Also the choices about how to present myself and to whom had very important consequences about the types of data that I collected and how rapport developed with the research participants. I also informed the audience in Ndebele's show of their right to refuse further discussion and of my commitment to confidentiality if they decided to continue talking with me.

1.7 Arrangement of Chapters

After this introductory chapter, I cover the literature review in Chapter Two and theoretical framework. This is where I will be evaluating the studies that already exist in the same field of research and show the gap left for the current study. The theories on which the study is grounded which are Post-modern feminism, Post-colonial feminist theory and Africana Womanism will also be presented. Chapter Three focuses on Edith Weutonga, the bassist who is challenging the prescribed feminine roles through the instrument. Chapter Four presents Sandra Ndebele as the Bulawayo dancing queen and a subversive rebel. The last content chapter is chapter Five, where I highlight the various organisations that are promoting female musicians such as Weutonga and Ndebele in Zimbabwe. Chapter Six contains my conclusions and recommendations related to this research project.

Chapter Two

Literature review and Theoretical framework

2.0 Introduction

The chapter will provide critical analysis of published musical scholarship in an effort to provide historical perspective, contextualisation and a theoretical framework for the current study. The chapter is divided into three main sections starting with the history of Zimbabwean music and women musicians. The second section will focus on the three theoretical frameworks on which this study is grounded; Postmodern Feminism, Postcolonial Feminism and Africana Womanism. The weaknesses of each theory are complemented by the strengths of the others. The last section of the chapter will focus on the writings on gender studies in popular music.

2.1 History of Zimbabwean Music

Very little ethnographic work on Zimbabwean popular music exists. The few scholars who wrote on the history of popular music in Zimbabwe tended to concentrate on specific periods which raises the problem of the lack of continuity in the narration of the development of the music. Paul Berliner's research is one of the pioneering works on Zimbabwean music but it concentrates mainly on Shona traditional music with the *mbira* as its main focus (1993). Berliner's concentration on traditional music is important however, for it is in traditional music where one locates the foundation of a society's music. According to Berliner, music played an important role in traditional Zimbabwean society for it accompanied all aspects of community occasions, from weddings, beer parties, work in the fields and even at funerals (1993:20). Berliner does not specify the role that women played in the making of music back then for he concentrates on male *mbira* players only. But as Ezra Chitando (2002) and Joyce Jenje-Makwenda (2005) put it, women in traditional Zimbabwean societies also contributed to the music-making process.

Chitando acknowledges however, that women were given the more marginal roles of singing, clapping and dancing just as the children did. They lacked access to instruments that were associated with ancestral beliefs, such as the *mbira* and drums (2002:25). Jenje-Makwenda notes that women were not allowed to play most musical instruments, especially the *mbira* since it was

deeply rooted in ancestral traditions (2000:10). In reference to the above insights, I intend to investigate whether this contributed in any way to the suppression of certain female musicians like Stella Chiweshe, who started playing *mbira* in the 1960s. Stella Chiweshe challenged the norm and did learn to play mbira. Zindi quoted her saying that:

> I counted the number of fingers on a man's hand and saw five and I counted the fingers on my hand they also came to five, so I said to myself what the hell, if a man can play mbira, I can too. (2010:68)

Despite having played the instrument earlier in her life, Chiweshe only began to be recognized and be popular in post-independence Zimbabwe (Zindi 1985:69). The fact that women were not allowed to play Mbira in the traditional society however mean that women did not have any power in the whole family setup. Their role in the cultural context commanded political power to differing intensities within the family and even the larger community. The aged women occupied the crucial role of folklore narrators, whose generic name according to Alec Pongweni is "Ambuya Muzavazi: 'Grandmother, the speaker-at-length-who-does-not-allow-interruption'" (2001: 155). By not allowing any interruption during their narrations, the Grandmothers therefore commanded powers, which even the men could not take away from them.

Thomas Turino follows Berliner and goes a step further to trace what he calls "a social and style history of urban-popular music in Harare, Zimbabwe from the 1930s to the mid-1990s" (2000:4). Turino's analysis of music through the major landmarks of Zimbabwean political history provides a base and background for my study. I intend to compare the involvement of women in music in the period he discusses with the current scenario which has seen the number of female musicians increase significantly.

Turino, similar to most male scholars who wrote on Zimbabwean music, trivialised the role that women played in the development of the popular music genre. According to Chitando (2002:24), Turino is a "well-meaning interpreter of Shona popular music" and certainly Turino has contributed immensely to the literature on Zimbabwean popular music. In as much as the present researcher appreciates Turino's contribution to Zimbabwean literature on music development, it is disturbing to note that in the book, Turino discussed at length the contribution of many male musicians, with all his interviewees being men and mentions just a few female musicians in passing. Turino noted that "Dorothy Masuka was Zimbabwe's first international singing artist"

(2000:134). This leaves no doubt about this being a landmark in the development of music in Zimbabwe. In a whole chapter on the music from the 1930s to the 60s, Turino only mentions Masuka under the last sub-topic of "other contributors", without giving her particular attention or emphasis. This proves that Turino's work implies that women played only a minor role.

Nhamo Mhiripiri (2011:103), Turino (2000:5), and Berliner (1993:25) are in agreement that colonialism impacted heavily on the development of popular music in Zimbabwe. Berliner asserts that "the European occupation of Zimbabwe in the late 19th century and the subsequent development of urbanization and mass communication forced people to move into towns and mines in search of employment" (1993:25). This and other developments that resulted from it, led to the growth of popular music. As Zimbabwean workers moved into towns they converged with migrant workers from Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi and this resulted in the emergence of a new music culture (Dube 1996:112). According to Jenje-Makwenda, the mixing of traditional music with styles from the region and the exposure to western music styles through loudspeakers installed by the municipalities in towns, saw the birth of popular music in the 1930s (2005:17). The argument is cemented by Sibanda who notes that:

> Colonialism had a double impact to the development of Zimbabwean music. There was gradual displacement of African culture which was manifest largely in cultural practices like dance and music which harmonized and knit communities (Turino:2000).This, in turn, influenced change in life styles and shaped ideologies that further eroded the culture of the indigenous people. (2012:17)

Following the above scholars, I am going to investigate how the popular music context led to the under-representation of women in this genre and how it is currently being transformed and reversed.

Fred Zindi correctly puts it that the commercialisation of African music started when the Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation encouraged the performance of new music genres by paying the indigenous musicians whose music would have been recorded and played on radio (1985:3). Turino follows Zindi by saying that these traditional activities were viewed by government as "safe recreational activities for the locals to engage in" (2000:63). The government therefore did not discourage the recording and airplay of music by the Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation but I believe that it was not for the benefit of the people. I agree with

Nomusa Moyo who writes that, since the radio station was government-owned and controlled, it was meant to keep Africans entertained so that they would not tune into other stations that may have broadcasted anti-government sentiments (2008:13). I will therefore build on this and the observation by Sindisiwe Sibanda (2004:5) that commercialisation led to the formation of many bands; and explore how commercialisation later introduced gender divisions into the popular music industry.

Zindi (1985) wrote biographies of fifteen musicians with only one female musician, Susan Mapfumo, in the whole book. The 1997 revised version of the same book has a slight increase in number to five female musicians. What is surprising is that in the later version he included female musicians who had entered the industry well before Mapfumo. It is not clear whether the reason for this is that the writer had not yet come across these artists in 1985 or whether this indicates gender discrimination on the part of the author.

Jenje-Makwenda's work is the first book that goes to greater lengths in exploring the contributions of female musicians in the popular music industry from its inception (2005). I am going to continue in her academic direction and focus on the changes that took place after the time of her writing which has seen the increase in female participation in the industry. Jenje-Makwenda covered too lengthy a period for a single book to be exhaustive of the female musicians who contributed to the development of popular music. This leaves room for reexamination of certain landmarks in the history of the music to ascertain whether any other female musicians who contributed to the popular music industry may have been left out.

In a chapter she dedicates to "female musicians who set the jazz ball rolling", Jenje-Makwenda writes biographies of 16 female musicians who she acknowledges to have been the pioneers in the popular music industry (2005:136-141). I observed that, of all 16 female musicians she compiled, only three, namely Victoria Chingate, Sylvia Sondo and Dorothy Masuka were band leaders. The others were vocalists and some were dancers in male-headed bands, such as Lina Mattaka with the Bandu actors and Joyce Ndoro with the De Black Evening Follies. Most of them had very short careers as they had to retire – just like Evelyn Juba did – "from active stage work to give more attention to her growing family" (2005:140). The biographies presented by Jenje-Makwenda then negate the over-generalisation on the marital status of most female musicians by Chitauro and others, where they state that female musicians were "perceived as

dangerous in that they might influence other women to follow their lifestyle, as they were often single or divorced" (1994:118). The analysis of what Jenje-Makwenda presented also allows me an opportunity to investigate the changes in the industry that are making it possible for a significant number of women to become band leaders. I will also look at what has changed in the family institution to allow mothers to take up popular music performance as full-time careers.

Alec Pongweni's (1982) compilation of *Chimurenga* songs is a very relevant piece of literature in Zimbabwe's music history for it gives a detailed analysis of one of the major genres of popular music in Zimbabwe. This complements the works of scholars like Turino and Jenje-Makwenda who covered a wider period from the 1930s to the mid-1990s but did not include in-depth information on any one genre. My study will also follow Pongweni by concentrating on an area that has not been attended to by these scholars. This ensures that my work will complement the available literature. In Pongweni's well-detailed collation of *Chimurenga* songs however, most if not all of the songs were composed by male composers. Rwafa and Vambe question whether there were no female composers during the war or rather, that Pongweni was "biased against women's creativity to the extent where he excluded their voices from his book" (2007:70). Focus therefore needs to be directed to the exploration of whether most of these male scholars intentionally left out female musicians or that there were none in the periods covered by their works.

For Chitauro et al., Susan Mapfumo can be named the 1970s female "guru" for they note that, "[t]he decade of the 70s, the years of Mapfumo's success, was noticeable for its lack of women artists…" (1994:127) and the harshness of the UDI regime was mainly blamed for the lack of a community of women singers within the country in the early 70s (ibid.:127). I concur with Chitauro et al. that "Possibly this meant that the ground gained in terms of challenging the stereotypic images of women and inhabiting a space from which counter images could be produced, was, for the time being, lost" (1994:127). Maurice Vambe introduces a different view where he says that:

> During the Zimbabwean liberation struggle of the 1970s, the degree to which a song became "popular" depended on the African community's acceptance of the value of national self-assertion and a quest for political freedom which the African singers sang about. (2000:74)

The 1970s therefore deserves further investigation as it is possible that political events played a significant role in how women musicians became popular or not during this period.

After independence, popular music genres; Jazz, *Chimurenga* and *Jiti* which had emerged in the pre-independence era continued to flourish with the addition of new genres like Gospel and *Sungura*. Scholars did not give much attention to post-independence Zimbabwean music. The few who have written about it concentrated on male musicians and therefore did not consider gender representations and its impact on the industry. Diane Thram (2006) writes about music censorship in Zimbabwe but focused on three male artists, Oliver Mtukudzi, Thomas Mapfumo and Leonard Zhakata. Sindisiwe Sibanda (2004) and Jennifer Kyker (2011) analyzed the socio-political meanings in Oliver Mtukudzi's music. Kyker (2013: 261) also writes on the audience's reception of Oliver Mtukudzi's music in the Zimbabwean diaspora in which she suggests that "Mtukudzi's songs enable audiences to symbolically reposition themselves within the social relations of a remembered home".

These studies are not very relevant to the current study but Kyker's 2011 work however brings to the debate a very relevant discussion on the discourses of popular music in post-independence Zimbabwe. In her analysis of Oliver Mtukudzi's music, Kyker critiques the general philosophy as is presented by O'Connor, that post-colony popular music is all about "generalizing theories of flows of people, media and ideas around the globe and accounts of cultural hybridity" (2002:225, quoted in Kyker 2011:4). Kyker, in her reference to Oliver Mtukudzi, says that Tuku's music gives linkages between music, morality, politics, and gender, which move us from a "singular understanding of the post colony towards the balance of stories…" (ibid.: 4). This is of importance to me for it brings to light the fact that popular music in post-independence Zimbabwe is not one-sided but deals with a variety of issues from social to political, both positive and negative. It opens the door for me to explore how female musicians are also participating in the industry. It also explore the issues they are presenting to the public and how all this is helping them remain popular in this industry.

Nomusa Moyo also did the same analysis but on Albert Nyathi's music in 2008. An aspect of interest that I will draw from Nomusa Moyo's study of music by Albert Nyathi, is not on the text analysis but on the performance technique used by Nyathi. Albert Nyathi as he is presented by Moyo, is a "poet musician", a musician who presents poetry through music which is unlike most

popular music artists in Zimbabwe who sing only composed lyrics. Nyathi's performance technique I assume, must have contributed greatly in making him popular (2008:6). This would help me make parallel comparisons with the techniques of my chosen cases and to reflect how these techniques are helping them to become popular. The four authors above, Thram, Sibanda, Moyo and Kyker analysed music by male musicians. I am however going to be focusing on female musicians who own bands. Tendai Chari (2008) also analyses the portrayal of women in male produced "urban grooves" in Zimbabwe but this is not of great value to me, as I am not concerned about the images of women in music by male musicians but rather how women are managing to survive in the industry despite those who are portraying them in a negative light.[1]

A category of scholars that interests me most is that of writers who have examined the participation of women in Zimbabwean music. Of interest are Nhamo Mhiripiri (2011) who explores challenges faced by women in the *Sungura* genre and Susan Makore (2004) who interrogates the problems faced by females in the music industry in Zimbabwe. In Maxwell Sibanda's 2011 analysis of women's participation in *mbira* music, he notes that women *mbira*players have asserted their presence in post-independence Zimbabwe. Most of these scholars as presented have concentrated on the problems that women musicians are facing; I will however be looking at the solutions to these problems.

Angela Impey (1992) is one scholar who has written extensively on women's experiences in the Zimbabwean music industry. Her work is very relevant to my study, for she discusses the problems that women musicians encounter, especially where she discusses the exploitative and discriminatory treatment of women by men and women's experiences with the commercial music industry. Impey notes that:

> Women are used as a marketing gimmick to lure male audiences…in the context of live music performances, where men tend to make up the majority of the audiences. …women are herein considered mere flavouring of the music which is produced and consumed by men: they are the salt and onions of the commercial music while the "meat" is associated with the creative control of men. (1992:152)

[1]For the purposes of this study, I'm including all-female bands as well as female-led bands with some male members as part of my focus on women in the music industry. The primary genres of performance include Jazz, *Sungura*, urban grooves and *Chimurenga*

Impey's observation proves that women are not respected and are viewed as intruders in the industry that is believed to be an all-men territory. I wish to build on this by exploring how women are managing to fight male dominance in the industry and the reasons that account for the notable increase in their numbers.

Ntarangwi (1999:34) notes and I agree to the fact that female musicians experience a lack of respect from the male members of their bands. As Ntarangwi puts it, most women in popular music are often there "usually as appendages of men, and their duties often entail the support of well-established male-headed bands" (1999:36).They are used as back-up singers and dancers often put on stage not for their talent but to appeal to the drinking men (ibid.:36). Ntarangwi (1999:34), Chitauro et al. (1994:112), Zindi (1985:68), and Vambe (2000:83) agree on the fact that those women who join the popular music industry are viewed as individuals of "loose morals" and "dangerous" because they cause a lot of anxiety in the male-dominated space. Ntarangwi states that, "some women have however been able to shake off this cultural brick wall and have pursued successful musical careers" (1999:36). I will therefore focus on the female musicians who have made a mark in the industry despite experiencing problems like those mentioned above.

The number of female musicians grew significantly after independence and even those who had started their careers well before independence gained more recognition and respect during this time. Zindi (1985:69) notes that Dorothy Masuka was noticed and signed up by a European record company, Mango Production, in 1990. Stella Chiweshe started playing *mbira* professionally and formed her band in 1984. Chitauro et al. concur and add that besides playing *mbira* professionally, she was also "invited to Germany to perform on her own" (1994:133). Even though the number of female musicians increased, the increase is not evenly distributed between the available popular genres. Susan Makore asserts that women find greater social acceptance when they venture into gospel music when she writes that:

> In Zimbabwe, it is female gospel musicians who seem to enjoy a good image in society. Because they are singing about the goodness of God, they are often portrayed favorably, even when they perform at night. But female pop musicians are not seen in such a favorable light. (2004:53)

Mhiripiri (2011:103) concurs with Makore and adds that the genre of gospel music has a majority of female exponents. Although the numbers are not as high as in gospel music Mhiripiri

admits that jazz and *Sungura* which were once all-male genres, now boast successful women musicians. These include Duduzile Manhenga, Prudence Katomeni, Edith Weutonga, Sandra Ndebele, Patricia Matongo and Plaxedes Wenyika and the present study will focus on these non-gospel genres. With these women already prospering in the industry, I then disagree with Mhiripiri (2011:103) when he discusses ways of introducing and nurturing female musicians into *Sungura* music. How can one introduce people to a genre in which they are already excelling (Rwafa and Vambe 2007:66)? I believe that it is time to stop lamenting the under-representation of women and instead, to concentrate on the positive changes that are being experienced in the industry. The focus of this study therefore is to look at those who have made it into the industry and how they are managing to stay popular.

I therefore applaud Rwafa and Vambe (2007) for focusing on the creativity of female musicians where they analyze the music of Mbuya Madhuve and Chioniso Maraire and state that although "female singers are on the margin of theoretical works, their performances and creativity steal the musical charts" (2007:66). As I follow Rwafa and Vambe's focus on women who are making it in the industry, I intend to concentrate not on song analysis as they did, but on the performance styles used as particular strategies by the two chosen cases of female musicians.

Pauline Mateveke and Ezra Chitando share the same sentiment that women have negotiated numerous challenges to become an integral part of music in Zimbabwe and notes that "despite the heavy odds that women in Zimbabwe face, they have refused to succumb without a fight"(2012:45). They present a study of two other female musicians and undertook a comparative analysis of the careers of these two leading women musicians who belong to two distinct genres, Olivia Charamba, a gospel musician and Chiwoniso Maraire, a popular *mbira* musician. This they have done as a way of challenging "an artificial demarcation amongst women artists who might face similar challenges and struggles" (2012:41). I am however going to centre on performance strategies by those in less accepted popular music and not compare it with any other genres. The lives and performances of two more female artists, Sandra Ndebele and Edith Weutonga, will also be explored.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

As a way of grounding its argument, this research is going to engage the three frameworks, Postmodern Feminism, Postcolonial Feminism and Africana Womanism. The three are all relevant to my study for they agree and advocate for the recognition of differences that exist among people, be it man or women. The two paradigms, Postcolonial Feminism and Africana Womanism are not completely divorced from Postmodern Feminism, which is in the mainstream Feminism as their proponents would claim. They actually build on these frameworks that existed before them. The three theories complement each other yet they compete for significance in the analysis of the experiences of African women. This section of the chapter defines and interrogates these concepts as the chosen frameworks in the analysis of the participation of women in the Zimbabwean music industry.

2.2.1 Postmodern Feminism

According to Whiteley (2000:2), the concept "post" (postmodernism, postfeminism) implies a process of change and for feminists this is characterized by a conceptual shift from "equality" to "difference", "otherness" and plurality where gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and class are all recognized as relevant in the formation of sexual identity. By advocating for difference, otherness and plurality, the postmodernist feminist is moving away from traditional feminist theorists who advocated for women's rights on the grounds of sexual equality (*The South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* 2002:423). Whitford (1992:32) suggests that for postmodernist feminists demanding equality as women assumes a term of comparison. What do women want to be equal to? The exploitation of women is based upon sexual difference and can only be resolved through sexual difference (ibid.:32). According to Rosemarie P. Tong, by proposing "difference" instead of equality, postmodern feminists claim that women's otherness would enable them to stand back and criticize norms, values and practices that the dominant male culture (patriarchy) seeks to impose on everyone – particularly those who live on its periphery (1998:7). The otherness being associated with being shunned, excluded and marginalized can be used to the advantage of women and it will be a way of existing that would allow for change and difference (ibid.:7).

The theory is ideal for the study of the Zimbabwean music industry as it advocates for a women's fight – not for sameness with men but for respect and recognition in their status as women. It encourages women to fight in a feminine way, which somehow makes their battles more acceptable than if they were to fight for sameness with men. Postmodern Feminism has its share of weaknesses; the major one being its coming from the same school of thought with the Traditional Feminists. It considers women to be a monolithic block and so does not appreciate the difference in experiences of women in the West and those in Postcolonial states. Trinh Minh-ha (1989) is one scholar who further challenged Western feminists by stressing the importance of recognising the diversity of women in developing countries. While those scholars who were focusing on postcolonial states accepted the Postmodern Feminist's proposition of the "otherness", they were of the notion that the concepts of otherness and difference must be anchored specifically to the politics of race and gender (hooks 2001). This therefore led to the birth of Postcolonial Feminism theory.

