

THE INFLUENCE OF AFRICAN ORAL ART FORMS IN RAISING CLIMATE CHANGE AWARENESS IN OLIVER MTUKUDZI'S 'PINDIRAI'

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Page | 1 **ABSTRACT.**

Background:

The need for different stakeholders, particularly in developing nations, to promote climate change awareness has been emphasized by scholars and environmental activists. Yet, musicians appear to be overlooked in these calls despite their influence in society. The article presents an analysis of "Pindirai", a song that was composed and sung by the legendary Zimbabwean musician, Oliver Mtukudzi, to show how it presents the effects of anthropogenic climate change through traditional African oral art forms.

Methods:

Afrocentricity served as a theoretical lens through which we examined 'Pindirai' because it rejected the claim that Europe is the origin of knowledge which was perpetuated by Europe's global dominance for many years. In addition, critical discourse analysis (CDA), a qualitative means of gathering data, was used to examine words' frequency, usage, and implications in the song under study. CDA enabled the study to infer meanings and motivation behind the way messages are encoded which facilitated interpretations based on the context.

Results:

It was observed that, through thought-provoking rhetorical devices such as invocation, rhetorical figures, proverbs, and symbolism among others, Mtukudzi departs from the victimhood narrative by giving agency to Africans whom the singer calls on to revert to their traditions which serve as a manual for life.

Conclusions:

Mtukudzi is successful in urging Africans, using their language, to own up for their part in causing climate change by preserving natural resources. Much as scientists have flagged human activities in Western countries as the main cause of climate change, Mtukudzi is commended for urging Africans to act responsibly.

Recommendations:

African governments need to provide resources to communicate climate-related initiatives and facilitate the participation of indigenous people in endeavors that seek to sustain livelihoods in the face of adverse effects of climate change.

Keywords: Afrocentricity, Anthropogenic climate change, Climate change, Language, Pindirai

Submitted: 2024-01-24 *Accepted:* 2024-01-27

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INTRODUCTION.

Scientists have noted rapid changes, with human activities accounting for 'most' of the 'unequivocal' warming of the average global temperature of the Earth over the second half of the 20th century' (Anderegg et al., 2010, p. 12107). The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) indicate that human activities have triggered more 'natural disasters' in the last fifty years (United Nations, 2021).

Marchand (2021), however, argues that this dates to 'around 200 years ago' (p. 1). Human activity has also been blamed for the emergence of Covid-19¹.

'These sources concur that, although developed countries are the largest emitters of carbon and developing countries produce minimal emissions, the latter bears the brunt of anthropogenic climate change². The Atlas of Mortality and Economic Losses from Weather, Climate, and Water Extremes (1970-2019), revealed that over two million people died from the 11 000 recorded disasters and more than 91% of these deaths were reported in developing countries (Douris & Kim, 2021). The World Health Organization (2023) found that climate change was one of the factors that contributed to malaria among pregnant women in Burundi when, with some education, this could be prevented. Similarly, Rwiita, Tumwesigye, and

Atwongyeire (2023) note that activities such as deforestation in Uganda have increased yet find that community-based practices can equally contribute to the promotion of biodiversity conservation. This suggests that community awareness and education on climate change are beneficial to the reversal of illegal activities that are harmful to the environment and humans themselves.

Global initiatives have been taken to mitigate the negative effects of climate change. Adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), better known as the Earth

¹Chakrabarty, D. (2021) and Morens & Anthony note that 'human beings are the ultimate causes of pandemics'; it is 'deforestation, agricultural intensification, urbanization, and ecosystem disruption' that 'bring people into contact with wildlife and their potentially zoonotic pathogens' (2020, p.4).

²Climate changes are instigated by human activities resulting in adverse conditions such as the occurrence, frequency, and severity of droughts, storms, floods, extreme temperature events, cyclones, and earthquakes.

Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992 was a momentous occasion (Sultana. 2023). Article 1 of the UNFCCC defines climate change as a change of climate that is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and that is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable periods (United Nations, 1992, p.1). The same conference noted disproportionate contributions to carbon emissions between developed and developing countries, whereby the former contributes more than the latter, who however experience the worst effects of climate change.

include adaptation of renewable energy sources, saving energy, and increasing efficiency. Adaptation denotes adjusting the effects of climate change through present or anticipated effects to minimize harm to people while capitalizing on opportunities.

The UNFCCC paved the way for numerous global landmark initiatives. The Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997, expanded the 1992 UNFCCC by resolving that developed countries must reduce carbon emissions and assist developing countries' efforts (Van Oosterzee, 2021). The Paris Agreement, which was adopted after the French capital hosted the 21st session of the Congress of the Parties (COP 21) in December 2015, covers climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance. Climate change mitigation refers to measures like reducing the burning of fossil fuels such as oil, coal, and natural gas. Other actions

Climate resilience refers to standing up or thriving despite negative weather conditions by adapting to the effects of climate change by adopting a safe lifestyle (The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, 2019). Although climate change was initially treated as a scientific issue, it has become multi-disciplinary, and one of its concepts, climate resilience, promotes turning negative environmental conditions into opportunities.

Various scholars have emphasized the need for different stakeholders to put all hands-on deck, but musicians seem to be underestimated, yet they are influential members of society. Despite achieving international stardom, 'Tuku', as Oliver Mtukudzi was affectionately known, remained grounded in his culture. His fidelity to Katekwe (sound) and Korekore, a language spoken mainly in his rural home, Madziva, was palpable as the musician weaved different themes to reflect the rich tapestry of Zimbabwe's cultures. In 'Pindirai', a track off his 2015 album, *Nhava*, Mtukudzi deals with the topical issue of climate change

Objectives.

