

BRIDGING CULTURAL AND SOCIAL BARRIERS CREATED THROUGH DIVISIVE AND TRIBAL POLITICS THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE STAR CHORALE.

Kenya as a country comprises of more than 40 ethnic groups each with its own unique culture including dialect, music and traditional practices. The communities among the Kenyan people have a fascinating way of life or living that blends the traditions of thousands of years of African social evolution with the modern influences of the 21st century (Gilbert, 2014). The diversity in these cultures is expressed in different forms ranging from its people and language, food, music and dance, art and ethical norms. Combined with other traditions, these forms of expression and lifestyle form an identity that is uniquely Kenyan. The richness in culture that is portrayed in every part of our country is one that, to a keen eye, will create a lasting impact (Gilbert, 2014). This diversity is seen in our folk music, dances and other cultural practices of each individual community. However this diversity comes to haunt as a nation during seasons like electioneering periods where some political leaders pit the various communities against each other. The culture diversity makes it easier to brain wash, spread propaganda and to create stereotypes that divide us (Ireru, 2013). Interesting enough is that after these election periods, the country falls back to a state of calm. Media outlets, religious leaders, politicians, and even cultural leaders all preach a message of peace during and even after such times (Otieno, 2015). The Star chorale has not been left out in this effort. Since its inception the group has actively participated in community music engagement as an agent of peace thus bridging cultural and social barriers created through divisive and tribal politics through. Through live performances the discussions of this study will seek to demonstrate how cultural and social barriers can be bridged through active community music engagement.

Keywords

Music, cultural diversity, community music engagement, cultural and social barriers

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