2.2.2 Postcolonial Feminism

Postcolonial Feminism, also known as Third World Feminism, is a "subset of feminism that developed in the 1980s because it appeared that feminism only focused on the experience of women in the western cultures" (Fisher 2013:1). It is founded on the premise that colonialism was an important factor that heightened the gender struggles of women. This is supported by Ann Brooks who defines postcolonial feminism as a feminism that is "centred around the idea that racism, and the long lasting effects of colonialism in the part of colonial setting are inextricably bound up with the unique gendered realities of non-white and non-western women" (1992:47). Brooks' view then accommodates the reality that black women in former colonies have a plight that is peculiar to them, moulded by their skin colour and colonisation. Its scope, therefore, focuses on the women who are in colonised territories and it engages with the political, economic and cultural effects of colonialism on women in the postcolonial world.Chris Weedon says that Postcolonial Feminism is:

> articulating powerful critique of the Eurocentricism of much Western feminism…that privileges western notions of liberation and progress, and portrays Third World women primarily as victims of ignorance and restrictive cultures and religions. (2002: 2)

Postcolonial Feminists aim to remind feminists that there is more than the label of "woman" to define and distinguish individuals or even groups of individuals. People can be defined by social class, race, ethnicity, and/or sexual preference, and all with a focus on the historical and social perspective of their respective society/culture (Fisher 2013:1).

Postcolonial Feminists are combating misperception by telling their own stories, validating their existence, and being their own people, regardless of what other feminists claim they must or must not do. Chandra Mohanty is one Postcolonial Feminist who critiques Western feminists for depicting Third World women as victims of male control and of traditional cultures and claims that in these characterizations, little attention is paid to history and difference (1991:53). She also argues that much of Western feminist writing about Third World women:

> discursively colonize[s] the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world, thereby producing/re-presenting a composite, singular "third world woman"-an image which appears arbitrarily constructed, but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of Western humanist discourse. (ibid.: 1991:53)

Postcolonial Feminism calls for a rejection of homogenisation and universalising of women; it calls for an understanding of historical, cultural, and social differences; and it calls on Western women to observe and combat racism even on the most intimate of levels (Fisher 2013). This then means that Postcolonial Feminists believe that women's fight for equality must tally with their cultural, social and political realities.

Fisher however highlights that Postcolonial Feminism is not in opposition with the other feminisms which came before it. He notes that:

> Postcolonial Feminists aim to educate Western Feminists in such a way that Western Feminists will construct their identities independent of the pejorative stereotypes of women they have othered. In this respect, Postcolonial Feminism does not build itself in complete opposition to other feminisms, not even Western Feminism, as it simply tries to restructure the feminist conversation to be more inclusive of previously ignored individuals. (2013:1)

In a statement, Weedon shares Fisher's view and summarises Postcolonial Feminism effectively. She says, "Thinking difference in new, non-oppressive ways is a key objective of postcolonial feminism, both in the West and in the Third World" (2002:4).

Postcolonial Feminism is gaining much respect because it is a practice that allows women to react within their culture, to have pride in their traditions and to still vocalise gender issues of their communities (Bushra 2002). The theory is also relevant to the current study because Zimbabwe is a former colony, originally populated mainly by black people; and the women's music-making process is also affected by the same problems as in most post-colonial states. Although it is a development from the other feminisms that came before it, Postcolonial Feminism has its own weaknesses. The theory is also affected by the same weakness of the earlier feminisms that led to its foundation. Just as other Feminisms are criticised for universalising women's problems, Postcolonial Feminism also universalises the plight of the non-white women. This is so because of Ashcroft et al. (2000:93) who view it as broadened to a feminism that covers all cultures affected by imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present.

This theory has other weaknesses which makes it impossible for me to base my thesis on it alone. Although it attempts to accommodate the black woman, Postcolonial theory is still "a war raged against men which may not be the pre-occupation of the black woman in the African context who values relationship of men and women" (Sibanda 2012:11). The theory also does not streamline the unique experience of the African woman as a cause for concern; this then leads me to another theory that is tied to the interest of the African woman, namely Africana Womanism.

2.2.3 Africana Womanism

Africana Womanism is an ideology which is grounded in African culture. The term Africana Womanism was coined by Hudson-Weems in 1997 and it rightly discards the term feminism. Hudson-Weems gives an explanation to the origin and meaning of the coinage Africana Womanism:

> The first part of the coinage, Africana, identifies the ethnicity of the woman being considered, and this reference to her ethnicity, establishing her cultural identity, relates directly to her ancestry and land base—Africa. The second part of the term Womanism, recalls Sojourner Truth's powerful impromptu speech 'And Ain't I A Woman,' one in which she battles with the dominant alienating forces in her life as a struggling Africana Woman, questioning the accepted idea of womanhood. Without question she is the flip side of the coin, the co-

> partner in the struggle for her people, one who, unlike the white woman, has received no special privileges… (Hudson-Weems 1993: 22-23).

The theory includes elements that Postcolonial Feminism explores earlier in the chapter such as race and colonialism and the need to elevate the woman's position. Tendai Mangena cements this line of thought where she observes that; "the effort by Hudson-Weems to set up a paradigm 'properly named and officially defined' according to the people of African descent's 'unique and cultural matrix' fits well into the postcolonial discourse" (2013:8). This therefore means that Africana Womanism is part of the postcolonial discourse which seeks to weaken the discourse of Western Feminism and to expose its inadequacies by attempting to include what it has tended to leave out. Africana Womanism goes further than Postcolonial Feminism in identifying with ethnicity and cultural identity of the woman. Dove affirms this by noting that Africana Womanism emphasises the role of the, "African mother as a leader in the struggle to regain, reconstruct and create a cultural integrity" (1998:535). The Afrocentric approach of Africana Womanism does not only afford African women "an opportunity to talk about their lives in their own terms but here is an opportunity for them to demonstrate all their positive qualities" (2013:9).

According to Lyons, Africana Womanism was born out of a debate between Third World Women and Western Feminists in which "one perspective la[id] blame on Western Feminists for silencing the African Woman in the very speech intended to liberate her from oppression" (Lyons 2004 cited in Mangena 2013:8). Hudson-Weems acknowledges that she did not create the legacy of Africana Womanism but has "observed Africana women, documented their reality, and refined a paradigm relative to who they are, what they do, and what they believe in as a people" (2007:289). Africana Feminism accepts some elements of mainstream feminism's female-centred empowerment agenda. It however criticises Western Feminism for its "caustic beginnings and inapplicability for women of African descent" (ibid.:291). The need for a theory that is Africa specific was brought about by sentiment by women such as Marta Bennett who notes that as an African woman:

> I must remember that…what I do affects the status in society of my husband, my father-in-law, my mother-in-law…Therefore [African] woman…will always look back and ask, 'am I carrying the family with me? (2005: online)

African women therefore have peculiar cultural expectations which control their actions and so the need for a theory that cater for their special differences.

Hudson-Weems outlined the key characteristics of African Womanism that define the "Agenda for Africana Womanism" (1993:55). These tenets total eighteen and are as follows; "self-naming, self-definition, role flexibility, family-centeredness, struggling with males against oppression, adaptability, Black female sisterhood, wholeness, authenticity, strength, male compatibility, respect, recognition, respect for elders, ambition, mothering, nurturing and spirituality" (ibid.:55). Aldridge (2004) sums up these characteristic by noting that Africana Womanism "is lucid in characterising the Africana womanist as a self-namer and self-definer who is also family centred with a strong grounding in sisterhood and an unyielding belief in positive Africana male-female relationships as foundations for the survival of Africana people and humankind" (in Hudson-Weems 2004:xii). This study will explore how these characteristics of an African woman have influenced the careers and popularity of Weutonga and Ndebele.

In as much as Africana Womanism is global in its approach and has managed to isolate the African woman from the general category of "women" that includes non-African women, it still has some major weaknesses which need to be addressed. Mangena states it aptly where she says that:

> …the major challenge remains that Africana Woman, just like the term woman is not a monolithic bloc. What is particularly problematic is combining and having one approach that addresses the problems of one category but two separate realities of the African continent and that of its diaspora. In as much as women in the continent and its diaspora belong to the same category their realities are quite different. Whereas Africana women in the diaspora may still be existing in racist societies, those in the continent may not identify race as an immediate problem in their daily encounters because most of the African nations are independent from political imperial rule. (Mangena, 2013:9)

The diversity of the localized realities in Zimbabwe women also has to be appreciated and so addressing these diverse realities under one rubric remains challenging. Mangena supports this by saying that "there are no simple ways of representing the diverse struggles and histories that characterize Zimbabwean women" (2013:12).

The strengths and weaknesses of the frameworks above however have led me to take advantage of the complementary effect they have on each other and adopt them all as basis for this study's analysis. They all approach and appreciate the fact that gender issues do not exist in a vacuum. The Postmodern Feminist is fighting for the recognition and respect of the difference between men and women. This theory also encourages women to use their femininity in the fight for recognition for it is one important aspect that men do not possess. Hudson-Weems (1993) describes Africana Womanism as a theory that identifies the ethnicity of the African woman, her cultural identity, relating her to her ancestral land base, Africa. Postcolonial feminism advocates for the appreciation of the effects that colonialism had on women in postcolonies. Sara Mills also notes that the Postcolonial feminist theory has been extremely influential in that, "it has brought about a 'worlding' of the mainstream feminist theory [by moving] from a rather parochial concern with white, middle class English-speaking women, to a focus on women in different national and cultural contexts" (1998: 98).

However the major weakness of these three chosen frameworks is that they all tend to universalize women's problems at the various levels each framework represent. As Postmodern Feminism assumes that women of all races face similar problems, Postcolonial Feminism does the same with women in postcolonies. Africana Womanism also does not consider the differences in ethnicity among African women and even women in the same country from belonging to different ethnic groups. This then affords the frameworks more similarities than differences and this is the reason for my adoption of them all.

2.3 Gender Studies in Popular Music

Studies by feminist ethnomusicologists, focusing on their discussions of how gender identities have affected and influenced the music-making and consumption processes is also a foundation for this study. I have chosen women scholars on the basis of McFadden's statement that:

> When women write, they create new worlds of intellectual creativity and activist energy; they break new ground in terms of realization of essentially different and more empowering relationships with men... (1999: preface)

Feminist criticism in music did not begin at the same time as other disciplines of literary studies and art (McClary 1991:5). Ellen Koskoff blames the methodologies that were used by

anthropologists and earlier ethnographers who tended to focus on music by men because of a gender bias (1989:1). The separation of men and women's music performance spaces also accounted for the late documentation of music performed by women. This was because of cultural boundaries that restricted entry by men into the gendered spaces designated for women (ibid.:1).

The concept of patriarchy, as is presented by Green cited in Jooma (2011:53), is central and fundamental to issues surrounding women and music because a patriarchal society affects the cultural products that come out of it. The patriarchal society has a social structure "in which the overall balance of power is held by men rather than women" (ibid.:53). This is a great disadvantage to women who will then fall under the control of men and have their social spaces dictated by men. Green (1997:13) notes that within patriarchy, men circulate in the public sphere which is associated with paid jobs, while women stay in the private sphere where they perform unpaid domestic work such as caring, catering, cleaning, nursing and bringing up children. The popular music industry is then reserved for men—and women who are in it had to fight their way in[2].

On the issue of women's confinement to the home, L. JaFran Jones states that a "woman's only legitimate sphere of activity was within her husband's or father's guarded walls" (1989:72). So it was questionable for women to be seen outside their specified spaces. This is followed by Chitando who says that, in pre-colonial Zimbabwe, African women had no voice of their own since they were considered an extension of men's property (2012:1). Women were therefore considered safe when they were within their specified spaces. However, the fact that women were considered as property and confined to these domestic spaces did not mean that they had no power at all. They did make use of the power within the domestic sphere and were not as voiceless as scholars would have us believe.

Due to this specification of women's social space, Koskoff notes that "It is not surprising that the majority of existing descriptions of women's musical activities and rationales for their behavior focus on their primary social roles, for these roles are central to women's gender identity in many societies"(1989:4). Following Koskoff's notion, Kwabena Nketia provides an example of

[2] After consulting various sources on Zimbabwean culture and history on educated and urban women, it became clear to me that although this is an important context for my study, there are limited sources dealing with this topic.

women's activities among the Akan in Ghana where puberty rites for girls are celebrated by women, and the songs and drum music for this event are accordingly performed by adult women (1992:36).

It is also observed that it is not necessarily because of their musical interests that women take part in these prescribed activities but also by virtue of their gender role in society (ibid.:38). John Lwanda observes that even music that women make as "an outlet or expression for women's emotions and positive aspirations, has not significantly, transferred to the modern public spheres and has remained located and localized in female environments" (2003:119). I therefore intend to explore how this confinement to the prescribed music performance spaces has affected women's participation in popular music in Zimbabwe.

Richard Middleton (2006) is one scholar who addresses a number of issues regarding popular music and he also discusses issues surrounding women's participation although not in greater detail. Middleton notes two vital questions which he says cannot be ignored if women are to equally participate in popular music. Middleton (2006:91) suggests that the questions which the industry needs to focus on are, "How can women's subordinate roles within the music industry and the social relations of popular music be addressed? And how the stereotypes governing female participation can be countered"? The above questions place Middleton in a class of those scholars who wish to see change and improved participation by women in popular music but he is quick to turn and concur with the general negative statement which suggests that women's subordination cannot be easily overturned for it "is deeply embedded in the historically constituted structures of socialized subjectivity" (Middleton 2006:92).

However repressive the industry may be, women nevertheless are finding their feet and are fighting very hard to gain recognition in the once male-dominated discipline. Koskoff affirms that music performance has also provided an environment for behaviour that challenges and intimidates the established social/sexual order (1989:12). Marie Jorritsma observes how women are using these designated spaces to express their discontentment with patriarchy in her comment on an all-female church gathering in Kroonvale. She writes that:

> It is here, in differently gendered spaces of the church context, those women's responses to and commentaries on long-entrenched South

> African patriarchal systems can be found in their singing style and use of improvisational and nonverbal sounds. (2011:120)

So even if they fail to express it openly, most women are aware of patriarchal prejudice and may use various opportunities to resist it. This entails the maximum use of the designated spaces of musical performance. It therefore becomes vital to investigate whether Zimbabwean women have such spaces where they meet to share experiences which would help them confront problems in the industry with the same voice.

Ceri Moelwyn-Hughes (2013) follows Jorritsma's observation that women are finding avenues to perform their music. She interrogates the meanings of identity, stereotypes about women on stage and strategies of performance that the women adopt. Moelwyn-Hughes notes how women are finding their feet in the music industry by chronicling the lives and musical experiences of South African women popular musicians. In her own words Moelwyn-Hughes says she "was interested to explore how women musicians experienced making music and the relationships involved through all these different activities a career usually entails" (2012:3). I am also following Moelwyn-Hughes by looking at women performers in the Zimbabwean music industry, although on a more targeted group, that of the two selected cases of Weutonga and Ndebele, who are popular and making it in the industry.

Lwanda (2003:119) notes another aspect of how female musicians are being exploited by their male counterparts and he feels that, while female musicians continue to create a musical outlet as a result of their grievances and constrained social roles, the music is not usefully deposited in the public sphere but instead appropriated and often exploited by men. Jenje-Makwenda (2005) affirms Lwanda's observation on how women musicians are usually exploited by men. She gets closer to home when she notes how Susan Chenjerai let Safirio Madzikatire sign for the rights to all the songs she had composed for the group. What female musicians are doing in an attempt to reverse such scenarios is my focus.

Timothy Taylor (1997) presents an interesting case to the current study, that of Angelique Kidjo. Kidjo is one of Africa's most popular female musicians who have made a mark on the world music market. Kidjo was born in Benin and according to Timothy Taylor (1997:136), a star of Afro-pop, world beat, and Afro beat. Taylor notes that Kidjo was billed by her record company, Island/Mango, as "the African funk diva of world music" (ibid.:136). Bernadette McNulty

(2012) described her as "The undisputed queen of Africa music" and was included by the BBC in its list of the African continent's 50 most iconic figures. Khaleeni Homa (2011) of the *Guardian* newspaper listed her as one of their Top 100 most inspiring women in the world. Kidjo's music is accepted worldwide and she is fluent in French, English, Yoruba and Fon. She sings in all four languages and this must have in a way been instrumental to her reaching out and being accepted by people of different countries (Taylor 1997:137). Kidjo is an interesting case in my study in that she is an African woman who fought hard and has gained a lot of respect and popularity in the music industry. Kidjo was quoted by Taylor as having said that:

> …the music business is macho [and] when you are a woman ... you have to fight two times harder because men want power for themselves and they don't want to share it. (1997:141)

Kidjo has used what Taylor (ibid:125) refers to as "strategic inauthenticity" in which she creates world music by mixing different music styles. She does not stick to that which is generally believed to be African music. Also, the use of more than four languages in her music as her strategy for success has succeeded. Kidjo is one success story which cements the observation by Kimberly Huisman and Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo which says that:

> More women are in positions of power and authority. What is needed now is for women to stop seeing themselves as victims and reach out to grasp the opportunity which exist for them. With a bit of effort, determination and the right attitude, we can have it all. (2005:45)

I have noted this African woman icon and her strategies in gaining popularity as a case to be emulated by African women who would want to make it in the popular music industry.

2.4 Conclusion

The first section of this chapter established from the reviewed literature that although their numbers were minimal and their challenges numerous, women participated in the popular music industry from its inception to present. The effects of colonialism on the presence and absence of women in the music making process and its contribution to the shaping of the standards of "decency" in the music industry were also revealed. The chapter also revealed that most women shy away from the popular music industry, except for a few who have managed to challenge the established notions and have thrived beyond the negativity that is thrust on them. Those who

have managed to penetrate the industry are the focal point of this study which seeks to find out the factors that are promoting their resilience and popularity.

The second section of this chapter explored and interrogated the conceptual and contextual frameworks that inform this study that is Postmodern Feminism, Postcolonial Feminism and Africana Womanism. The exploration involved citing the shortcomings and strengths of the chosen frameworks. These frameworks are suggested in this chapter as the theories on the basis of which this research discusses the ways in which female musicians are managing to penetrate and remain popular in the Zimbabwean music industry. The appropriateness of these theories is validated by their appreciation of the fact that there are differences between men and women which have to be accepted; and that the non-western women have more than sexual discrimination as a battle to fight in light of their cultural and political realities. The last section of this chapter then brought the argument closer to home by linking the current study with other studies done on the relationship between gender and popular music. Studies on gender in popular music that have been reviewed brought to light the observation that women have not been given equal opportunities as men in the music industry. It has also been revealed that women are fighting hard to change this scenario and those who are persistent are achieving great results.

Chapter 3

Edith the Bassist: Challenging the Prescribed Feminine Roles through the Instrument



...one of a generation of creatives who have emerged with such a brilliant signature that they have presented a model scarcely seen before.

Pumla D.Gqola (A feminist, pan-Africanist and professor at the University of Witwatersrand)

On the afternoon of January 22, 2011, I attended the celebrations of "Sistaz Open Mic", a project which ran under the Female Literary Arts and Music Enterprise (FLAME) in Harare at the Book Café.[3] *It turned out to be a very well organized and entertaining function with a variety of performances ranging from music, poetry and even dancing, from both seasoned and upcoming artists. Although it was a celebration for the success of a women's project, there were also some performances by certain male artists in support of the project. While it was a small venue, it was full to capacity and the audience went wild whenever a female musician took to the stage to perform. This made me realize that people were beginning to appreciate female performers. What struck me most was when after several performances there came to the stage*

[3]It was the 4th anniversary celebrations of "sistaz open mic", a celebration of women's achievements in the arts. As a woman lecturer and artist I was representing the Midlands State University Music Department at the invitation of Pen Yon, the arts administrator of Pamberi Trust.

one female performer by the name of Edith Weutonga, who received a standing ovation from the house. The lady was holding a bass guitar which I thought she was bringing for some male player but to my amazement, she started playing it and she played it well. It was from that moment that I started to brainstorm about venturing into studying her and how – as a woman – she had acquired a skill which is usually associated with men.

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on one of the two main cases in this study, Edith Katiji (stage name Edith Weutonga). I have chosen Weutonga because she is a female musician who possesses a special skill, which is that of playing the bass guitar. She has gained enormous success and recognition as an instrument player. My interest in Weutonga, a success story in the Zimbabwean popular music industry, was prompted when I noticed that accounts of women in popular music have tended to be dominated by a focus on what Mary Ann Clawson calls "the social dynamics of gendered music making and sources of feminine disadvantage" than it has in an equally important task of illuminating the mileage that has been gained by the inroads being made by female musicians in the industry (1999:193). I am going to explore the life history of Weutonga, focusing on her family history and its influences, and her educational and musical background. I am also going to look at the bass guitar – how she learnt it and how all this contributed to her popularity in the popular music industry in Zimbabwe. Instrument playing interests me because it has always garnered the most prestige for it is seen as the most technical aspect in music performance. It is also linked to song writing in a musical genre where the ability to create original material is a defining characteristic of the complete artist (ibid.:201).

My decision to concentrate on Weutonga was motivated by the view that ensemble instrument playing is the musical activity from which women have been most fully excluded, in contrast to singing where they have achieved significant recognition (Clawson 1999:193). The domination of women in being band vocalists is in a way authenticating Barbara Reskin and Patricia Roos's queuing theory which emphasises that the availability of an occupation to women is contingent on men's rejecting it (1990). Lower skill requirements therefore produce opportunities for women especially when it is attached with low prestige and masculine disregard. By venturing into bass guitar playing, Weutonga has moved out of this labelled group of vocalists and represents a breakthrough that is both symbolically and practically important. She is a pioneer

bass guitarist "whose participation will legitimatise women as instrumental musicians while providing them access to the band-based modes of artistic and professional development that characterize popular music" (Clawson 1999:208). Weutonga as a bass guitarist is confirmation of Veronica Doubleday's view that the mastery of technology on an instrument is usually the domain of men and in this way women's instrumental performance… becomes perhaps more disruptive than women's vocal performance (2008 cited in Jones 2010:149).

In this chapter I am also going to look at the social meaning of some of Weutonga's songs; her interaction with other musicians who came into the industry before her and her works of charity. I will relate how she is exercising her agency in women's fight for recognition in the industry through the assistance she gives to other upcoming female artists and by taking her music to the world through tours and collaborations. The family dynamics, the balance she maintains between being a mother, wife and a musician and how all this is contributing to making her popular will also be analysed. In summary, the chapter will reveal the main traits of Weutonga's character which have contributed to her popularity in the Zimbabwean music industry. She is a woman in a post-colony fighting not for sameness but acceptance and respect for the differences between men and women as is advocated by the postmodern feminists. Weutonga is "spiritual, ambitious, nurturing, mothering, adaptable,..., family centred, strong, flexible role-player, recognised, respectful of elders, in concert with male in struggle, male compatible and authentic" which makes her a true African Woman (Hudson-Weems, 2004:90).

3.1 Early Childhood Experiences: Access to Formal and Music Education

Weutonga was born on 22 April 1979, the year before Zimbabwe attained its independence. She is the first born in a family of five, with one brother and three sisters. Weutonga was born in the Mashonaland West town of Kadoma to a father who was in the army. At the age of eight they relocated to Bulawayo when her father was transferred to work at One Brigade Military Base. Weutonga, as a girl child who started going to school in post-independence Zimbabwe, benefitted from the Education for All Programme that was initiated by the government after independence. During the colonial era, although "no blacks had easy access to schools, girls were far less likely to receive formal education than boys", thus independence gave girls like Weutonga equal opportunities as boys to get formal education (Seidman 1984:422). Kanyongo supports this by highlighting the success of the education equity programme and provides

statistics showing how the proportion of females in schools increased from 47.6 per cent in 1980 to 49.1 per cent in 1999 (2005:70).

Although the statistics may seem very small, 1.5 percent of at least more than 7 million Zimbabweans who are school-going is a sizable number worth mentioning and therefore accounts for an increase. Weutonga did her secondary education at Townsend High School and completed her O' Level in 1995 but she did not pass and had to supplement her education while working at a tuck shop at the barracks. Her parents encouraged her to continue studying the subjects she had failed because they believed that formal education was the only base needed for one to be successful in life (Weutonga, Int.:2012). This is supported by Chitando where he says that, "when African families realized the importance of formal education, they emphasized it ahead of all other cultural activities" (2002:37).

Weutonga's success can also be attributed to the musical education that she enjoyed in the early stages of her life. The move to One Brigade Barracks in Bulawayo – as Weutonga puts it "saw the birth of [her] musical life" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). While working at the barracks tuck shop Weutonga joined the Army School of Music and that is where she got her first music theory lessons. The army bandleader invited Weutonga and a friend of hers to join the band as vocalists after noticing that she had a beautiful voice. Although her mother was very supportive of her career choice, Weutonga's father did not approve. To him, being in a band – especially for a girl – was a sure sign of failure in life. Her father, who had grown up in pre-independence Zimbabwe, "still had the mentality of music as a profession for those who were academically less gifted and of doubtful moral status, '*basa remarombe*'[4] and would make it a point to remind [Weutonga] often" (Weutonga, Int.:2013). As Makeba notes, during her time, good families did not allow their children to become performers and it wasn't proper for a woman to be on stage (2004:28). Weutonga spent the year 2000 with the army band and became known in and around Bulawayo as she performed with them. This made her realise that she could take up music performance as a full-time career.

[4]*Basa re marombe* is a Shona phrase which refers to a job for vagabonds.

3.2 The Years at Amakhosi: Influences and Introduction to the Bass Guitar

While performing with the army band, Weutonga was noticed by Cont Mhlanga and was invited to audition for Siyeza, an afro-jazz band that was stationed at Amakhosi Arts Centre in Bulawayo. She got the job after auditioning and became the band's lead vocalist from 2001. Although she enjoyed music performance, Weutonga was not yet certain about making it a full-time career and so while at Amakhosi, she got into acting as well. She said that the director of Amakhosi approached her and asked her to feature in a drama that was to be called *Sinjalo* as "Mai Shupi" and to her surprise, with no acting background, she accepted and she became an instant star in that drama. The drama did very well in the arts circles and was aired several times as a series on national television. With the success of *Sinjalo*, Weutonga became involved in other acting projects as well. She claims that she gained a lot of mileage in the arts through all the publicity she received from acting and performing with the Siyeza jazz band. The director of Amakhosi, Cont Mhlanga, confirmed the success of Weutonga as an actress and he said that "I took a gamble after noticing the confidence that was displayed as she performed with Siyeza and the gamble paid off and she proved that she is a versatile artist" (Mhlanga, Int.:2013).

At Amakhosi, Weutonga furthered her musical talent by performing with Siyeza and received tutoring and mentorship in stage and screen acting. She toured the country and the region with Amakhosi featuring in acts like Athol Fugard's *Hello and Goodbye (1965),* The Greek classic *Lyssistrata (1912)* and Raisedom Baya's *Tomorrow's People (2009)*. Furthering her musical education with Amakhosi boosted Weutonga's confidence to excel in the industry. This later led to the formation of her own band. This confirms Chitando's observation that women who make it in the industry tend to possess better educational qualifications than those female musicians who end up as supporting acts in other male groups (2002:73). The United Nations Population Agency Fund (UNFPA) report also noted that "education is one of the most means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process"(UNFPA: Online). Weutonga had this to say about her education:

> Talent alone would never have gotten me to where I am today. I owe a great deal of my success to the education and mentorship I got from Amakhosi Arts Centre. Education is what most musicians lack and because of that they usually end up making uninformed and foolish decisions which usually backfires to them. (Int.:2012)

Both the formal and musical education that Weutonga acquired thus played a significant role in the development and success of her musical career.

The assessment of the status of Weutonga as a woman musician should therefore include examination of her work as an instrumentalist because "instrument playing is strongly linked to creativity and therefore challenges the traditional restriction of women to the role of vocalists in bands" (Clawson 1999:194). Her bass guitar playing is the most significant aspect and major contributor to Weutonga's fame for she is currently described as "one of the few and probably the best female bassist in the country" (Kunaka: 2013 *Daily news online*). According to her manager, the prominence of Weutonga as a bass player "has evoked pride in her achievement" (Mjanana, Int.:2013). Her bold venture into instrument playing is a challenge to the existing gender arrangements and assumptions that prescribe women's roles in popular music as restricted to vocal performance only (Clawson 1993:194). Weutonga has become very popular because of the bass guitar playing, to the extent that she was even shocked and thrilled that she is now being recognized by some of the most popular artists in the Zimbabwean popular music industry, namely Oliver Mtukudzi. Weutonga notes, "I felt proud when at the 2012 Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA) I was invited to the main stage by Oliver Mtukudzi to accompany him on one of his most popular tunes, *Tozeza Baba*" (Weutonga, Int.:2012).

The story of her bass playing also started at Amakhosi in 2003 when the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) funded a project that taught women musicians how to play various musical instruments. As women were coming for the free training workshops, Amakhosikazi, an all-female band was formed. The formation of this all-female band was not because of what Linda Dahl calls "a response to the difficulties of gaining access to the more established – that is male-musical groups" but from SIDA's initiative to introduce and train women to play various musical instruments (1984:47). They would use this skill later on to form their own bands rather than being used as appendages of men in male-headed bands. Weutonga started as the composer and lead vocalist for the band and later on she discovered her passion for the bass guitar. In an interview with Weutonga, she mentioned how difficult it was for her to learn the guitar since someone was already playing the bass in their band. She noted that she could not practice it during their rehearsal time for each band member was supposed to concentrate on their part in the band, and "to be seen playing another person's instrument would have been considered a

challenge and a threat to that individual" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). Weutonga recalled how she would come early, before rehearsal time, in order to have time to practice the bass guitar without being seen by the other band members. As the first all-female band in the country, Amakhosikazi was highly appreciated and received a lot of media attention; as a result it was invited and toured the country to perform at both private and national events. Weutonga privately continued to learn the bass guitar and improved as each day passed.

3.3 Interruption of Femininity through the Instrument

Macleod (2001:26) and Alyson Jones (2010:149) agree on the fact that the women instrumentalists are more respectable than vocalists, for they believe that the vocalist will be more on display because their body is the instrument being played. Lucy Green however believes that instrumentalist just as the singer is also on display. What differs are "the kinds of delineations that arise from woman's singing practices and those that arise from women's instrumental practices", which are in favour of the instrumentalist (ibid. 1997:53). Green explains this well where she says that:

> … because the musical sound-source of the woman singer is her body itself, her vocal display appears to remain locked within a self-referring cycle from body to femininity and back again. Contrastingly the female instrumentalist mediates the whole scenario through a piece of technology. The instrument she wields or controls interrupts the centrality of the appearance of her in-tuneness with her body. (1997:53)

The instrument therefore has an interruptive power to detract from the fullness of the intention to display. The eagerness to control an instrument on the part of the woman player disrupts the confirmation that a woman is a mere part of nature that man controls (Green 1997:53). Weutonga, just as the other woman instrumentalists, is controlling man-made objects thereby stepping out into the world, into the position of the controller – this makes her popular. By playing an instrument which is mostly associated with men, Weutonga has stood firm and risen above the circumstances to show that men and women are not "opposite sexes but different sexes who have fundamentally much more in common than they have differences" (Connel 2002:10).

The venture and success in bass guitar playing has not been an easy road for Weutonga. As the first female bassist in Zimbabwe, she was affected by the scarcity of female role models from whom to draw inspiration and the unfortunate dominance of gender-based stereotypes about

which instruments women should and should not play. Green also noted the instruments that are mostly associated with women in popular music. She says that "the electric keyboard and keyboard synthesizer have been played quite commonly by women popular musicians, the keyboard synthesizers are [therefore] sometimes associated with femininity or effeminacy" (1997:75). Green also noted the drums, electric bass and electric guitar as the instruments from which women have been most noticeably absent (ibid.:76). Post follows Green by noting the discrimination that women experienced in the West and in other parts of the world, when they had been involved in instrumental performance in the past. Women have often played instruments that have not required adapting their facial expressions or their physical stance (1994:40). The idea of instrumental restriction on women is also noted by Green where she says that, just as the voice represents the least interruption to patriarchal constructions of femininity, so the biggest, loudest and most technologically advanced instruments represent the greater interruption and so women were mostly discouraged or banned from playing them (1997:75). Playing the bass guitar made Weutonga a novelty in the instrument-playing department and this presented her with both advantages and disadvantages. She has received extensive media coverage and this has helped her gain popularity but the publicity has not always been positive. The trend has not changed much from what was experienced by women instrumentalists in the 1950s who, as Lara Allen notes, by being regarded as novelties:

> Initially they received more publicity than their male counterparts, but press coverage tended to focus on their gender, rather than their artistic or professional competence…. [C]onsiderable attention was paid to their appearance and sexuality, which diverted attention from, and acknowledgement of, their artistic ability. (2000:156)

Competence is usually not given much focus and it might also be because the media is also dominated and controlled by men who wouldn't want to be outshined by a woman. Even the male performers in the industry never used to give Weutonga credit for her guitar playing skills:

> What hurts me most is that men never openly admit that I am a better bass guitar player than some of them, even when I am recognized and invited to perform at very big functions. They always claim that it is not because if my musical capabilities but that I sleep my way through to these big events. (Int.:2013)

The lack of appreciation of women instrumentalists by men in the music industry is a sure sign of the desire on the part of men to preserve professional spaces exclusively for themselves. Men

will always fight "the act of instrumental performance by women [for it] threatens a disintegration of some fundamental characteristics of femininity as it is constructed and negotiated by men and women within the overall context of patriarchy" (Green 1997:54). Any woman who therefore ventures into instrument playing is viewed as performing an act of deviance that is "performing an unspeakable act in public by stepping into an image associated as the sole domain of men" (Moelwyn-Hughes 2013:138). This did not however deter Weutonga from fighting the misogynistic and denigration impressions of female instrumentalists by working hard and making a name for herself in the industry.

3.4 So What! and the Move to Harare

The band Amakhosikazi broke up in 2006 as some band members got married and some switched professions and moved to other towns due to economic hardships. Weutonga recalled painfully how the band's bassist whom she claims was extremely talented, got married and the husband stopped her from performing and moved her to stay with his parents in his rural home (Weutonga, Int.:2012). She recalled how they tried to intervene by asking the husband to allow his wife to perform. However, the husband insisted that he would not let his wife expose herself to the fantasies and advances of male audiences. Weutonga was quick to note that:

> The funny thing is that this man had met and noticed his wife during one of our performances. He was attracted to her as a bass player but was stopping her from doing that which had attracted him to her. (Int.:2012)

Weutonga then formed her own band from the remnants of Amakhosikazi and since the bassist had left, Weutonga was thrilled and took up the bass she had learnt privately for a very long time. She named the band *So What!* and,as Mhlanga puts it, this was the band that "was to make a name for her on the local music scene" (Int.:2013). The band relocated to Harare and since she had maintained an all-female outfit they were loved and highly accepted as it was a new thing in the music industry to have a band with all instrumentalists being female. They were invited to perform at very popular and highly respected venues such as the Jazz 105, Mannenberg, Sports Dinner and at the Book Café (see Figure 3.1). Weutonga's vocal talent was also noticed and she was invited to join a very popular musician, Tanga wekwa Sando, as a part-time lead vocalist. This she also accepted as it continued to put her in the limelight.



Figure 3.1 So What! performing at the Book Café in Harare on March 31, 2012.

In 2008 So What! experienced some problems similar to the ones that had led to the disbanding of Amakhosikazi. Some ladies got married and started families and so could not perform. Others migrated to South Africa to look for work because of the economic hardships that were being experienced in the country. Weutonga was again left with only four members of her band but they continued to perform whenever they were invited, until July 2009 when the band was involved in a serious car accident as they were travelling from Harare to Bulawayo. The problems that were faced by Amkhosikazi and So What! are still being experienced and are preventing many women from pursuing their musical careers. It takes unwavering artists like Weutonga to make it in the face of such hardships.

3.5 The Birth of Weutonga (The new dawn)

The July 2009 accident which nearly took Weutonga's life became a major landmark in her career. Weutonga noted that:

> After cheating death in the accident and giving birth to my second son Mudiwa, I realized that life could end at any time and that God had given me a second chance which I had to maximize doing that which I loved most which is making music. (Weutonga, Int.:2012)

After months of recovering in hospital and at home Weutonga said that she "discovered a new sound within herself and started composing new songs with much more depth and meaning". She called this new sound "Utonga", meaning dawn, and this became the new name for the band (Weutonga, Int.:2012). She perfected her bass guitar playing, and started rehearsing with her band which had scouted and contracted two more female band members, Tariro Ruzvidzo, a rhythm guitarist and Rumbie Tapfuma on congas and percussion. In an interview with Pen Yon, the arts director of Pamberi Trust, Yon admitted to the fact that after the accident, Weutonga's compositions took a new twist. Her songs began to be highly accepted by the audiences as compared to the ones she performed before the accident. Weutonga became one of the favourite artists at the venue's "ladies' nite on the mic", a show that features only female musicians every Tuesday night (Pen Yon, Int.:2013).

The rebranding led to the release of her ten-track album, *Utonga,* in 2010 and the second one, *Kwacha* in 2013, with all songs composed by Weutonga, unlike those that So What!, her previous band thrived on. The albums received positive comments in the media with the radio VOP online calling it "A very good refreshing sound" (cited on Weutonga online).Originality of compositions on both albums is one aspect that has helped in making Weutonga a household name in the Zimbabwean music industry.

3.6 A Social Commentator

People usually listen and relate to music that has meaning in their lives. Weutonga said that the themes of her music are mainly on social issues and this makes her popular because she sings about the problems and joys that people experience in life. This then agrees with the comment about her first album in the *Newsday* paper which called it "danceable beats that compliment Edith's social commentary" (cited on Weutonga online).

According to statistics from the Central Statistical office of Zimbabwe, women make up the greater percentage of the Zimbabwean population and so those musicians who sing about issues that affect women and children tend to receive a large audience. It seems women musicians in post-independence Zimbabwe have realized this and have taken heed of a point that Richard Rodgers made when he said that, "for never does a song achieve any sort of public unless the words have at some point made a joint impact with the music on the individual and public ear…"

(cited in Frith 2002:159). Weutonga's music appeals to all age groups in society for she sings about love in "*Rudo*", "*Chipo*" and "*Chinyarara*". She also sings about leadership in "*Hutungamiriri*" and "*Hurombo"*.

Out of Weutonga's twenty recorded songs, thirteen focus on women and children's issues specifically. Weutonga noted that "as a mother and wife, I now experience most of the ills and disadvantages that women encounter in society and as a female musician I take it to be my responsibility to conscientise society and help in redressing these imbalances" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). Weutonga sings about some very controversial and topical issues in the Zimbabwean traditional societies. In *"Mukaranga*" (The youngest wife) she sings about polygamy and its effects on the family. This is a topic which a lot of women relate to in this age when men are cheating on their wives and taking second wives. In traditional Zimbabwean society, wills of inheritance are not part of the tradition and so when a person dies, their inheritance (*Nhaka*) is decided upon by the remaining elders of the family. Whoever they decide to give the inheritance to is not an issue for discussion. This is reflected in one of Weutonga's songs, "*Nhaka*" (Inheritance), which has the following text:

Nhaka	**English translation**
Babamukurumatigona	Uncle you have fixed us
Babamukurumainyanya	Uncle it is now too much
Kufirwa imhoswa here	To lose a loved one, is it a crime to death
Zvomotoramusha	You are taking our home
Matitogarepiko	where do you expect us to stay
Zvamatoraimba	You are taking our home
Matitosarapayiko	where do you expect us to stay
Ndofiramusango	I will die homeless
Inimushandiinawo	yet I had a home
Rufu rune shanje	Death is unfair
rwanditorera baba vevana	it took the father of my children
Imbayangumatora	You have taken my house
Pfumayosematora	you have taken all that we owned
Nhakayevanavangu	My children's inheritance
Yavakasiirwanababavavo	which was left for them by their father
Ndakaishanda	I worked for this inheritance
nababavavo	with their father

Weutonga is attacking the ills of the inheritance tradition which is supposed to benefit the immediate family of the deceased. The song speaks powerfully to the listener's personal experience with the interpersonal politics of inheritance. The song embodies an important ongoing debate over what type of inheritance practices are socially desirable. Songs like this are highly appreciated and therefore receive a large following. This is because many people are affected by decisions where children and the wife of the deceased are often left with nothing, while the extended family takes everything. The positivity of Weutonga's theme in this song is also noted by Jennifer Kyker as she writes about how Oliver Mtukudzi's music also tackles the theme of inheritance. Kyker says that it is an "approach to singing about relations within the domestic sphere, through a musical discourse speaking to the personal experiences of individuals and families, yet which resonates on much broader levels of social organization" (2011:64).

Singing about these social themes has made Weutonga so popular that she is now being invited to perform at functions by various governmental and non-governmental organisations who are trying to enact social change through the media. These organisations, as John Riber, the leading founder of Media for Development notes, describe music as one of their most powerful promotional tools (Riber 2000 cited in Kyker 2011:64). Weutonga says that "the themes of my music are opening up the market for me, I am being invited to perform at various social functions especially at gender awareness programmes and my music is being highly accepted" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). Simon Frith puts it that "popular song lyrics [must] reflect the emotional needs of their time" (2007:79). Zimbabwean female musicians must have noted this and are now focusing on issues of interest to the people of their time and thereby increasing their popularity and acceptance in the industry. In this way their songs now have an ideological function for "they play back to people situations or ideas they recognize but which are infected now with particular moral lessons" (Frith 2007:212).

Language is a very important aspect in order for any form of communication to take place. Zimbabwe is a country with more than five ethnic groups with different languages. To appeal to most people in the country would therefore demand a good command of most of these languages – with the major ones being Shona, Ndebele and English. Weutonga has this aspect well catered for; she was born in Harare where Shona is the main language, then moved to Bulawayo where she learnt Ndebele. She acknowledges that she learnt English atschool and so she sings

comfortably in all three languages. She also sings in Chewa, a language from Zambia and Malawi which then widens her audience base to those Zambian and Malawian migrants who now live permanently in Zimbabwe. On both her albums she mixes English, Chewa, Shona and Ndebele songs. Weutonga acknowledges that it is because of the diversity of languages in Zimbabwe that she decided to reach for a wider audience by singing in different languages. She also noted that:

> Although I am a Zimbabwean my ancestry can be traced back to Malawi and through interaction with relatives from Malawi I learnt Chewa, which I use in some of my songs. This is also helping in opening up new markets for my music. (Int.:2012)

"Amai" is a song that is highly appreciated countrywide for its meaning and that it combines Shona and Ndebele lyrics in the same song. The lyrics entitled "*Amai"* are as follows:

Shona	**English Translation**
Ndiani asingazivi	Who doesn't know
Kuti amai vakakosha	the importance of a mother?
Vakakosha, vakakosha	She is important, she is important
Ndebele	
Ubani umhlabeni ungangkwazi	Who doesn't know
ukhuthiumama	the importance of a mother?
Uthakhatekile uthakatekile	She is important, she is important
Shona	
Chivindi chako ndecheiko	What gives you courage
Kurova amai,	To beat up your mother
Kutuka amai	To shout at your mother
Ukarova mai, Uchatanda botso	If you beat up your mother, you will be cursed
Ukatuka mai	If you shout at your mother
Uchatanda botso	you will be cursed
Ndebele	
Uzothukhamama	if you shout at your mother
UzodubekaUzohlupeka	you will be cursed

It is a song that calls for respect for women in their role as mothers. These days this is a global issue. Singing about motherhood which is an accepted role of women in most patriarchal

societies, is Weutonga's way of fighting for women's empowerment and supporting Donaldson's proposal that:

> Feminists need to take existing images that have reflected a passive femininity and sound out the words and images with their own tongues and voices, reinterpreting and re-imagining these images and symbols, so that what is finally expressed is vibrant, vital and empowering new significance with these images have been imbued. (2011:51)

For Weutonga, singing about motherhood is also a way of being subversive and working within the system in order to explode it. She is a woman singing about a woman's role in society. Weutonga's lyrics encapsulate the viewpoint that children these days do not respect and neither do they acknowledge the sacrifices their mothers are making for their wellbeing; and so when someone sings about such an issue, it is bound to become popular. Mothers associate with its meaning and would also encourage their children to listen to it and thereby increase its popularity and acceptance. The fact that it is also sung in two of the major languages in Zimbabwe, Shona and Ndebele, increases its acceptance even among the illiterate members of society who belong to the two ethnic groups. The importance of the song's meaning is encapsulated in Frith's statement that "words matter to people… they are central to how popular songs are heard and evaluated" (2002:159). The text therefore in Weutonga's music not only contributes to her popularity but also proof that women are using their own discourse in their fight against men.

3.7 Genre and Performance Style

On the evening of April 20,' 2013, Jazz 105 was full to capacity, with some patrons even standing at the back because all seats were already taken. A jazz tune was being played in the background while the stage was being prepared. I was seated at one corner, feeling a little bit out of place for the venue was a club and with my Christian background I was not used to entering into such venues. At her invitation, I was attending one of Weutonga's shows and was a bit nervous about how I was going to interact with these revellers in order to interview some of them. As I sat there, I noticed something peculiar about quite a number of people in the audience. They were wearing shirts made out of Java material with different African prints and colours. I couldn't put a finger on what it meant at that time but it all started to make sense when the show started. When Weutonga and her band came on to the stage it then dawned on me that the audience were

dressed in attires that matched that of the band (see Figure 3.2). A trend that is mainly associated with sporting matches where supporters wear jerseys of the team they support was now moving even into music.



Figure 3.2 Weutonga with the rebranded Utonga band at Jazz 105 on April 20, 2013

Stage work is one aspect that has propelled a lot of female musicians into popularity and according to one of the main organisers of all the Zimbabwe national galas, Major Mutambudzi, women are giving the best performances at all the galas as compared to men. "They are always better organized and offer polished performances on stage" (Brigadier Major Mutambudzi, Int.:2013). Weutonga also admits that it plays a very significant role in her popularity. With her background in theatre and being married to a film director, Weutonga boasts that "I don't just walk on to the stage, my stage work is always thematic and every show will be having a different theme and this always leaves the audience anticipating for my next show"(Weutonga, Int.:2012).

She also has a specific dress code where the whole band wears Java material attires at all their performances. This is what Penny Yon, the manager at the Book café, one of Weutonga's regular venues, notes "is fast becoming her signature which even audiences to her shows are now imitating as they come to her performances" (Yon, Int.:2013) (see Figure 3.3). Wearing the same attire during performances is "understood to have considerable semiotic value in the expression

of… the potency of social statuses and socio-political relations" (Hendrickson 1996:8). The idea of java with African prints on Weutonga's band attires as she notes, "is a reflection of their pride in being Africans and aims at unifying the African continent as a whole" (Int.:2012). The audience would in a way be showing their solidarity, oneness and support of their favourite musician by coming to her shows wearing her signature attire. This "creates a collective… identity that obscures the economic and other status differences between [people] unifying the participants into an effective representation" (Hendrickson 1996:8). Weutonga can therefore be credited for singing songs that unify and cut across social classes in society.

This trend of having an artist signature is being used by many musicians with some bands even going to extremes of having shaven heads for the whole band. Most female artists are following the trend and it seems that it is working for them. They are now leaving a mark on the music scene in the country as audiences are accepting and imitating it.



Figure 3.3 Audience at Weutonga's show at the Book café in Harare on January 23, 2013

Musical tastes differ from one individual to another and this is evidenced by the variety of popular music genres that exist in Zimbabwe. After asking about the name of her genre in popular music, Weutonga said that her music is called Contemporary Afro-Traditional Music. From the name itself it shows that her style is a blend of many genres and she specifically noted "Contemporary Jazz, Rhumba and traditional music beats" as the genres from which she derives

her own style" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). By combining elements from different genres Weutonga is sure of appealing to a wider audience for "every individual who listens to her music would find same traits from their genre of choice thereby making them like her music" (Mjanana, Int.:2013). The Jazz and traditional elements cater for the elderly, while the contemporary and Rhumba caters for the youth (Weutonga, Int.:2012).

3.8 Touring and Collaborations

The Afro feel in her music makes her popular even beyond the Zimbabwean borders. She has been invited and toured several Africa countries, including Kenya and Uganda and Burkina Faso (see Figure 3.4). On her tour of Kenya, Weutonga also "performed on the Blankets and Wine festival and that made [her] the first Zimbabwean artist to perform at that festival" (Weutonga, Int.:2012).



Figure 3.4 Utonga band at the Blankets and Wine festival in Kenya on September 3, 2012

Weutonga's versatility allowed her a chance to mingle with big names in African popular music when she shared the stage with Ishmael Lo at HIFA 2012. She also did collaborations with an American band (Publish the Quest) at the same festival (see Figure 3.5). All these tours and collaborations have contributed in making Weutonga a name to reckon with on the Zimbabwean popular music scene.



Figure 3.5 Weutonga with Publish the Quest, an American band she collaborated with at HIFA on May 4, 2012

3.9 Technological Advancement: An Avenue for Talent Exposure

Advancement in technology has led to various positive developments in the music industry. Sunboy Sibindi is an administration officer with Metro Studios, one of the many recording companies that were established in the post-independence Zimbabwe. He notes that the number of female musicians has increased in Zimbabwe because of the increase in the number of recording companies. According to Sibindi "talent was always there among Zimbabwean females but the limiting aspect was the recording studios and so talent was being sat on due to lack of production channels" (Sibindi, Int.:2013). Before independence there was one recording company, Gramma Records and as its Executive director, Emmanuel Vori[5] states, they used to be selective based on what they felt to be the better products because they could not record everyone who wanted to back then (Vori, Int.:2013). In post-independence Zimbabwe there are now several recording studios, with Harare as one city having more than ten registered recording companies, among them Gramma Records, Ngaavongwe Records, Zimbabwe Music Records (ZMC), Metro Studios, Diamond Studios, Last Power Studios, Artisan Studios and Sunshine Studios.

[5] Emmanuel Vori was a very informative interviewee for he has been with Gramma Records since 1974 and has witnessed most of the changes the music industry has experienced in Zimbabwe.

The influx of recording companies has really helped in bringing to light the vast talent in women that had not been given any opportunity to shine in the past. Unlike before independence when they often turned away certain musicians without even giving them an opportunity to demonstrate what they could do, Vori admitted that they are now even scouting for talent. Due to the economic hardships and rampant piracy, recording companies can no longer pay for the production process as they used to. Therefore anyone who can afford to pay the charges for the recording services is now being given an opportunity to do so (Vori, Int.:2013). This has in a way opened the system for those women who can afford to fund for their recording process. Weutonga is among the benefiters of this development and has gone further to a stage where she has her own recording studio which is run by her husband under the name of Family Affair Studios. This has helped her in that "she gets all the time she needs to perfect her product without worrying about payment of the studio" and this results in a well-polished product which the public appreciates and accepts (Mjanana, Int.:2013). After following Weutonga on YouTube and the events on her website I noticed one other contributor to her popularity. Most of her songs from the first album are posted on YouTube and audiences can view them at any time. This is a strong marketing strategy. Events and performances of the Weutonga band are posted regularly on her website. Weutonga comments that:

> It is a huge marketing strategy for me and since the site is managed by my husband, he makes sure that it is always up to date and it helps keep me in touch with my audiences. I also receive positive feedback regularly from my followers. (Int.:2012)

Having access to these social networks is helping to market many female musicians. This is in contrast to the situation in the pre-independence era when all had relied on the one national broadcaster, The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) to play their music on radio and television.

The mushrooming of recording companies and in turn the increase in recording female musicians was due to the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) that was introduced in the early 1990s (Kanyongo 2005:70). Many people lost their jobs and this opened doors to the informal sector or the creative industries. These creative industries are defined as those "industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual

property" (Bakhshi, Freeman and Higgs 2013:6). Music as part of the performing arts then falls into this creative economy. The shift to creative economy also opened doors for females to venture into music as a way to survive in the harsh economic times in which formal employment was no longer secure. Most female musicians interviewed were just giving the love for music as the main reason for their involvement with the music industry, except for Duduzile Manhenga. Besides being one of the most popular female musicians in the country, Manhenga admitted that it was not only for the love of music that she and many other musicians joined the industry, "it was the only paying profession at the time and I was also inspired by some musicians who were making it big and even touring the region and the world – the likes of Oliver Mtukudzi and Chiwoniso Maraire" (Manhenga, Int.:2013). Weutonga also conceded to the fact that "remuneration is good once you put your act together and know your stuff". She was therefore also attracted by how quickly money can be made in the music business when one is a good performer (Weutonga, Int.:2012).

3.10 Government Policy on Women's Empowerment

Attainment of independence in Zimbabwe opened up the market for the blossoming of the music industry in general and for female musicians in particular. Penny Yon explained that:

> Independence brought with it freedom of movement and so musicians who were earlier on confined to one city due to political unrest during the war, could now move freely to all parts of the country. Even for us the coloured people, we can now perform in high density areas without fear of victimization because of the reconciliation policy that the government insisted on at independence. (Int.:2013)

The freedom of movement benefited versatile artists like Weutonga who sing in three major languages in the country. Weutonga and her band tour the whole country as her songs cater for the diversity of the Zimbabwean languages and this helps in increasing her popularity.

The government of Zimbabwe also realized the importance of the arts industry as a player in employment creation after independence. For example, it formed a government ministry specifically for this purpose, namely the Ministry of Education and Culture which later changed to Ministry of Youth, Arts and Culture. Turino notes that this ministry saw to the sponsorship of arts groups such as the National Dance Company which used to represent the country regionally in the arts section (2000:320). The National Arts Council was also formed by the government to

sponsor individual artists who would need financial assistance. The National Arts Council through the Culture Fund has helped Weutonga by sponsoring her first tour of Kenya and Uganda. Weutonga appreciated the council's help and acknowledged that "they bought six tickets for my band members and it went a long way in making the tour successful" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). This government position also saw the formation of arts centres which started training people, for example the Amakhosi Arts Centre in Bulawayo where Weutonga's career as a musician and actor started. Women's participation in the war of liberation played a significant role in the recognition and acceptance of women in the Post-independence Arts Industry. Impey affirms this where she says that:

> Women had been publicly praised for their participation in the war of independence where they had bravely fought alongside male combatants to liberate the country… On the basis of the socialist-informed ideological transformations which had taken place during the war, it had been recognized that women had been harshly denied access to participation in the public sector and in 1981 a ministry of community Development and Women's Affairs had been established to promote professional opportunities for women. (1992:8)

This was a huge step taken by the government in acknowledging the role that women played and for this kind of intervention, as Chitando and Mateveke puts it:

> The postcolonial state must be commended for striving to improve the status of women. Through legislation and facilitating the work of women's groups, the state has contributed towards the growing acceptance of women's rights in Zimbabwe. (2012:49)

There are also a number of other organisations that are assisting female musicians specifically in the country. Most well established female musicians passed through these organisations; among them are the Amakhosi Culture Centre, The Zimbabwe College of Music, Pamberi Trust and Mother Earth (see Chapter five).

3.11 Women's Agency: Nurturing Female Talent

The number of female musicians is also increasing because those female musicians who have made it in the industry are helping to nurture some upcoming stars. Weutonga notes that:

> Male musicians help each other and we see a lot of collaborations between big names and upcoming male artists, for example Tuku [Oliver

> Mtukudzi] did collaborations with Sulumani Chimbetu, Peter Moyo and also with Jar Praizer. The collaborations have helped these young musicians and they are now even topping the charts. We as women have also realized the importance of this kind of assistance and we also doing the same to our young sisters who are still trying to find their feet in the industry. I for one have helped Tariro Ruzvidzo who was my backing vocalist and now she has managed to record her own album. (Int.:2012)

In an interview with *Good morning Zimbabwe* on 13 July 2012, Tariro Ruzvidzo[6] admitted to have been assisted by Weutonga where she says that "I have gained a lot from working with Edith… I am still a session musician for Edith Weutonga" (online: 2013). I also had an opportunity to attend Tariro Ruzvidzo's show and personally experienced Weutonga getting involved in the organization of the show. Weutonga was called to the stage where she joined Ruzvidzo and they sang together two of Ruzvidzo's tunes. Penny Yon of Pamberi Trust also praised Weutonga for her assistance of upcoming artists, stating that "she [Weutonga] has allowed upcoming women artists to tap from her talent and experience" (Penny Yon, Int.:2013). All these praises and acknowledgements have also helped Weutonga gain popularity in the industry. Weutonga's behaviour of helping other women musicians is a true fulfilment of the Africana Womanism agenda which "allows women of African descent an opportunity to link with each other and build strength from their shared conditions in exploring the links that bind them" (Mangena 2013:8).

3.12 Management: Formalisation of the Career

In his article, Chipfunyise explained the important role of an artist manager to the success of any musician and bemoans the fact that "[t]he nation has never considered the training of managers for cultural industry as being essential" (2001:18). Most female musicians in post-independence Zimbabwe have now realised the need and importance of good management and so have started to appoint some. According to Mjanana they have now realised that music is:

> a cut-throat business where talent ranks least on the scale. There is a lot of admin work to be done on numerous fronts like promotion, publicity, advertising and merchandising, publishing ... Essentially the artist needs to worry about perfecting their art because the world is too demanding and judgemental. (Mjanana, Int.:2013)

[6]Ruzvidzo is one of the most popular budding female musicians in the country at present. She started as a backing vocalist and rhythm guitarist for Weutonga and now leads her own band.

Weutonga's career is managed by Elton Mjanana who is also her husband. When asked why she had not engaged a manager who is not her husband, Weutonga said that they had tried to get one but since she was not yet popular she was rejected by all the popular managers. Weutonga accuses the managers in the country of being greedy and that "they want to jump onto a moving ship". They say "make it first and you will get a good manager" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). Weutonga's point is supported by Stephen Chipfunyise where he says that, "[m]any managers in the entertainment industry are either untrained or individuals who come into the industry to cash in and run" (2001:18). This means that the managers worry solely about making money and not the improvement of an artist's career.

Having a husband-manager has been very beneficial to Weutonga for she says that "my husband has my interests at heart" (Weutonga, Int.:2012). Mjanana cites a number of reasons why it is best for him as the husband to be Weutonga's manager. He puts it that:

> The advantages are quite numerous; ranging from the fact that my allegiance lies with her first to having her best interests at heart. As her husband, empowering her and ensuring her success means I am laying a strong and good base not only for her and her career but also for myself and the kids in case something happened to me and I am unable to work. Also I am proud to have introduced such talent to Zimbabwe and the world. (Mjanana, Int.:2013)

The scenario of having a husband-manager is proving to be a positive move, not only to Weutonga but also to most married female musicians in the country. The big names in popular music in Zimbabwe – among them Olivia Charamba, Duduzile Manhenga, Prudence Katomeni-Mbofana, Shingisai Suluma, and Stella Chiweshe are all being managed by their husbands. Vori also believes that the idea of having husband-managers is helping to popularise most women. "Women no longer experience problems of cultural conflict and in trying to explain their movements for the husbands are the ones organising shows and would accompany the wife on all tours" (Vori, Int.:2013). This idea of women and men working together is one fulfilment of the main objectives of Africana womanism theory which advocate for the inclusion of men in women's fight for recognition. Moelwyn-Hughes also notes how besides being managers, the support of husbands helps in the making of a successful musical career. She presents cases of women who take pride in the support they get from their husbands. Moelwyn-Hughes cites

Yvonne Chaka Chaka's response at the 2007 Moshito[7] conference, who when asked how she had succeeded as a woman musician responded that she had a very supportive and understanding husband. The husband's willingness to care for their children while she performed was very crucial to her career (2013:48). Another woman musician, Cathy del Mei interviewed by Moelwyn-Hughes had this to say about her husband:

> He would never hold me back, never! Or say you can't do that. So the nice thing is that we can sometimes play together which is such a treat, but when we're not working together, which is most of the time, he supports me. He has no problem with the fact that I'm playing, number one, and number two, with what else goes with the industry; having to socialize, speak to people, getting the pick-up lines, and he's not threatened by that at all, he know it goes with the territory. He's not insecure in himself at all, and he knows I'm coming home to him. So we have a very unique and very lucky relationship which really works for us. …I never feel I have to withhold anything from him… (cited in Moelwyn-Hughes 2013:49)

Weutonga has achieved what a lot of male musicians are failing to achieve in the Zimbabwean music industry. It is only that, as she puts it, "men do not want to accept that women can perform better than them" (Int.:2012). Taking both men and women performers into account, Weutonga could surely be rated among the top ten of the Zimbabwean popular music artists.

3.13 Conclusion

Weutonga as revealed in this chapter is one of Zimbabwean women's major breakthroughs in the music industry. She has defied the odds not just by playing a musical instrument but by playing an instrument which as Green puts it, is among the least expected instruments, to be played by women, namely the bass guitar (Green 1997:76). Weutonga has proved to be a true Africana woman who is not preoccupied and influenced by some feminist perspective in which women and men are antagonists. Weutonga sings about issues that affect women but she is also managed by her husband. She is therefore negotiating "the inclusivity of men and the 'voicing' of women simultaneously in respect to African cultural realities" which is the main focus of Africana Womanism (Sibanda 2012:7). Weutonga has proved that men are neither the Africana women's primary concern nor enemy as is with the white feminists who, as Hudson-Weems puts it, are fighting "an age-old battle with her white male counterpart" (Hudson-Weems, 1993). This

[7]Moshito is a music and exhibition conference in Newtown, Johannesburg. It has been held annually since 1994.

chapter therefore is a celebration of Weutonga's ability to rise above adverse situations (resilience) rather than being hostile in action (resistance) which is true success in an African way.

Chapter 4

Sandra Ndebele the Bulawayo Dancing Queen: A Subversive Rebel



If my dressing is viewed to be controversial, then it is our culture that's contradicting itself.

Sandra,Ndebele Int. (2013)

You can't let the opinion of other people discourage you. Don't give up on your dreams, don't allow them to define who you are or they would have won!

AngeliqueKidjo (2013)

One evening in December 2010, while watching television at home, there was an advertisement of a National Unity Gala.[8] A list of up to 15[9] of the most popular musicians in the country was announced and on that list of certain artists expected to perform at the gala, was only one female musician by the name of Sandra Ndebele. The following day I did some preliminary research online and traced the galas back to 2005. I ascertained that musicians perform at the galas on invitation from the organisers. Given the huge number of musicians in the country an artist can be invited to one gala, depending on the theme of that gala and may miss the next one. Even though the number of female musicians who performed on these national shows was smaller than that of men, Sandra was the only female musician who had not missed a gala during the five-year period I focused on. I became interested in finding out why this was so and why her name was always in the adverts for the galas. In an informal discussion with Major Mtambudzi,[10] he told me that they used Sandra's name on all advertisements because she is a crowd puller. What really makes her a crowd puller? This is one of the questions that drew me to Sandra as a musician and when this opportunity to carry out a study on Zimbabwe popular music arose, I knew that I intended to investigate this further.

4.0 Introduction

Some women are winning their fight for recognition in the Zimbabwean popular music industry by simultaneously subverting the stereotypes surrounding their femininity. Sandra Ndebele is the main focus of this chapter with all the contradictions that surround her in the music industry in Zimbabwe. The discussion will be around the performance techniques that have moved Ndebele into a group of women called game-changers. According to Gqola these women are:

> …a breed of innovators who not only create something new, but shift the reference point on a certain matter or in a field. … They are courageous artists who dare produce and release publicly the kind of visionary material that we did not have before… They have changed the rules of

[8]Galas are national celebrations of all the important landmarks in the history of Zimbabwe, among them, the independence gala, heroes' gala, and the unity gala. There are also other galas which celebrate the lives of those national heroes who died in post-independence Zimbabwe. The unity gala is annually held on the 22nd of December to commemorate the signing of the unity accord between Zanu PF and PF Zapu.

[9]Although they were not the only musicians to be performing at the gala but were chosen so as to lure people to the gala.

[10]Major Mtambudzi as one of the main organisers of the national galas had come to Midlands State University to attend rehearsals of our students who had been invited to perform at the independence gala dinner.

> the game. And in the midst of contradictory messages about who they are, their value and their place … in society, they survive. (2013:3)

This chapter will demonstrate how women like Sandra[11] are not aiming to reverse the order of things as are presented by patriarchy but to shelter themselves from men's domineering choices that put them in the position of rival commodities. They are "forg[ing] for themselves a social status that compels recognition" (Irigaray 1985:33). I will explore Sandra's so-called "unconventional" dance moves, her style of dressing and the meaning that she and society attaches to it all. Emphasis will also be drawn to how Sandra has managed to put Lucy Irigaray's theory of mimicry into effect. This theory advocates for a woman to "resubmit herself ... to ideas about herself, that are elaborated in/by masculine logic, but so as to make visible by effect of playful repetition, what was supposed to remain invisible…"(Irigaray 1995:76). In this chapter I will analyse Sandra's life, music and performance in terms of its intended effects in particular, whether it serves to be subversive or reinforcing to conventional dominating ideas in society. In so doing this chapter will create a new reality to inform how to engage with female musicians in the industry. I will look at how Sandra has managed to steal the limelight in the industry by doing the unexpected, metaphorically speaking, sitting at the intersection of two religions, namely Christianity and the African Traditional Religion (ATR). I will explore the scandals and rumours surrounding Sandra's career and how they have all helped in bringing her to prominence. I will analyse how and why Sandra Ndebele's liveliness on stage, for example, has been misconstrued in several articles as manifestation of immorality whilst little or no attention is given to the profundity of her cultural consciousness.

4.1Conflict of Religion: Christianity versus African Traditional Religion

In Zimbabwe there is a clear demarcation of what Christianity is which makes it different from African traditional religion.[12] According to Gort, Christians perceive other religions as

[11]In this chapter I am going to refer to the musician by her first name Sandra so as to show the difference between the artist and the culture which is also called Ndebele.

[12] This I note is different from the situation in South Africa where there seems to be blurring of boundaries between Christianity and African traditional religion. Carol Muller notes that Isaiah Shembe the founder of The Church of the Nazarites; "… skilfully incorporated into his religious community signs and practices of power from a variety of available sources: Nguni ritual and custom,…the miraculous powers associated with the written word… and sacred images drawn from the European mission and the Salvation Army" (1991:26). Some churches in South Africa therefore combine aspects from both western Christianity and traditional religion. They also believe that "people could be converted to Christianity and still retain their cultural ways, many of which were reflected in the narratives of the Old Testament" (Roberts 1936 cited in Muller 1991:25).

expressions of 'heathen unbelief and evil superstition' and the world outside the church…. as the 'kingdom of darkness' (2008:748). Chitando also testifies to this where he notes that "in the struggle for allegiance, Christianity and Africa traditional religion have made demands to their followers" (2002:12). Mbiti testified to this fact when he states that "many millions of Africans are followers of more than one religion, even if they may register or be counted in census as adherents of only one religion…" (cited in Adamo 2011: introduction). Many people claim to be Christian yet they practice African traditional religion secretly because the missionaries who brought Christianity were aggressively opposed to traditional African practices that they considered barbaric and based on superstition (Denis 2006:310-323, Mills 1995:153-172).

Sandra is one person who has been very open about her religious orientations and this has brought about mixed reactions from the society. During my first interview with Sandra I made sure to ask a question I felt really centres on her controversy and had contributed to her being given a lot of media coverage, the question about her religion. Sandra proudly responded by saying:

> Although I am a born-again Christian baptised in the Seventh Day Adventist church, I am also a proud African woman and so I strongly believe in the upliftment of my traditional practices. I perform both traditional and contemporary dances wearing Ndebele traditional regalia. I also sing gospel music. (Int.:2013)

The question then arises, why is this such a mixed bag? How could she proclaim to belong to Christianity and then practise the beliefs of the African Traditional Religion (ATR), some of which are in direct conflict with Christianity? Chitando notes that the major preoccupation of churches is the creation of a new social identity. The idiom of conversion, the new life available in Christ and finding a haven of belonging characterise the Christian discourse (2002:12). The idea of conversion indicates a move from other religions to focus only on Christianity. To be a musician who sings anything besides Gospel music is not acceptable to some Christians. Christians are encouraged to sing Gospel music which is defined by Chitando as "music laden with Christian themes and performed by individuals who regard themselves as Christians [and] [t]hese individuals seek to preach the word of God through music" (2002:14). To a Christian, "African spirituality [is] seen as representing the devil's machinations" and so they foresee that

"the cleansing power of the gospel would be African heathenism" as they see it (Ibid. 2002:29). African Traditional Religion on the other hand is based on the "practice of rituals and recognition of the presence of the living-dead (ancestors) to allow the person to co-exist in harmony with other members of the community and nature" (Kamara 2000:503). By claiming to belong to both religions Sandra is therefore caught up in this longstanding issue of the relationship between Christianity and African culture. This, whether in a positive or negative light, has created a lot of interest towards Sandra's career and has made her popular.

What made Sandra belong to two religions became my next question to consider. Sandra was born in Bulawayo on the 3rd of January 1982 to educated and working parents. The father is a teacher and the mother works as a secretary for a brewery called Ingwebu Breweries. The parents are very strict and committed Christians of the Seventh Day Adventist church. Sandra has three siblings; two boys and one young sister. Sandra noted this about her parents and their religion:

> My parents were very strict about our going to church. We would never miss the Sabbath except when there was a funeral. They would make sure that we spent the whole day at church and follow strictly the rules of the Sabbath. I am very grateful for this because it gave me a very solid grounding in the religion that I so much love and respect. (Int.:2013)

Sandra's respect the church is not only for the spiritual grounding she got from it but she acknowledges it for affording her the platform on which to discover her vocal talent. Sandra says that:

> It was at church that I first discovered that I could sing. You know the Seventh Day Adventist is well known for its vocal training and so I joined and became an active member of the youth church choir. It is from then that I realised I could sing so well for I was made the leading vocalist in a very short time after joining the choir. (Int.:2013)

Although Christianity was the main religion at home in Bulawayo where she grew up and received her education, Sandra insisted that she has a very strong rural background. The fact that both parents were working did not stop them from having very strong ties with their roots. As she puts it:

> My parents would send us ekhaya[13] every school holiday and they made sure we stayed there with our grandparents for the whole holiday and

[13] "*Ekhaya*" is a Ndebele word for rural home.

> they would come to collect us maybe a day or two before the schools open. For my parent spending more time with our grandparents was a way of keeping us in touch with our rural life so that we would not forget where we come from. My grandparents although they went to church, they had strong ties also with their Madlozi.[14] During those holidays, they would take time to teach us about our heritage and some of our Ndebele cultural practices. The appreciation and respect for those good practices remained with me from then up to now. (Int.:2013)

Sandra' knowledge of the Ndebele cultural practices came in handy in her secondary school years when she was a learner at Mpopoma High School. She joined Mpopoma High School as she was transferring from Founders High School. Founders High is a former group A[15] school and so coming from such an elite school, Sandra had a very good command of English. She was encouraged to join the Mpopoma High School public speaking club where she excelled and was noticed by the teacher who was in charge of the Drama Club. The Drama Club combined acting and singing and so the skills Sandra had acquired from her two teachings; the church and the traditional side from grandparents, became useful and she was getting the lead roles in most of the dramas and was shining above the rest (Dube Int.:2013).

The first days with the Drama Club were the most difficult ones for Sandra because her parents were against the secular genres of music that they were singing and the traditional attire they would wear during their performances. Sandra remembered and noted how strongly her father was against her joining the Drama Club as she said:

> I remember the day my young sister told my parents that I had joined the Drama Club. My father sat me down and told me that he would not have his own daughter embarrass them (parents) and herself by acting in the secular dramas and be paraded to the world while naked. I wondered why he would say I would be naked when we were wearing our own traditional Ndebele clothes. He however said he did not mind my being in the public speaking club for to him it was more 'dignified'. (Int.:2013)

Although the above statement by Sandra discusses her individual situation, Edith Weutonga, my other case study discussed in the previous chapter experienced the same problem with her father.

[14] *"Madlozi"* are the ancestors who are believed to be the main guides in an African's life.

[15] The colonial education system in Zimbabwe had categorised schools into Group A for the whites and Group B for the blacks. The standards at the schools were obviously different with the group A having the better standards than group B. The system was abolished at the time of independence but the standards however remained different for the former Group A schools which still had better infrastructure and facilities than the group B schools. Currently, this characterization still persists in the post-independence context.

The negative reaction of these fathers to their daughters' career choices is because of the fact that "image of the paid female singer who puts body and voice on public display has inevitably been associated in practically all societies with that of the sexual temptress or prostitute" (Green 1997:29).

Sandra said that the clash between the religion she had been born into (Christianity) and the performance that she had a passion for did not stop her even when her father asked her to but she says that:

> I started lying at home that I was going for Public Speaking rehearsals when in fact I would be going for drama practice. I would leave home wearing different clothes from the ones we would use for drama and music and would change at the venue so no one at home suspected anything. (Int.:2013)

The success of the Mpopoma High School Drama Club led to the formation of Inkululeko Yabatsha School of Arts (IYASA). IYASA accommodated even those who had finished their high school at Mpopoma and who still wanted to perform together with those who were in the school's Drama Club. Sandra noted that her parents started to adjust their stance on this when money started coming in from performances they held in and around the city of Bulawayo (Int.:2013). IYASA started in 1999 and for two years they toured the whole country, Austria and the Czech Republic. Sandra decided to go solo in 2002 and formed her own band called Intombi Zomqangala.[16] In February 2003 she released her debut album called *Tshaya Tshaya* and this album announced her entry into the Zimbabwe music industry. To date she has seven albums to her name. Sandra's area of strength in her performance is her dancing and in her own words "the dances are modernised Ndebele traditional dances" (Int.:2013).

Sandra is popular and controversial for her freedom in combining aspects from two main conflicting religions in the country. Sandra is one musician who has allowed herself to have individual religious liberty which is defined by Carl Hallencreutz as the "guaranteed freedom for an adherent of any religious tradition, to practice his/her religion according to his/her own preference" (1988:2). By borrowing from both religions Sandra appeals to all those open-minded individuals from both religions who each find some aspects of their religion to identify with in

[16]Intombi zomqangala is a name they borrowed from an extinct Ndebele instrument which is also known as the breast calabash. Ndebele said that by naming her band, she is trying to revive the instrument that has long been forgotten (Int.:2013).

her music. She also noted that her music is highly appreciated by the educated and the elite in society who she says "value the fight to bring back those important aspects of our culture like our dances" (Int.:2013). Sandra boasts of being invited to many corporate functions which she claims pay better than any other gigs. In support of Sandra's point that the educated of society respect their traditional beliefs, Olowola claims that "while Africans are being exposed to western education, traditional thought is still the source of basic world view for most of them" (1993:7).

Except for a few who are religious extremists, Sandra is now a celebrated musician for bringing our valued traditions into the music of the day – which is popular music. To the few overzealous Christians and African Traditionalists Sandra will remain an outcast not to be associated with. One lady from the Seventh Day Adventist church in Harare (name withheld), "Sandra must be banned from our church for she is tarnishing its image by lying that she is an Adventist Christian. What kind of an Adventist performs in bars and clubs?" (Int.:2013). In response to such outbursts Sandra had this to say:

> I am really surprised that there are people who still don't understand and appreciate what I do as recent as now. All these years I have been fighting for people to understand what I am really doing which is to entertain while celebrating our culture and now praising God. I have three gospel songs on my latest album and I am now being invited to sing in churches. I will be holding my first ever church gig on the 7th of April at a local church here in Bulawayo. (Int.:2013)

4.2 Social Responsibility

Responsible artists are the ones who do not forget where they have come from. Sandra is one such artist who always gives back to the community whenever she can. This has made Sandra an icon in several communities in Bulawayo and countrywide. Sandra puts it that "I have learnt that I have to give back to the community because it is through their support that I am where I am today" (Int.:2013). Sandra is surely giving back to society; she donated a machine for checking blood pressure to a clinic called Princess Margaret Rose in Bulawayo in 2007. The clinic is said to have been without such a basic machine for months. In 2004 Sandra fundraised for SOS Hermann Gmeiner Primary School in Bulawayo as well but it is not only in Bulawayo that she is helping. She also held a fundraising show in Gweru for the Midlands State University when they wanted to build a Multipurpose Hall. With her name always on their lips as they look at the

machines and buildings they now have because of her help; Sandra is steadily climbing the ladder of popularity in Zimbabwe.

As mentioned earlier on in the chapter, Sandra's backing band is known as Intombi Zomqongala (see Figure 4.1). It is an all-female ensemble constituted of members between the ages of 16 and 30 years. According to Sandra she formed the group as a way of trying to bring back what she terms as "the lost culture of the Ndebele people" (Int.: 2013)[17]. These ladies dance to Ndebele traditional dances. Sandra is a hero among these women for they are earning a living through this group. She has toured Europe with them and they perform at several cultural events in Bulawayo. One band member acknowledged this and she added that:

> Sandie has given us a chance to showcase our own talents and culture. We are so grateful to her for this chance because our families are now living comfortable lives. Sandie is also very supportive she has even encouraged me and groomed me, now I am in the process of recording my own album. (Thandeka Int.: 2013)



Figure 4.1 Intombi Zomqangala in action at Nkulumane on February 5, 2009

Sandra's love for her traditional culture led her to open a culture centre called Umuzi Wakhethu[18] and a restaurant that specialises in traditional food at Amakhosi Township Square Culture Centre. Sandra noted that "this is a centre where we remind people especially young

[17] Sandra's comment on 'the lost culture' maybe an inaccurate characterization because music of a people is considered a living tradition which is passed on from one generation to the other.
[18]Umuzi Wakhethu is a Ndebele term which means "our rural home".

people of our tradition, we sell all kinds of traditional foods and crafts as well" (Int.:2013). My visit to the culture centre made me realise that it is not only in singing and performing on stage that women can make themselves known and appreciated in society. It also takes initiative, knowing where there are needs, and filling in that gap.

Sandra also is a very resourceful woman. Besides being a musician and performer she owns a bag shop in town, and a traditional food outlet[19]. In an interview with Mangena, Mhlanga praised Sandra's versatility and said that Sandra:

> …is a very enterprising young woman who will buy an air ticket today, fly to Dubai, purchase her goods, not from the performance money but from the arts and craft she would have bought here and sold there. She then lands in Harare, before clearing her goods, she rushes off to perform at a gala and later at another club, then she clears her goods, lands in Bulawayo, supplies shops and is off for rehearsal the next morning. (Mangena 2012:25)

Society will surely hold one in high esteem because this is exactly what Sandra has done. Who would go to those lengths to see other people succeed than a true Africana womanist who is flexible, filled with the spirit of sisterhood, nurturing and a role player?

4.3 Fighting within the Feminine: A Feminism of Difference

Be nobody's darling
Be an outcast
Take the contradictions
Of your life
And wrap around
You like a shawl,
To parry stones
To keep you warm

-Alice Walker

[19] The observation of Sandra proves the multiple roles that women whether musicians or not play in society and this is the same scenario that was at play at my mother's club (see Chapter One).



Figure 4.2 Sandra in one of her performances, Photograph supplied by Ndebele

4.3.1 Sandra's Dance Moves

Most of the controversy surrounding Sandra's religious beliefs stem out of her dancing styles. Sandra's popularity in the Zimbabwean music industry is mainly based on these dancing styles. When I started doing research on Sandra in which I was trying to find out how well she was known in the country, most people only recognise Sandra as the dancing girl from Bulawayo. This proved that it is in dancing that she has made her mark and she also acknowledged this in response to a question I had asked about her area of strength in her performances. She noted that "my strength in my performance is in my dancing" (Int.:2013). The dancing can be seen to contradict with the values of the Christian denomination that she has claimed to belong to, the Seventh Day Adventist church. According to an Adventist pastor Rusukira,

> *Masabata hatitambi muchechi kana kuombera maoko chaiko kana tichiimba hazvitenderwi saka handizivi kuti isabata ipi yaanopinda inomutendera kutamba matambiro aanoita iwayo .Mwana iyeyu akatorasika zvachose*.(Int.:2013)

> (Adventists do not dance to music neither do we ever clap our hands when singing. I don't know the kind of an Adventist that she is. Judging from the way I saw her dance on national television, she is one lost soul.)

Sandra also said that she sings about social issues while dancing Ndebele traditional dances. Since I am not from the Ndebele ethnic group, I needed verification from some Ndebele people on the statement above. I took four of Sandra's music videos to Mrs Khumalo, an elderly Ndebele woman[20] who stays in the Nkulumane suburb in Bulawayo. Mrs Khumalo is also a respected retired traditional dancer in Bulawayo. When I asked her if she knew who Sandra Ndebele was, this was her response:

> *Abantwana bomntanami abamthandanayo kakhulu bangitshelangaye, kodwa angazi ukuthi uhlabela mayelananganingo basengimdala kakhulu ukuthi ngilalele imisindo yabantwana balezinsuku*.(Int.:2013)
>
> (I have heard about her from my grandchildren who like her very much but I don't know what she sings about. I am too old to listen to these noises of today's children.)

The videos I took were of the following songs, "*Guvarangu"* and "*Intoyami Ngeyako"* from her first album and the other two were "*Jiva"* and "*Abandwini"* from her latest album. As we watched the videos I noticed the surprise and shock on Mrs Khumalo's face as we moved from one video to the next. I could tell that something was amiss. After watching the four videos with me, Mrs Khumalo had this to say:

> *Ngili Ndebele qhonjalo ngakhulela emakhaya ase Kezi lapho esasigida imigido yamandebele yasendulo. Angenelisiukwazi ukuth ikuyini okuyibu*Ndebele *kuleyo migido ongitshengiseyo nangaphandle kwengoma eyodwa ayihlabela ngeSiShona okuyikho engibone umgido weSiNdebeleni oyiisitshikitsha.* (Int.:2013)
>
> (I am a true Ndebele and I grew up in the rural areas of Kezi where we used to perform all Ndebele traditional dances. I didn't see anything that's Ndebele in most of these dances except for one song she sings in Shona where I can identify some elements of *Isitshikitsha,* one of our dances.)

Tendai Shoko, a music lecturer at the Midlands State University also echoed Mrs Khumalo's sentiments. Shoko said that she liked Sandra very much but claimed that while she was also born

[20]Most respondents in Sandra's case are women. Because Ndebele women's dances are different from men's dances, I wanted to get the information from the real performers of these dances, who are women.

in Bulawayo and knew all the Ndebele traditional dances, these are not what Sandra performs (Int.:2013). This is a very strong statement to make, especially since Sandra claims that she is dancing Ndebele dances. In response Sandra went on to clarify that:

> My dances are Ndebele traditional dances that are modernised in the sense that as a born free I am also influenced by the several African and western dances that our media is so eager to show us at the expense of our own traditional dances. I therefore at times incorporate these influences into my dances. (Int.:2013 [2])

Sandra is therefore admitting to the fact that her dances are not purely traditional dances but are a fusion with different western pop dances. Sandra and the other contemporary musicians are therefore striving to modernise traditional music or keep it to fashionable standards with the intention of commodifying it for the purpose of earning a living out of their performances (Nombembe 2012:8). This in a way works to her advantage for she then caters for a wider audience with varied tastes in dancing styles. James Gump also supports the idea of modernising traditional performances where he states that; "all traditions… are symbolically [re]constructed in the present and reflect contemporary concerns and purposes rather than a passive inherited legacy" (1997:23). The reconstruction that Sandra is doing is a positive move. It promotes acceptance of the traditional dances by the younger generations because it has elements from the genres that they listen to these days. The basing on traditional dances is important to Sandra for she says that it keeps her in touch with her culture. This view is also shared by Sithabile West,[21] who said that "Going back to older cultures does ground you. It anchors you regarding what things you might portray or communicate and what images you choose" (cited in Friedler and Glazer 2000:190). Ndebele culture is an older culture to Sandra in the sense that it is the culture she was born into and has participated in for a longer period. Western culture then becomes the new culture which she later encountered and she is trying to strike a balance between the two.

In one of my interviews with Sandra I asked her to comment on the observation that she was not a traditional but a dirty dancer and I cited Mandla Ndlamini (2012: online) who calls her "a raunchy dancer". Sandra had this to say:

> Dirty dancing is what they want that's why I always perform to a full house (she laughed). (Seriously she then said) It becomes dirty when it is

[21]Stabile West is a dance writer who said this at an American dance guild conference panel in 1989 in America.

> Sandra's band that's performing it but when Kofi Olomide comes to Zimbabwe with his dancing girls gyrating their waists like no man's business its ok because it's a man's band. Our society has double standards. People fill the stadium for Kofi and praise him for the dances but it is always negative when it's a woman. (Int.:2013 [2])

Sandra's statement confirms that a double standard is at work here. Olomide's dancing girls are accepted by society because they dance in a band that is led by a man but Sandra's band is demonised mainly because there is a woman at the helm of the band. This brings to mind Ntarangwi's statement that women are always expected to be appendages of men in bands and should never take the leading role. (1998). Sandra is trying to fight this demeaning stance by men in the following way:

> As real as the policing of women's bodies is, … it is possible for women to think of themselves – ourselves - differently. It is important that a critique of power not end with reaction, but it goes further to imagine something new, more exiting, more pleasurable. (Gqola 2013:2)

Sandra is not just reacting verbally to the discrimination against women in the music industry. She is surely doing something new by dancing her way to the top of the ladder in the Zimbabwean popular music industry whether people like her or despise her. This shows that women are now past that crying stage to be heard but are surely exercising agency in an effort to gain their rightful status in the music industry.

The hostility that Sandra and the other female musicians in the popular music industry are experiencing is also observed by Linda Dahl as she discussed the problems that are being experienced by women in Jazz. She states that:

> A woman musician determined not to be intimidated by such a tough, smoke-filled atmosphere (where one's peers were probably men) often paid the penalties designed to put her in place…the loss of her respectability being high on the list, as well as disapproval, ridicule and sometimes ostracism. (1984:x)

Sandra notes that although her shows are always sold out, men will never respect women in the arts. Sandra said that:

> Whenever I am performing for an audience in venues that are usually dominated by men especially in night clubs and bars, the stage will always have to be barricaded. It will be for my own protection because

> men will always act as if you are there for them to do whatever they want with you. Some would even want to touch you as if you wouldn't mind, and they act as if you are there because that is what you are looking for. (Int.:2013)

These same sentiments that Sandra put across on how men lack respect for women were also aired by Simphiwe Dana in an interview cited by Gqola where she says that:

> As a woman, no matter how successful you look, even a beggar on the street believes they own your body. I have experienced this. "Hello nice, hello baby!" Some men will even go the length of touching you, grabbing you. You have to put on a bulletproof mask when you leave the house, so that you may not be emotionally incensed enough to want to lash out in anger… (Cited in Gqola 2013:51)

It only takes courageous women like Sandra and Simphiwe as they have indicated above to soldier on and wear the "bulletproof masks" to get the respect that they deserve. Most women are discouraged by this disrespect and the stereotyping they receive but they must be encouraged by testimonies such as those above from female artists who have made their names in this industry, where:

> Women artists be they singers or actresses are often perceived as "women of the night" or women of the streets; perhaps this is because they exist in these roles in the unmarked territory outside domesticity and also in urban space for historic reasons relating to both colonial and indigenous patriarchy has been officially defined as the territory of men. (Chitauro et al. 1994:11)

4.3.2 Clothes and Representations

When women wear the same type of dress during performances, they "create a collective identity that obscures the economic and other status differences between them, unifying the participants into an effective representation of historical identity" (Hendrickson 1996:9). Sandra's band attire is a true testimony to Hendrickson's statement because they wear the same regalia during performances. Sandra's performance attire is a challenge to modern westernised dressing and a true reflection and preservation of the Ndebele tradition. Ndebele defended her attire by saying that:

> When I was a girl I wore what Ndebele girls wear that is a pant and the short skirt made of beads and a bra top (see figure 4.2) but now I am a

> married woman I now wear tight leggings inside the skirt. My girls are still single and so they still wear the skirt without the tights. (Int.:2013)

Hendrickson testifies to this where she refers to clothes as; "primary symbols in a performance through which modernity – and therefore history – have been conceived, constructed and challenged in Africa" (1996:13). Ntarangwi (1998) notes how artists use their mode of dress as a way of expressing their cultural ideology of Africanness rather than their identity as sexual performers. This is to say the traditional regalia that Sandra Ndebele puts on deserves more admiration from a scholarly view point as it is an essential component in building a Zimbabwean cultural image.

One elderly woman, Gogo Msipa, did not see Sandra's dressing as representative of the Ndebele culture in any way and had this to say about Sandra, "that girl is a real disgrace to our culture. How can she wear our traditional Ndebele clothes, the ones we respect as a surviving element of our culture and dance like a harlot" (Msipa Int.:2013). In a way Gogo Msipa is acknowledging that Sandra's dressing is cultural although she is against the dancing style. Sandra dresses in a way that directly links her to Ndebele culture but her dancing as proven above are far from reflecting the same thing. I take the clothes to be a reflection of Sandra's inner aspirations. Anne Hollander states that;

> When people put clothes on their bodies, they are primarily engaged in making pictures of themselves to suit their own eyes, out of the completed combination of clothing and body… [T]he picture they make when they dress are directly connected to the pictures they see and accept as real. (Cited in Bastian 1996:97)

Although it is a fact that she wears traditional regalia I believe that by wearing what most of her critics call half-naked dressing,[22] Sandra is in a way rebelling and challenging the standard that modern society has put on clothes they expect women to wear. Women who wear mini and tight fitting dresses are labelled as morally questionable in society. By wearing that which society is rejecting and performing in a genre that has never been accommodative to women, Sandra is unconsciously miming the conventions that have been imposed by society. These sentiments are also shared by Hildi Hendrickson where she says that clothes also "provide women with

[22]I wish to note here that in our interview Sandra never referred to her dress code in this way (Int.: 2013).

possibilities, as a relatively disempowered social group, in making satirical and potentially subversive statements about their identities in relation to power-holders" (1996:10).

Sandra is miming the conventions men have imposed on her as a way of fighting back. Men have labelled her as a woman of loose character, she is therefore dressing and dancing the way she does as a way of affirming the label and in a way becoming popular and challenging the men in the industry. Rosemary Tong follows this by saying that, through miming, women can undo the effects of phallocentric discourse simply by overdoing them (1998:204). Sandra said that:

> People have labelled me as a prostitute and they claimed that nothing good will ever come out of my life. They flock to my shows to see the person they think is a prostitute and I don't waste my time in trying to clear my name but my life is a true testimony that I am the exact opposite of what they proclaim. I am married to a very loving man who is a lawyer by profession and we were blessed with two boys and I can proudly say that I have all that I have ever wished for. (Int.:2013)

The allegations of prostitution and the reinvention of what is "traditionally" proper behaviour for women seems to be a fitting mechanism to both lessen competition within the industry and to ensure ongoing control by men of the society. Even if the singing woman in a public arena is not engaged in a fully intentional act of display, she is still considered "dangerously, and tantalisingly close to doing so. For this reason she is a threat, as such is open to abuse" (Green 1997:29). Angela Impey proposes that in order to fight the sexual insults of their profession women must either "disregard what people say as 'useless talk' or play into the image of the prostitute, the seductress, as a means to gain entry into the profession and thereby further one's own career interests" (1992:159). Sandra can therefore be placed in a group of women feminists who are reinterpreting patriarchal images of women to their advantage, as is noted by Donaldson where she says that:

> No image is entirely fixed; symbols are invested with the numinous meaning and imaginative power brought to them by each person who grapples with them. Because of this, an image that may have been used by patriarchy to subordinate women can be reinvented by feminists so that the image is empowering. (2011:50)

Weutonga also commented on the way that Sandra dresses. She said that Sandra was a true feminist fighting for what most women are failing to get – which is their freedom. She noted that:

> Most women when they are criticised they withdraw and some even lose the confidence they would have started with but Sandie is not like that, she has stood her ground and defended her dressing and now society is beginning to accept her as she is and I even heard that she performed in church in April, a turn that is positive. (Int.:2013)

4.3.3 Marital Support: Balance between Roles

In Zimbabwean societies a woman is accorded respect and dignity primarily through marriage. The institution of marriage is however believed to be incompatible, in almost every way, with a career in popular music. Most women who want to make it in the industry end up choosing either to stay single, or divorce and become single parents. Impey made an observation that women mostly opt out of marriage because:

> [T]he pressure imposed on women by husbands and relatives to remain within the home, to be the rearers of children and to provide for necessary domestic needs, means that the night life and public demands of a professional musician cannot be realised. (1992:139)

These women who decide to remain single and pursue their musical careers are subjected to the negative social labels linked to both their single status and to their careers in popular music, both of which are considered synonymous with prostitution. Although Sandra is not immune to the prostitution label, she has managed to maintain a balance between the expectations of her social role as a married woman and the career of her choice which is music. Sandra gained a lot of respect and recognition when she got married to her long-time boyfriend, Nkanyiso Sibindi. This in her own words "silenced the critics and the prophets of doom who had prophesied that I was never going to get married" (Int.:2013). As to how she manages both roles, Sandra had this to say:

> At home I do my duties of a wife and a mother, I take good care of my family and when I go to work it is just like any other job. I do what I have to do and come back to my family. My husband is not in the arts but he is very understanding and supportive of my career. He trusts me and knows that it is just a job because I was already performing when we met. My kids are my number one fans and when I perform at venues that allow kids, they do attend with their father but mostly they are at home because most of my venues are pubs and bars. (Int.:2013)

Sandra is very proud of the support offered by her husband and this she says has seen her rise to greater heights in her career. Sandra said that she will continue to do what she does best which is

performing. She wouldn't care what some critics say as long as her family accepts what she does (Int.:2013). Makwenda testifies to the same issue when in an interview with Impey she said "family is the most important thing. If your family says this is right, then the negative attitudes of society don't mean anything. So you will go on" (cited in Impey 1992:177). By balancing her roles as a mother, wife and performer Sandra hasemerged as a mothering, nurturing, flexible role-player and family-centred personality, which make up five of the eighteen characteristics of an Africana Womanist as presented by Hudson-Weems (1993:55).

4.4 Marketing and Publicity

For an artist to become popular, they have to be seen and then be appreciated by the public. Sandra has successfully worked on this fundamental feature of the music profession, which is visibility. She does not as most women musicians do, "sit and wait to be discovered and promoted by the controllers of the industry" (Impey 1992:160). In her own words Sandra said that "I make myself known by making contacts with the important players in the industry who then invite me to most major functions in the country" (Int.:2013). Sandra's response here confirmed what Major Mtambudzi, the main organiser of the Zimbabwe national galas had noted in an earlier discussion. I had asked Major Mtambudzi why Sandra was the only female musician who had performed at all the galas and whose records I had managed to get hold of. Major Mtambudzi had said that "we always invite Sandra because the crowds love her and that she makes the gala lively" (Int.:2013). Sandra acknowledged Major Mtambudzi's point that she brings life to the galas. She added that:

> Maybe it is the reason they don't make us perform at the beginning of the show. We are always slotted in the early hours of the morning at these Pungwes.[23]So their aim will be to make sure that the crowd will stay throughout the show as they will be waiting for our performance. (Int.:2013)

The above observation did not in any way disturb Sandra, mainly because it is at these galas that the people get to see her more; the reason being that the galas are screened live on national

[23]Pungwes are all-night vigils that were performed during the war of liberation where people would spend the whole night sing and dancing at selected places in the bush (Presler 1999:43). It is at these pungwe meetings that the people were encouraged to keep up the fighting spirit and were considered to be a ''…national resource... designed in close and on-going consultation with its target audience' ... in order to 'empower people through knowledge and to enable them to make more informed decisions concerning their lives" (Kruger, 2006 :156).The word is now being used in the post-independence Zimbabwe to refer to the national galas which celebrate national achievements.

television. This in a way is free advertisement for the musicians. Sandra has managed to stay visible through her own initiative and the media has played a major role both positively and negatively in making Sandra known to the people. This discussion about how Sandra publicises herself led me to question her about who manages her band. Her response was:

> I don't have a manager and I don't need one. I have a personal assistant. I can't sit around and wait for someone to promote and book gigs for me. Most of the managers currently in Zimbabwe are men and so would never do it in good faith. My friends who have tried working with these managers tell me that on top of the money you pay them, they would ask for extra favours you know what I mean. In this age of technology I do most of my advertising and promotion on line. I have learnt how to use the internet and I have opened my own website where I interact with my fans so what more do I need a manager for? (Int.:2013)

Sandra's response above indicates that each woman musician will have an individual approach to the issue of management. Weutonga in the previous chapter attributed part of her success to the good manager that she has. Here Sandra is bringing in the idea of going it alone. It works when the manager is your husband, as shown in Weutonga's chapter where I noted several women musicians who are doing well because their careers are being managed by their husbands. Sandra on the other hand is bringing in a different perspective that there is no need for a manager and that a musician can do it all by herself. Sandra's husband is not in the music business and so she has a fear of being taken advantage of by professional managers (Int.:2013). The important thing however is that Sandra is doing well without a manager.

In the month of August only in 2013, Sandra was booked and performed at all the major events that took place in the country. On the 9th of August she performed at Victoria Falls Golf Tournament, on the 23rd was the Welcome to Zimbabwe carnival for the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). On the 27th she was in Harare for the Agricultural Show and on the 28th she also performed at the Commissioner's Fun Day in Harare. Sandra said that these are some of the open platforms that she gets to show the people who Sandra really is and that she wouldn't miss them for anything (Int.:2013). Sandra makes sure that she stays visible to the extent that at one time she had to juggle between two functions in two different towns in one day. She was booked to perform at the first Zimbabwean carnival that took place in Victoria Falls and also at the Bulawayo Comes Alive festival that was on the same date. Jeys Marabini, the main organiser of the Bulawayo Concert was quoted by the *Nehanda online* as having said

that, "We have managed to clear up things with Sandra and I am happy to say that she will be performing at the concert and the carnival as well" (Cited in Nehanda Radio online May 9, 2013). This is a sure sign that Sandra is a powerhouse in the Zimbabwean music industry who can't be missed on most shows.

Most musicians only perform for financial benefits but Sandra realised that in order to make money, you first need publicity. She goes to where the people are and performs for them there for free, namely holding charity shows or just offering entertainment to the people. Sandra said that:

> I move around in schools, performing for the kids and also whenever they have functions like prize-giving days they would then invite me and I perform for free. I have gained a lot from these free shows because it is through them that I get noticed by some parents who would later invite me to perform at work functions for a fee. Corporate functions I get through some of these free shows are better paying than most gigs. (Int.:2013)

Sandra has performed at a number of schools in Bulawayo, among them Tategulu Primary School in Cowdray park, Robert Tredgold in Makokoba and Mahlabezulu in Tshabalala. In Gweru Sandra performed at Muunga Primary School in Ascot, Riverside School in Riverside and Matinunura School in Mkoba.

4.5 Media Canvasing Reality

When I met Sandra for the first time in person at Sandie's Hub,[24] *I got the shock of my life. The picture that I had of Sandra from what I had heard and read about her in the media was that of a wild-looking and radical person, a person who was always dressed in an overly revealing manner. The person who came out to receive me was the exact opposite of that picture. I was welcomed by a radiant, sweet, soft-spoken, decent and well-dressed woman and this changed my interview approach completely. I felt so angry with the media for painting such a bad image of her that I started by asking why she did not react to all the negative comments that were mostly aired in the media of her. Her reply showed me that this was truly a mature and well-focused individual.*

[24]Sandie's Hub is Sandra's shop that is in Bulawayo town. It is a very beautiful bag shop which reflects how well travelled Sandra is because most of the bags are imported from China, Tanzania and Dubai. The shop also shows how versatile Sandra is.

Sandra said that:

> Media is there to sell news and so they look for what they think people would want to hear and even if they don't find it they write whatever they want. I can't fight with them because they have the power of the pen and paper. Where would I go to try and justify myself except to go back to them and what good would come out of that they will still write what they want. I just let them say whatever they want about me but I let those who meet me in person be the real judges of the real me. (Int.:2013)

It is clear that media is so powerful that it can determine who is to be loved and respected and who is to be shunned by the public. What they write for people to read reach the people faster than the musician's tours and shows where they can be truly judged by what they do. The media has also played a major role in making Sandra one of the most popular musicians in the Zimbabwean music industry at the moment. However negative the media has portrayed Sandra, she is unconcerned because:

> Whenever they think of something bad to write about female musicians, they first think of Sandra. The funny thing is when something good happens to me they don't publicise it like they do when I do something wrong. The media was busy publicising that Sandra will never get married because she dances like a prostitute but my marriage and wedding was given very little publicity. All they enjoy is to demonise me and women in general. Recently we came back from our tour of Europe where we had spent the whole month. Instead of celebrating that our musicians are making it abroad, all they concentrated on was the fact that our skins were too light and pale which made them conclude that we might have been using skin lighteners in Europe. They didn't realise that the weather there is cold and different from what we experience here. I don't care about the rubbish they write because it is in a way promoting me by keeping me in the papers. People would want to see the person who the media would have demonised and that's why I always perform to full houses, at the end of it all I am making money. What is more important than that? (Int.:2013)

It is very true that those musicians who are written and talked about in the media become the most popular, because the portrayed images and stories can also strengthen them by opening up vistas and paths they had previously been unable to imagine (Donaldson 2011:216). It is also a fact that women musicians are mostly aired in the negative even if they do exactly what men would have done. Sandra noted that:

> Maybe it is because the media houses are also controlled by men because when male musicians do bad things, they are treated in so light a tone that you would think it is normal. Let it be a woman then who does the same thing it will be blown out of proportion to make it look very bad. When musicians like Macheso marry more than three wives and when Jar Praizer claim to have slept with more than twenty five women, it is just normal but when a female musician like Mercy Mutsvene divorces its written as if she wants to become a prostitute. (Int.:2013)

Sandra also noted how, when the gospel group Mahendere Brothers wore long suit jackets and dance to a Rumba beat on one of their albums, all was well but when Fungisai Zvakavapano who also sings gospel wore the same regalia, she was called all sorts of names. Society and mostly the media are not being fair to female musicians.

I also testify to the fact that the media is mostly negative when it comes to Sandra. Most articles that I came across in the media about Sandra were negative. Mandla Dingani (2012) called her "a raunchy dancer" and concentrated on how age and motherhood seem to be catching up with Sandra as if she was now failing to perform. Dingani was in fact referring to a joint show that Sandra had with upcoming dancers in which she was trying to help promote them, which she said is one of her social obligations as a musician who has been in the industry for quite some time. In response to Dingani's allegation Sandra said that, "I did not see this show as a competition as suggested by some sections of the media. Instead it was a joint event by three different but talented performers" (cited in Dingani 2012:online). Age brings with it maturity and wisdom relevant in any profession. Commenting on how age affects dancing, Friedler and Glazer states that "older people can bring an understanding and depth of feeling due to their life experiences which are valuable both in performance and in teaching" (2000:183). By being older Sandra brings a wealth of experience relevant to maintaining a career in the music industry.

Some media present Sandra in both a positive and negative manner in a single coverage. *Mafaro*, an online magazine described Sandra as being renowned for her waist-wiggling dances with silky and fancy footwork moves that always leave the audience asking for more (August 2013:Online). The fact that Sandra's dance moves leave the audience asking for more triggers the interest of those who would not have attended – this is enough advertisement for her future shows. The media has not been all negative about Sandra. In certain instances they were left with no choice but to be positive in their reporting. On Sandra's last album launch that I

attended, Sandra gave a stunning performance and she was praised for being a very talented and focused artist. The following morning *Bulawayo 24 news online* was very positive about the launch and they even went on to quote the speech of the guest of honour, the then Minister of Information and Publicity Comrade Webster Shamu, where he had said that Sandra had "defied the odds and has set a benchmark that artists, especially female artists, should use to achieve their dreams" (Cited in Bulawayo 24 news).

Nehanda online of 9 May 2013 also referred to Sandra as the "Bulawayo Dancing Queen". This points to the fact that Sandra is the best at what she does and even the media acknowledges that. The sincerity of the media in naming Sandra the Dancing Queen must however be received with caution, as the name Queen could be used with different connotations and interchangeably with the name "Diva" in the music industry. The *Oxford dictionary online* defines a "Diva" but it however goes further to refers to the same "Diva" as a "famous singer of popular music" but goes further to refer to her as a woman "regarded as temperamental or haughty" (Online: 2013). Given both positive and negative connotations that can be attached to the name, the music industry is using the name to praise and also to demean women musicians. Connie Benlage cited in Moelwyn-Hughes refused to be called a "Diva" for she defined a "Diva" to be "somebody who is trying to outshine everybody else" (2013:123). If the name is this confusing one would never know whether it is used in admiration or in contempt. A Queen is a title linked with royalty and with the observation of how the media is always trying to paint Sandra in the negative, I then wonder what connotations the name carries or bestows on Sandra. Whichever meaning they may be trying to portray by naming her Queen, the media is accepting her talent and how it is making a name for her.

4.6 Going Global: Touring the World

Sandra is the most travelled musician among all musicians – both male and female combined – in the Zimbabwean music industry. The touring has also helped in popularising her among members of the Zimbabwean diaspora. The harsh economic situation in Zimbabwe currently has forced a lot of Zimbabweans to move to other countries regionally and internationally. Sandra said that:

> I realised that there are a lot of Zimbabweans out there and even my husband is based in the United Kingdom. These people miss home and

> are willing to pay for anything that can remind them of home. When you go there the support that you get will be out of this world. This is what I realised and started looking for shows abroad but right now I am no longer looking but they look for me. The people out there love Zimbabwean music especially the traditional aspect which reminds them of their culture. (Int.:2013)

The stance that Sandra took has made her a household name in the Zimbabwean music industry. Even those people who did not like her in the country are starting to appreciate her when they hear that she had been touring Europe. Sandra has been to the United Kingdom, Canada, China, Dubai, Japan, India, Russia, Singapore and Germany, where she held very successful shows. These tours, as Sandra noted, did widen her market base, not only to the Zimbabweans in diaspora but also to citizens of those countries who in fact highly appreciate African music (Int.:2013). Sandra has managed to penetrate and gain acceptance in these international markets mainly because "Africa women are considered particularly exotic by these communities (since successful African women have been rare) and their opportunities for success are therefore greater outside Zimbabwe" (Impey 1992:112).

Sandra also credited her acceptance abroad to the type of regalia that she wears during her performances which is traditional African attire (Int.:2013). Sandra has not only toured Europe and Asia as indicated above, she has also been to several African countries as well, especially the Southern African region. She said that she performed in South Africa at the show that was held before the World cup in 2010. Sandra also has collaborated with a South African group called Platform One. They have produced a video for one of her songs from the latest album. These collaborations with certain popular bands in the region pushed Sandra into the limelight as well because the fans of the groups she collaborated with, also had an opportunity to see her showcasing her talent.

4.7 Conclusion

The chapter has managed to reveal how the important features namely religious orientation, dance, performance attire and style of performance, all contribute to defining the popular phenomenon that is Sandra Ndebele. What has been revealed in this chapter brings to light that being alternative and independent of mainstream and traditional ideas is an important ambition of Ndebele. As a mainstream popular musician, she expresses this by playing the popular music

game by her own rules. While acting within the realms of popular music, Sandra serves to challenge conventional and dominant ideas in society in regards to sexuality, gender and feminist identity, through her musical and visual expression.

Ndebele serves as activist through the musical and visual content she creates– for sexually and gender oppressed groups in society as well as for women empowerment. Sandra is also characterised through her dramatic, scandalous and entertaining live performances, which play a substantial part in her identity as the "Bulawayo Dancing Queen" and a "raunchy dancer". Marketing herself as a brand, touring the world, support from family and respect for her social responsibilities has hugely contributed to her popularity in the Zimbabwean popular music industry.

Chapter 5

Organisational Agency in the Promotion of Female Musicians

5.0 Introduction

As highlighted in the literature review in my second chapter, biographies of musicians and reference to musicians in works by diasporic writers on Zimbabwean music are mostly of male musicians. This shows that the male musicians are the ones best known to the community and were therefore drawn by interest to write about them. This also reflects badly on female musicians in the country for it seems as if they are not visible or that the women are not sufficiently active to be recognised. There are however some non-governmental organisations which, after carrying out surveys and observations of the industry, have taken steps to try and rectify the discrepancy in the arts where men mostly dominate. I also got to know of these organisations through my case study musicians, Weutonga and Ndebele, who have passed through at least one of these organisations. This chapter therefore focuses on these organisations as a matrix that nurtured Weutonga and Ndebele respectively as part of their special focus on assisting women in their promotion and development. These organisations have worked consistently to the extent that most popular female musicians have passed through them. The interventions of these organisations include talent search, and financial and technical assistance to upcoming musicians and other artists. Corporate sponsorship of the arts is still a relatively new activity practiced by Zimbabwean organisations. As such, there is very little formal literature available on the subject. I will base my argument in this chapter on information gathered from a range of articles in newspapers, online websites and personal interviews.

5.1 Amakhosi Cultural Centre

Amakhosi is one organisation that has offered major contributions to the promotion and development of the arts in Zimbabwe. The strength of the Amakhosi Cultural Centre was recognised by Stephen Chigorimbo, who in a conversation with Cont Mhlanga after touring South Africa noted that most of the people who are doing well in the arts – both locally and in the diaspora – were former students of Amakhosi Cultural Centre (cited by Mhlanga Int.:2013). It is therefore a force to reckon with in the arts industry in Zimbabwe. Since 1988 the core

business of Amakhosi has been to train and develop talent in the performing arts. They offer a National Certificate and a National Diploma in Drama, TV, Video production, Dance, Music and Arts management (see Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1 Amakhosi Cultural Centre on September 20, 2013

5.1.1 Origin and History of Amakhosi

Amakhosi is a brain child of Cont Mhlanga who also is the director of the centre. It was founded in 1980, soon after independence, as a youth karate club and grew to the successful arts centre that it is today. In reply to a question of why the shift from a karate club to a culture centre, Mhlanga said that the arts were always the focus but a karate club was a way to attract kids; it was the time when Zimbabweans were starting to gain access to television and karate films were the most popular at the time. The kids then went with the excitement of being trained in karate and the arts were gradually introduced (Int.:2013). Unlike what most written records which say that Amakhosi started its operations at Stanley Hall in Makokoba Bulawayo, Mhlanga disputed this by saying that:

> A lot of people came to know of Amakhosi when we were now at Stanley Hall but there is a long history before the move to Stanley Hall. The people started before the space and I started using the small backyard of my home in the Nguwoyenga suburb in Bulawayo. When

> the number of kids grew to 50, we moved to the Mthwakazi Youth Centre which was being managed by the City Council. It was when Mthwakazi became too small in 1983 that we later moved to Stanley Hall. (Int.:2013)

Mhlanga had arts development in mind as his target and he noticed the discrepancy in terms of gender balance, as there were only two girls out of the 50 students they had for the karate class. He noted that the problem of lower numbers of female members was cultural because the two girls who had joined had their brothers in the club; it was as if they were allowed because the parents believed that they had protection from their brothers. In order to attract more women to the club, Mhlanga introduced netball and at that time 30 women joined the club. With the boys being attracted by karate and girls by netball the numbers more or less balanced. Mhlanga then introduced the theatre dancing and music which was his aim from the beginning. To make sure that everyone participated in the arts, Mhlanga said:

> I made it a policy that whoever wanted to train for either karate or netball had to join the arts training first. Training for the arts was done together and after the arts training they would then separate with the boys going for karate and the girls for netball. Even those who did not have any interest in performance had to practice and we started to stage plays and dances at Stanley Square in Makokoba. We staged our first play which made a name for the club in 1990 called *Sticher* with members from both the karate and netball classes. Fame then contributed to the increase in numbers. Even those girls who just wanted to come in for the arts had no problems convincing their parents, they just used netball as a scapegoat to come to the club. (Int.:2013)

Amakhosi turned semi-professional in 1988, creating its first pilot arts training centre, Amakhosi Performing Arts Workshop (APAW) that produced and toured nationally and internationally with theatre plays directed and written by Cont Mhlanga (Amakhosi online). In 1995, Amakhosi established the first privately-owned culture centre in Zimbabwe, Amakhosi Cultural Centre (ACC). They moved to the new centre in 1997 and in 1998 they opened a fully fledged arts business (Mhlanga Int.: 2013). To date Amakhosi is a force to reckon with in the arts in Bulawayo and Zimbabwe as a whole.

In an interview with Mhlanga I discovered that everything at Amakhosi centres on Mhlanga. When I arrived for the first time at Amakhosi, I asked to be directed to the reception but to my surprise I was directed to two people who were seated under a tree. The two were Cont and one

of his students. On introducing myself and asking who I could talk to in order to make an appointment for my interview, Mhlanga openly admitted that "I am Amakhosi and wherever you see me, you would have seen Amakhosi from secretary to director" (Int.:2013). This does not mean that there are no secretaries at the centre but it only meant that every activity at Amakhosi would have to pass by him. This was also noted by Mtandazo Dube who says that "everything at the place, every event, decision, movement and so forth, revolves around Mhlanga" (2013online). Mhlanga also added that the school only operates when he is around. When he goes on tours and other trips the school will be closed because every one of the 20 students enrolled every year, has to be taught by Mhlanga himself (Int.:2013) (see Figure 5.2). The advantage of such a scenario is that Mhlanga has a hands-on approach and will be certain that everything in the centre works according to his vision and plan. It is however disadvantageous in that the centre may not be able to survive after Mhlanga. The director of the National Arts Council, Mr Elvas Mari, also acknowledged the importance of Mhlanga to the survival of the centre but was also worried about the future of the centre. Mari said that "Cont is the main body of this organisation,...but such a situation is bad because what will happen if he can no longer do what he does now?" (cited in Dube 2013 online). In response to Mari's worry, Mhlanga said:

> This place can't fit in my grave - it is too big. I have made my two cent contribution to this organisation and it is obvious that I will not live forever. I have trained people and still continue to do so. It is these people I expect to carry on the legacy. (Int.:2013)

This response did not fully convince me because of the earlier statement that Mhlanga had made when he had noted that the centre only operates when he is around and is closed when he travels. How then would he pass on the job to people who at present he does not trust to do the job in his absence? Where will these people gain the experience from when Mhlanga is doing all the teaching by himself as he told me?



Figure 5.2 Mhlanga with one of his classes. Supplied by Amakhosi Culture Centre

5.1.2Amakhosi's Integration Policy

Mhlanga has introduced a 50/50 gender policy in terms of enrolment in order to give equal opportunities to both male and female performers. For every group performance to be approved by Mhlanga, "it has to have an equal number of male and female students or better still have more females" (Int.:2013). Below is a picture of one of the groups that was performing at one function being held at the centre during one of my visits (see Figure 5.3).



Figure 5.3performing group of Amakhosi students on December 14, 2012

5.1.3 Women in the Arts and Amakhosikazi

Even with the 50/50 gender policy in place, men continued to dominate in performances. As Mhlanga notes, the problem was made worse when they decided to introduce western instruments to complement their performances during their tours. The guys would push the girls to the vocals as was the trend in most bands at the time (Mhlanga Int.:2013). The way the male students pushed female students towards singing confirms the patriarchal control that men often want to show over women. They were assigning women to what they as men felt was the proper place for women. Singing as is noted by Lucy Green, "affirms patriarchal definitions of femininity as to do with the absence of technology in singing. Within patriarchy, man is constructed as being in control of nature through the harnessing of technology, [with] woman as part of the nature that man controls" (1997:28). It appears that some men want to have total control of women, as in music. This was also noted by Christopher Ballantine where he writes about the gender dynamics that evolved in the 1950s popular music in South Africa as having:

> … continued to bolster masculine power and place women ever more in the role of weak, passive victims. This manifested itself perhaps most strikingly through a dialectic: to the extent that women's musical autonomy was increasingly circumscribed, in the same measure what was increasingly 'liberated' was their availability for use as symbols of masculine prowess: women were there to be fought over, so that the male victor could then flaunt his prize as a kind of trophy. (2012:152)

The turning point for Amakhosi as Mhlanga recalled was after a tour of Germany. He was so disappointed at how women at his centre could not play instruments, when women they had seem in Germany played the instruments so well. Mhlanga gives credit to his grandmother Gogo Thwakuzo, to whom he would always go for inspiration after every tour outside the country. He recalled how he had complained to her about how useless the girls at his centre were in terms of instrument playing. He noted how quick Gogo Thwakazo was to turn the blame being experienced at the centre to him as the owner and director of the centre. Mhlanga said that:

> My grandmother told me that I was making the girls useless for I was not giving them an opportunity to play the instruments. She reminded me that the best Ndebele drummers in our rural home were all female and so how could women not play the other musical instruments. I realised the truth in her words and when I returned to the centre things changed. (Int.:2013)

Mhlanga introduced the women to arts programmes in which women were taught how to sing, dance and play musical instruments. Besides instrument playing, singing and dancing Mhlanga noted that, "The Women In Arts Project combined sound engineering, stage designing and more technical aspects of music. It was a calculated attempt for women to walk into the male-dominated technical fields of the arts" (Int.:2013).

Male students were not allowed to interfere with the women during their rehearsal time and tutors for specific instruments were hired. This did not go down well with the male students who felt that the ladies were being favoured, while they were being sidelined. However, since it was a rule, they had to give in (Mhlanga Int.:2013). The reaction from these male students also proves the depth of patriarchal control that men place upon themselves. It is because of this control that men find it difficult to accept scenarios where women will be given preference over them. Thobeka Ndlovu was a student at Amakhosi at the time of the Amakhosikazi project and he had this to say about the all-female classes:

> When the programme started it was very difficult for us the male students, for it was going against our culture and what we are used to. It is a known fact that men are born to be leaders but to be reduced to spectators and security guards for the women during their practice sessions was the most painful experience of our lives. We were even asked to cook for the ladies as they rehearsed and it was a direct reversal of duties. We later accepted and got used to it for we had no choice because it was a directive from the owner of the centre. (Int.:2013)

Patriarchal men are never interested in gender equality agendas, "unless they have to go along with them for other reasons, such as political window-dressing or political gain" (Hearn 2001:10). There was nothing to gain for the male students at Amakhosi and that is why they did not willingly support the Amakhosikazi project.

When the women who were receiving training in different musical instruments came together to practise their already-acquired skills, Amakhosikazi, Zimbabwe's first all-female band was formed. The band as a first of its kind was highly appreciated and the project was praised for opening doors for women in the music industry. One article on Kubatana.net online had this comment that:

> Most arts organizations and musicians don't give women a chance as they feel that women are only good as dancing flowers. The women in

> the Amakhosikazi project feel that the project is one of its kind as it offers them challenges to conquer. (Kubatana.net online 2006)

The Women in Arts project has had a huge impact on the involvement of women in the music industry as it introduced women instrumentalists and proved it possible for women to head their own bands. Edith Weutonga was also a member of the Amakhosikazi band. She is one proud, successful woman musician and is among the first female bass guitarists in the country. Weutonga acknowledged how Amakhosi helped and "opened doors to a career through which [she is] earning a living" (Int.:2013). According to Mhlanga, all the ladies from Amakhosikazi are now proud owners and leaders of their own bands which show how successful the project was.

On a sad note, the Amakhosikazi band was short-lived because "the band lost its focus, interpersonal tension started and the girls began to fight among themselves" (Mhlanga Int.:2013). Mhlanga blames the boyfriends of the Amakhosikazi band members for the break-up of the band. He said that:

> When I started the Women in Arts project, my aim was to make it an on-going project and a training ground for female musicians but it ended with the very first group of the project. I was of the idea that those ladies in Amakhosikazi who had been taught by the hired tutors would teach others and would leave behind the instruments and the band name. They were supposed to graduate, form their own bands and let others learn through the same process but they became selfish, refused to teach others. Men will always be a cause for female problems because their boyfriends were a bad influence to the group. Since the instruments they were using were donated by SIDA to the project, I lost control of the band as the ladies were also told by their boyfriends that I was trying to control instruments which were personally donated to the band. With no control they fought among themselves and the band stopped as they moved out. (Int.:2013)

Although Amakhosikazi was short-lived, it brought into the industry some of the most talented performing artists of the time[25] and as Mhlanga puts it "its failure became a learning curve for the cultural centre". Amakhosi is in the process of buying certain musical instruments which will belong to the centre and they will then revive the project (Int.: 2013). In the meantime the Amakhosi Cultural Centre continues to promote the introduction of women into the music

[25]Some members from the Amakhosikazi band are still performing and doing well as individual bands. Weutonga , who was the bass guitarist and Thembi ngwabi with her band called Abakagogo just to name a few.

industry through their 50/50 enrolment gender policy and the promotion of those who are already in the industry.

5.1.4 Promotions and Shows at Amakhosi

The strict gender policy at Amakhosi does not only end with the enrolment and performance groups of students at the centre. It goes further to even the gigs and performances that the centre hosts and promotes. When they host joint shows they encourage that they have to be of mixed gender because as Mhlanga notes, "Male musicians usually want to have their own shows as men, with women only as part of their dancing teams" (Int:2013).

Since they usually want to use the centre because it is an arts attraction centre and it is spacious, they are forced to have combined shows with female headed bands. This as Mhlanga notes has worked tremendously in favour of female musicians in terms of promotion and recognition in the industry (Int.:2013). Figure 5.4 below is a clear testimony of this stance by the Amakhosi centre where Sandra Ndebele was having a joint show with a male musician, Martin Sibanda. One other point of interest that Mhlanga made was that whenever they organise joint shows at the centre they make it a point not to pair a female musician with a male musician who has already made it in the industry, as this would push the women to act as a curtain raiser for the top male band. Mhlanga said that "for joint gigs we make it a point that we give the female musician a platform to shine by sharing a stage with male musicians who would then act as their curtain raisers" (Int.:2013).



Figure 5.4 A poster advertising a collaboration between Sandra Ndebele and Martin Sibanda.

5.2 Pamberi Trust

Pamberi Trust is a registered Zimbabwean non-profit organisation, which seeks to promote the arts. The word *"Pamberi*" literally means "forward" in English which appears to mean that they are helping push forward the arts through development. It is however an acronym for Performance, Arts, Music, Books, Education, Resources and Inspiration. It was established in 1980 as Pamberi Educational Trust and was amended in 2001 to Pamberi Trust with a new focus on artistic and cultural activities (Penny Yon Int.:2013). Paul Brickhill founded the Educational Trust together with a bookshop called Grassroots Bookshop around the same time; and they then complemented each other. As the focus of the Trust changed from education to the arts so did the venue (bookshop). Grassroots Books was transformed into the Book Café which now house a performance venue, bar, restaurant and the bookshop all in the same building.

In an interview with the Financial Gazette recently, Penny Yon, the trust's arts administrator, said that Pamberi was built on "the belief that the arts are critical in shaping values that reflect society" and so their emphasis is on arts promotion (Financial Gazette online: 2010). Yon also noted that the main objective of the organisation is to "provide facilities for the promotion and development of the arts, mainly among the youth and women artists" (Int.:2013). Pamberi Trust therefore exists solely as an enabling facility, by which performing artists and producers of

literary culture, including the most marginalised, may develop and find the means to promote and perform their work, and participate in building the nation. The Trust is governed by a 7-member board of trustees; Paul Brickhill (creative director), Steve Khoza (managing director), Jackie Cahi, Virginia Phiri, Rumbidzai Katedza, Colin Gatsi and Joy Kimemiah.

The link between the two entities, the Book Café and Pamberi Trust, was summed up by Yon said the "the two feed into each other, Pamberi Trust manages the Book Café as a business and it benefits from using the venue for its workshops and development programmes" (Int.:2013). The Book Café on the other hand benefits from Pamberi Trust's partners hosting private functions. The Book Café also benefits from the kitchen and the bar which offer catering services for these functions and all performances at the venue. Brickhill also testified to the fact that the kitchen and the bar are their major sources of income where he said that:

> The greatest source of income for the Book Café as an economic venture is its bar and kitchen. Bar and kitchen sales are derived from live music shows, Pamberi Trust artists' development programmes and hosting private functions by Pamberi Trust's partners. (Cited in Mukanga-Mujachani 2012:8)

Yon boasted that they are a non-profit making organisation which is there to just promote the arts. She also noted that from inception up to December 2011 the Book Café never charged artists for using the venue to perform. In 2012, it started charging a nominal fee of 15 percent of the gate takings, which in some cases is waivered, especially if an artist failed to raise enough money through ticket sales (Int.:2013). Yon however admitted that they use the artist as crowd pullers who bring business for the kitchen and the bar (Int.:2013). The position that Yon is portraying here that they are doing artists' development programmes for free is honourable, but is viewed differently by Jenni Verschoor who says that:

> In the globalised, capitalist market that exists today companies constantly have to search for new ways of attracting their clients; for new ways of appealing to the ever-growing personal tastes of their client base. By fostering the image of 'giving back' to their communities, companies are developing an inherent value in the eye of the customer. This also gives their actions in other spheres more authority, for it comes from a base that already holds value. (2012:9)

This observation by Verschoor proves that by engaging with their community, Pamberi Trust is creating an image for themselves as an organisation that cares; a business that has a firm interest

in the cultural activities of the country in which it operates. This in a way is paying off for it attracts a huge client base in those people who appreciate the work that they are doing. The people who will then come to witness the growth that is taking place in the artists who are being developed by the Trust, will buy food and drink from the bar. The Financial gazette online also noted this and sums it up saying that:

> Apart from hosting many public discussions and providing a facility for Pamberi development programmes, the Book Café has live music, poetry and other performances six nights a week and runs a Café and bar - it has truly become a place where people from various backgrounds and cultures mix and mingle freely at any other day of the week. (Online: 28 May 2010)

The 2011 income statement of the Book Café as presented by Mukanga-Mujachani proves right Verschoor's observation. It shows that the kitchen and the bar catered for 80 percent of the Book Café's gross income for that year, with the venue hire catering for the remaining 20 percent (2012:8). Benedict Andeson (1991) also shares the same view where he notes arts development as an opportunity and a vehicle with which they can entrench themselves in the market, obtain brand exposure and make a return on investment at the same time (cited in Verschoor 2012:5).

5.2.1 Pamberi Trust Arts Development Projects

Despite the profits they are getting out of working as an arts organisation, Pamberi Trust is one organisation that has had a huge impact in the development of the arts in Zimbabwe. Pamberi Trust is nurturing and developing artistic talent in the country. Several projects are run by the Trust and it "handles more than 500 creative events every year" (Pamberi Trust online).The projects operate under the following names:

- **The Book Café Academy of Performing Arts (BOCAPA)**

  It holds a weekly showcase of emerging bands, musicians and live literature. The project offers training workshops by professional artists, access to equipment and rehearsal space. These musicians will showcase on a monthly open mic event named Xposure. This has proved to be a very powerful project and has yielded massive results in the industry. Wellington Mashamba, an artist who passed through this programme had nothing but praise for the project. He said:

> When I heard about the BOCAPA project, I couldn't believe that it was real because I had always wanted to sing and did not know how to go about it. It helped me so much for we could access free musical instruments to practice on and we were given all the tips that we need to know about the industry by artists who were already in the industry. I am very grateful for such an opportunity, I have now recorded an album to my name and I know of four other colleagues who also are doing very well after the BOCAPA. (Int.:2013)

- **The Arts Factory**

The arts workshop works hand in hand with the BOCAPA but it is different in that it is open to both upcoming and established artists. It helps artists with a venue to perform at with, rehearsal space, opportunities for networking and collaboration, production, technical and publicity support and minimal cost. Yon notes that "this is very popular with most artists who still do not own instruments for the venue is fully furnished with a state of the art public address system and a full instrument kit" (Int.:2013).

- **The House of Hunger Poetry Slam**

Pamberi Trust does not only focus on music but it supports all arts. The House of Hunger project is a monthly poetry event which was initiated in August 2005 catering for the youth. It is also very well received for it involves a group that is usually sidelined. It grooms and gives platform to very young artists who would not manage to penetrate the market on their own (see Figure 5.5).



Figure 5.5 A young poet presenting on the House of Hunger Poetry Slam on April 9, 2011

- **The Mind Blast Network**

  The mind blast network is a project that encourages collaboration between artists and human rights partners from civil society. It was established in 2009. The network focuses on discussions of themes such as identity, dignity and social consciousness which adds depth to human rights issues.

- **The Multimedia Unit**

  This is a department that offers publicity services to artists in all the other Pamberi Trust projects. The unit also advertises artist's performances that go beyond the Arts Factory. Advertising is in the form of flyers, posters, short message sending (SMS), internet and emails.

All of the above projects are the general projects by Pamberi Trust which cater for all artists, male and female, young and old. A lot of upcoming artists who have sought for assistance have

benefited from the Pamberi Trust projects. Gideon Chagy while writing about patronage noted this where he explained that:

> ... artists have sought patrons to support their endeavours and allow them the opportunity to create works that reflect their experiences of the world and their perceptions of what they see around them. (1990:19)

It is therefore those artists who seek for patronage who benefit from the help of the sponsor. Pamberi Trust, having associated themselves with such artists, has achieved "greater visibility in society, increased status and recognition" amongst their competitors in the industry (Verschoor 2012:3). It is therefore a situation where both parts benefit from the relationship and Verschoor sums it well where she says that, "In their quest to establish themselves more firmly in their relevant field, both patrons [sponsors] and artists are searching for ways to feed off the values already accrued by the other" (2012:4).



Figure 5.6 An arts Factory workshop chaired by Penny Yon on May 11, 2013.

Figure 5.6 above shows a workshop that was hosted by Pamberi Trust for musicians which was being chaired by Penny Yon, the arts administrator of the Trust, seated on the far left top corner with a raised hand.

Without taking away the respect I have for them, what made Pamberi Trust a case of interest to the current study are not the above projects. Of interest to me are the projects that centre on women because as Yon said, "the target group for the Trust are young artists, particularly women

..." and they also are the focus of my study (Int.:2013). Beverley Diamond made an observation on the difference between men and women in terms of appreciation and acknowledgement of assistance. In her study of the gendered patterns of institutional commitment, Diamond discovered that men always praised themselves even when they would have been taught by someone else while "women attributed their skills to teachers or organisations that nurtured them" (2000:114). Beside the fact that women are generally marginalised, they are also appreciative of whatever help they would have get from institutions and this makes them a group of interest to most organisations, as they will be guaranteed recognition. The organisation will gain mileage from such recognition.

5.2.2 Female Literary Arts and Music Enterprise (FLAME)

Pamberi Trust organises and hosts a very strong gender programme, FLAME, which focuses on women and their upliftment in the arts. The project was launched in October 2006 as an arts development project. As noted by Batsirai Chigama, the Gender Programmes Coordinator, "the project is tailored to support women artists practically by offering publicity and exposure, performance opportunities, networking and skills workshops" (Int.:2013). This was also a way of catering for the gender imbalances which exist in the music industry at the moment (ibid.:2013). In January 2007 the FLAME project launched Sistaz Open Mic at the Book Café. Sistaz Open Mic is a platform for young and emerging women artists, featuring in music, poetry, theatre and dance "acts" in the Open Mic style. It is a monthly afternoon event, which was created to encourage young women to participate in the arts, in the safety of daytime. Sistaz Open Mic is held every second Saturday of the month at the Book Café as a "way of showcasing raw women talent" (Yon Int.:2013).

When I first attended the anniversary celebrations for Sistaz Open Mic, I was representing my university in 2011. In 2013 I attended the sixth anniversary celebrations as I was following one of my cases Weutonga, who was a guest of the day's celebrations. I was impressed by how big the event had grown in just two years from the time I had attended in 2011 to 2013. The Book Café was filled to capacity and everybody in that venue was in high spirits. Chigama acknowledged that the growth of the Sistaz Open Mic was "a direct result of young artists taking ownership of the project and mentoring from the professional women musicians" like Weutonga

(Int.:2013). These professional women musicians were also performing at the anniversary supporting the young artists in the FLAME project (see Figure 5.7).



Figure 5.7 Weutonga performing with Tariro and another young artist from the FLAME project on an anniversary of Sistaz Open Mic, January 23, 2013

There are a number of popular women musicians who passed through the Sistaz Open Mic project namely Diana Samkange, Violinist Alicia Ashburner, Hope Masike, Tina Watyoka, Eyahra Mathazia, Tariro 'Negitare' Ruzvidzo, Pierra Kel Rodgers, Rudo Chasi, Maria Vera Chisvo and Uzanele Manhenga, just to name a few. These women are already 'rocking the airwaves' and topping the charts in the Zimbabwean music industry. I became interested and managed to interview a young and upcoming guitarist and singer, Rudo Chasi. Chasi had performed so well and had become the highlight of one of the Open Mic shows that I attended. The *Independent* also commended on Chasi's performance and said "[t]alented guitarist Rudo Chasi was one of the best acts of the day as she sent the audience into delirium when she performed..." (Online: 2013). In my discussion with her I gathered that Chasi had studied law at the Nelson Mandela University in South Africa but had chosen instead to follow her passion in the arts (Chasi Int.:2013). She said that she loved being a musician because of the way that music can send strong messages in a peaceful way (ibid.:2013). Chasi noted how Sistaz Open Mic had influenced her to change her career path. She became convinced that music was her future, the first day that she attended and performed at the Sistaz Open mic because of the appreciation and

encouragements he received from the audience and fellow performers (Int.:2013). Chasi said this about her first performance:

> The platform was so open and there was no intimidation whatsoever, people in the crowd applauded and encouraged me that I relaxed and performed to the best of my ability. From then I continued to attend the event and got assistance from established female musician who attend the show and here I am, extremely proud of what I have achieved so far. (Int.:2013)

Of all the female artists who passed through the Open Mic, Tariro Ruzvidzo was the greatest revelation of them all (see Figure 5.8). Ruzvidzo attended Sistaz Open Mic on its first birthday. There she was noticed and was invited to join Weutonga's band and she grew from there. In her appreciative statement on the FLAME Website, Ruzvidzo had this to say:

> Sistaz Open Mic has had a strong impact on my music journey, and I value it as a performance platform. People don't realize that to improve as an artist, you just need to be able to perform in public, experiment with new music, meet and interact with other artists, professionals that you can learn from. You don't get that opportunity every day. (Online:2014)

Ruzvidzo has been doing well in the industry after having released her first album "*Tariro ne Gitare"* in 2012. The year 2013 was even more significant for her, she had her first tour of Germany in March-April, and shared the stage with Oliver Mtukudzi, Zahara and Simbiwe Dana. All this Ruzvidzo credits to the Sistaz Open Mic as that is where it all started (Int.:2013).

Sistaz Open Mic is an all women event, "run by women, from stage management, photograph to filming and administration" (Chigama Int.:2013). The fact that women are doing everything from performance to management proves right Impey's observation that there are quite a sizeable number of women in the technical side of the music industry (2001). This also in a way uplifts the status of women in the industry.



Figure 5.8 Tariro Ruzvidzo with her Acoustic guitar in January 2014. Supplied by Pamberi Trust.

5.2.3 Workshop for Women Artists by Women Artists

Apart from The Open Mic which is a performance event, FLAME also runs a series of workshops for established and emerging women artists, collectively entitled 'Workshop for Women Artists by Women Artists'. It is in these workshops that experienced professional women artists tackle key issues in the industry with emerging artists. Chigama noted that the topics usually include Role in the band, Professionalism/Discipline, Stagecraft, Understanding the PA system, copyright issues and publicity (Int.: 2013). They also have discussions on HIV/AIDS, focusing on the social responsibility of the songwriter or performer (ibid.:2013).

Popular Zimbabwean female singer Duduzile Manhenga, who is also one of the established musicians who facilitates some of these workshops, explained the importance of these workshops saying that:

> The young women artists that attend the workshops are lucky to receive such workshops, with guidance and advice from other women artists also a luxury that has never been enjoyed by female artists of Zimbabwe in the past. The impact of this guidance and training is already being seen, with several young women artists now emerging as empowered and professional performers who have graduated from wanna-bes to valid performers on the public stage, and in some cases progressed to forming and leading bands of their own. (cited in Freedom to create online: 2013)

It is in workshops and projects like the Sistaz Open Mic that women interact and get to know each other in the industry. As people interact, relationships are formed and knowledge is then imparted to others. Verschoor noted how important it is for artists to "appreciate that what they do is in fact work, despite the creative angle, and as such needs to be acted upon accordingly" (2012:25). Pamberi Trust through FLAME is helping women artists realise this by organising workshops in which artists are taught the expectations of the industry and how they have to react to situations as they present themselves.

The FLAME project is expanding to other cities as well. There have been workshops carried out in Bulawayo, Chipinge, Gweru, Mutare and Murehwa (see Figure 5.9). Outreaches are also taking place. The first one took place in Bulawayo during the Intwasa Arts Festival which is held annually. FLAME has also expanded to a regional outreach. FLAME undertook its first regional tour in the year 2010. The tour included four Africa women artists; Mingas (Mozambique), Mpumi Twala and Ndithini Mbali (South Africa) and Duduzile Manhenga (Zimbabwe). The four performed in Swaziland, Johannesburg, Maputo and Harare, in what *Pamberi online* called "a riveting performance and powerful stance by women artists of Africa..." (Pamberi: Online).

Workshops like these are the ones that unite people as they feel that they are fighting for a common cause. Women artists with the help of Pamberi Trust, have established the first ever Association for Women in the Performing arts in Zimbabwe (AWIPAZ). The association as Chigama notes "got registered with the National Arts council of Zimbabwe in March 2010" (Int.:2013). When associations like these are formed they reflect "how individuals within a community feel connected to one another and how a sense of identity and belonging is formed despite each person's distinct separation from one another" (Verschoor 2012:3).



Figure 5.9 Weutonga facilitating a workshop for women musicians in Bulawayo on September 19, 2012

Pamberi Trust is one organisation that is pioneering women empowerment in the arts. By promoting the arts in all their diversity, from singers, dancers, poets and those in the technical side of the arts, Pamberi Trust is empowering the women in all disciplines. This stance by Pamberi Trust challenges the:

> ...image of the paid female singer who puts her body and voice on display [which] has inevitably been associated in practically all known societies with that of the sexual temptress or prostitute. (Green 1997:29)

Pamberi Trust has managed to sponsor and organise most of these function because of the help they get from their funding partners namely; Africalia, Belgium, HIVOS, WK Kellogg Foundation, Freedom to Create, International Performers Aid Trust, Stichting Doen and Danish Centre for Culture and Development (DCCD). Their various projects, especially those that focus on women, have received several donations from the Culture Fund, a funding wing of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (Yon Int.:2013).

5.3 Conclusion

Judith Balfe maintains that "patronage always involves issues of visibility and control" and that patrons always support the arts as a way of encouraging the art that they want (1993:2,3).

Whatever benefits the two organisations above may be gaining out of the sponsorship and development of the arts, Amakhosi and Pamberi Trust have played an undisputedly important role in the empowerment of women in the arts in Zimbabwe. Women are truly being empowered to penetrate and conquer the music industry as a whole. Grace Chirumanzu concludes this by saying that "Music and dance not only brings enjoyment and education to both women and men, but also inspires women to believe in themselves and challenge the societal norms that oppress them" (Online: 2013).

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.0 General Conclusions

In pre-independence Zimbabwe, as noted by most scholars, black women "suffered the triple oppression of gender, class and race" (Chitando 2002: 36). Black women were considered to have no voice of their own since they were considered an extension of men's possessions. The situation was even worse in the popular music industry, which was considered as an unsafe environment for women. Women's participation was considered an act of pushing aside the boundaries of cultural taboo created by men for women's protection against their perceived destructive tendencies (Chitando 2012:2). This does not however mean that women had no power at all. They did not have power in the public spheres like the popular music industry but had significant power in the domestic sphere in which they were restricted to.

I believe that this restriction discouraged women and therefore may account for the minimal representation of women in the popular music industry in the pre-independence era. The situation has however changed in post-independence Zimbabwe. The number of female musicians has significantly increased and their recognition is encouraging. My background as a musician and music educator as well as the above observation, then prompted me to investigate the factors that are contributing to this notable increase in female participation. The reason for carrying out such a research project was to highlight the successes and strategies that are being employed by these women in popular music. This would then persuade other women to join in and encourage those who are already in the industry to persevere after having been presented with some success stories of popular women musicians.

In this study I acknowledged the valuable contribution of previous scholarship in the field of Zimbabwean popular music but also lamented the lack of specific writings on female participation and contribution. I revealed how most respected male scholars chose to be silent about women's participation yet some female scholars and my study brought to light the fact that there is a sizeable number of women, who are also doing well in the industry (Impey 1992). The theoretical frameworks that I used have helped in the grounding and focusing of my

investigation. The theories explored helped in the analysis of the various aspects of the chosen case studies' lives and careers that are making them popular. I engaged the theories starting from a broader universal world view of women's fight through Postmodern Feminism. I narrowed this down to Postcolonial Feminism which acknowledges colonialism as a second blow after patriarchy on the discrimination against women in society. The study further streamlined to Africana Womanism which caters for all aspects of an African woman's life and how her culture plays a significant role as she chooses and moulds her career. It has been proved beyond doubt that Weutonga and Ndebele are success stories in the Zimbabwean popular music industry. However the economic problems that Zimbabwe as a postcolony experienced had a huge impact on the two women's careers especially Weutonga for it led to the breakup of her first all-female band. It is cases like these that influenced the Postcolonial Feminists to consider the collective effects of social, political and economic forces in shaping identity. Postcolonial feminists advocate for the consideration of the effects of colonialism to the third-world women in their struggle for recognition which places them at a disadvantage compared to women in states which were never colonised. The analysis of the two women's careers therefore became very effective through the Postcolonial Feminists lens which also feeds into the Africana Womanist theory.

The lives and careers of two women musicians, Edith Weutonga and Sandra Ndebele have successfully answered my main research question which focused on the factors that are encouraging female participation in the popular music industry. It has been revealed that post-independence Zimbabwe has experienced a lot of political, social and economic changes that have contributed to the increase in the number of female participants in the music industry. The significance of independence is noted by John Kaemmer where he says that "[i]ndependence has changed the situation in many southern African countries. A major development has been in the amount of readily available modern education…" (2008:403). The Education for All policy by the post-independence government opened doors for girl children to attain formal education. It is at school that Ndebele was first exposed to music performance. Chapter Five of this dissertation demonstrates how this policy also encouraged some music training organizations to work towards the incorporation of female students. Amakhosi Culture Centre has established a 50/50 gender enrolment policy while Pamberi Trust initiated the FLAME project that specifically focuses on women in the arts. Weutonga's exposure to formal and music education significantly contributed to her being a strong contender in the industry. What women need to do now is to

make use of all opportunities at their disposal so as to reclaim their position in the music industry by willingly enrolling in music training schools. Women need to learn the skills necessary for survival in the industry and gain patronage from these organizations and individuals with expertise in the music business, so as to succeed in the industry, just as the two women featured in this study.

Through interviews and observations I discovered that what makes an artist popular is exposure through performance. People only get to know and in the end appreciate an artist they would have seen and even better, interacted with. World tours, collaborations and performances at state functions such as national galas which are usually screened for free on national television makes an artist known, for these are well-advertised events that draw the whole country's attention. Weutonga and Ndebele have realized this and are doing all they can to make themselves known by society. In Ndebele's own words:

> I make myself known by going to where the people are. I even perform for free for charity organizations, galas and I even move around in schools performing for school children at school functions. I don't discriminate the fans I also perform in churches and in clubs. (Int.:2013)

This proved that an artist who is prepared to perform for people of all calibres gains more mileage than those who focus on one particular social group.

In this study I also discovered and concluded that offering help where it is needed is one major step that artists must consider in order to gain popularity and remain relevant in the popular music industry. Women's agency has raised the status of both Weutonga and Ndebele within the industry. They have both groomed and helped upcoming musicians initiate their own careers. In a way being linked to this talent identification and grooming process made Weutonga and Ndebele even more popular. Weutonga is an active senior member of the FLAME project of Pamberi Trust. She has helped and even facilitated some workshops around the country as she is multilingual. Her contribution to the project is highly appreciated by the artists she has groomed, like Tariro Ruzvidzo and from the Trust itself (Chigama Int.:2013). Ndebele founded Intombi Zomqangala, an all-female group in 2008 in a bid to impart life and cultural skills to young women and to nurture their artistic talent.

Another conclusion derived from the research is that the two women musicians are true Africana Womanists. They are fighting their battle for recognition within their cultural and societal set standards and expectations. Family support is an important element in the careers of these women musicians. Weutonga and Ndebele are not fighting for equality but for recognition and acceptance as women musicians. They have proved to be true feminists who have accepted and have acted on the aspect of "difference" as proposed by postmodern feminists, for example Rosemary Tong (1998:7). They have confirmed that for African women the fight is not against men but the system and so the two are harmoniously engaging men in their struggle for recognition. Ndebele employs male band-members while Weutonga's all-female band is managed by her husband, a stance I believe would not be accepted by mainstream feminists who view men as the woman'. I therefore suggest that it is rather futile an attempt for women to struggle for acknowledgment from the party they are fighting. They should as Weutonga and Ndebele have realised, opt for men's inclusion in the struggle which then "becomes a strategic position to regain the space that women have lost" (Sibanda 2012:57). Weutonga and Ndebele emerged as very strong and powerful characters given the challenges that they face as women and as artists. Popular music performance is regarded as a profession associated only with women of loose morals (Chitauro et al. 1994). Weutonga and Ndebele have managed to stand firm to restore cultural dislocation by performing both roles of being a mother and performer to the satisfaction of their families and supporters. These two female musicians have managed to define and follow their music career paths successfully despite negative statements that have always been prevalent about women not being able to define themselves and their responsibilities in society (Kambanje 2010). Assertiveness therefore becomes a basic survival skill for women musicians to be successful in the industry.

One other revelation from my study is that the two women musicians in this study have proved to be true leaders in the fight for women's recognition in the Zimbabwean music industry and that the boldness they show will surely take them far. Greenleaf prophesied while writing about servant leadership that the coming years:

> …will be marked as a period when the dark skinned and the deprived and the alienated of the world effectively asserted their claims to stature, and they were not led by a privileged elite but exceptional people from their own kind. (1977:34)

Through the leadership of these exceptionally talented female musicians, I foresee the status of "alienated" women surely being elevated to a higher level in the music industry. Upcoming women musicians should therefore emulate these women achievers and follow in their footsteps so as to succeed in this unfriendly industry.

The careers of Weutonga and Ndebele have clearly answered Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's question "Can the subaltern speak?" (Spivak 1988). The word subaltern as used by Spivak designates "the 'silenced', the 'oppressed', the 'nonelite class', the 'third-world women', the 'economically dispossessed', and /or any social group marked by colonisation's essentialism" (Racine 2003: 92). By penetrating the popular music industry, the two female musicians are truly "speaking" and have confirmed that the subaltern can speak.

On a personal note this study has been a powerful eye opener. The calibre of women musicians that I worked with in this study really challenged me. Their eagerness to participate, and their willingness to open up the core of their lives even about matters that were painful and disheartening, came as a surprise to me. Even more surprising was the eagerness and strength that they displayed, in spite of very challenging musical performance environments. My relationship with the women musicians was positively impacted by my stance as an advocate for women empowerment and learner. They constantly talked about how they felt honoured and respected by being actively engaged in the research process. These women musicians taught me by their example what it means to be a woman and an advocate for social justice in spite of repressive forces. I saw resiliency embodied in each of the women as they had chosen what seemed to be a difficult path in order to make themselves known and accepted in the popular music industry. They challenged me to view my status as a Black-African-woman academic as a tool for the emancipation of marginalized persons, whether that be in my teaching, research and even in my musical performance.

Though a case study of the professional lives of two women in the Zimbabwean popular music by no means claims to be comprehensive, it nonetheless offers several insights into the challenges still facing women in popular music and most importantly the strategies the women are employing in their fight for recognition. The evidence presented in this thesis suggests that more women are able to sustain careers in the music industry. The ways that the chosen artists in this study are presenting themselves in a male dominated and contested musical terrain is not

only self-defining, therapeutic and emancipatory but it "proclaims an individual [woman] as a conscious being capable of independent thought and action" (Uwakweh, 1998:75). An observation I made is that those women who are moving into traditionally "male" domains such as instrument playing and band leading are mostly popular and are respected in their areas of expertise. This study can therefore be used as a base on which future studies with a wider scope can be built. The study opens up the popular music industry for women. They can explore their artistic talents and also influence policy makers to consider and incorporate in their policies the vital role that women are playing in popular music making.

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