Objectives of this study include identifying the characteristics of climate change that Mtukudzi mentions, examining the extent to which his use of Shona/African oral art forms assists him in clearly communicating his message and establishing the appropriateness of solutions offered (if any) by the song 'Pindirai'.

by the likes of John Henrik Clarke, Langston Hughes, Malcolm X, and Marcus Garvey (Karenga, 2018), advanced Afrocentricity alongside Temple University alumni such as Abu Abarry, Ella Forbes, Nilgun Okur, Ama Mazama, Terry Kersh, Tsehloane Keto, Wade Nobles, Maulana Karenga, Nah Dove, and Kariamou Welsh-Asante (Asante, 2021).

Theoretical framework: Afrocentricity.

Afrocentricity is a theory that was propagated by Africans in the diaspora that gives preference to African values. Although it was popularized by Molefi Kete Asante in the late 1970s³, the term 'Afrocentric' was used by William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (WEB Du Bois) in the early 1960s (Asante, 2020, p.148; Bay, 2000, p.502). In 1962, Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's founding president 'called for an 'Afro-centric education' for Ghanaian students' (Asante, 2020, p.148). Asante, who was also influenced

Afrocentricity rejects the claims that Europe is the origin of knowledge and attributes that perception to Europe's dominance of the world for many years. To illustrate the extent of the distortions made in African history, words like 'dismemberment' (Sesanti, 2019, p. 431), 'de-centered' (Asante, 2003, p.5), 'dislocated' (Asante, 1991, p. 172; 2002, p.97) and "decenteredness" (Asante, 2002, p.98) prominently feature in Afrocentric works. These terms reflect the physical and cultural estrangement of African people due to Western oppressive systems like slavery, colonialism, and apartheid. As Obierika observes in *Things Fall Apart*, Igbo, a Nigerian/African culture, 'held us together', but since the arrival of colonialism,

"we have fallen apart" (Achebe, 1969, p.143). Clarke likens the relationship between a people and its history to that of 'a mother to her child' (Clarke in Bourne, 1996), which means that a people's tradition provides them with

an identity and guidelines of how they should live, 'history tells them where they are, but more importantly what they must be.'

³Mazama (2001, p.387) credits Asante with bringing "fundamental referential changes in the African community" through his work which include *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* (1980), *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987) and *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* (1990).

History was revised to suit a Eurocentric agenda. Kaya and Seleti (2013, p.36) claim that African philosophy existed before the arrival of 'civilization' which was brought about by colonialism. Diop (1974) maintains that civilization is traceable to black people who lived in ancient Egypt where writing originated (Langmia, 2016). Likewise, Lewis argues that Egypt was shifted from Africa to 'the mysterious Middle East, a term that was invented by Europeans at the beginning of the twentieth century' (1998, p. 3). Thus, Africans were 'relegated to the fringes of society' (Asante, 1998, p. 39). Diop (1974) adds that Africans are "the most ancient guides on the path of civilization," (p. 50), a point supported by Sesanti (2016) who says that Africans created philosophy, writing, exact sciences, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, and so on. Obenga (1990) contends that Greek philosophers acquired their knowledge in Africa; 'Africa is the cradle of human civilization and therefore culture', Dove (1998, p.517) quips.

Afrocentricity implies cultural and social engagement; researchers must familiarize themselves with the history, language, philosophy, and myths of the subjects of their study lest they lose ethical principles and undertake research 'for the sake of research' (Mkabela, 2005, pp.179-180). African civilizations blended religion, society and philosophy, literature, art, medicine, and science (Monteiro-Ferreira 2014, Karenga, 2018) because knowledge production must be "pluridisciplinary" (Diop, 1974, p.xiii), "holistic and integrative" (Asante, 1990, p. 149). European knowledge systems, on the other hand, privilege 'scientific distance', so Europeans 'studied people without understanding them and interpreted them without knowing them' (Clarke in Ani, p. xv-xvii). Therefore, Afrocentricity is not just a rejoinder to Eurocentric claims of universality because it recognizes other worldviews as part of a wider 'pluriverse' (Kothari et al., 2019, p.4) and acknowledges that it is 'only one way to view the world' (Asante, 1998, pp. 87-89). However, Asante (1998) clarifies that the unique experiences of each area are best served by ideas that are germane to its environment. This agrees with Ngugi (1993) and Wiredu (1998), who insist that Afrocentricity collaboration with other knowledge systems should not distort Afrocentric values. Despite his pride in African knowledge systems, Ngugi (1993) suggests decentring knowledge from the West, where it is purported to be "a multiplicity of spheres in all the cultures of the world" (p. xiv).

Self-definition is a key tenet of Afrocentricity (Achebe, 1988; Hudson-Weems, 2021). Ani (1994) opines that Africa's wrongdoing was adopting Western definitions of

itself. Words such as 'situating', (Adetayo, 2021), 'locating' (Omar, 2020, p. 203), Anderegg et al, 'location' (2003, p. 3), and 'center' (Asante, 2003, p.2; Mazama, 2001; Omar, 2020, p. 203) regularly feature in Afrocentric discourse, where they are used literally and figuratively to illustrate the need for adopting African values as loci of enunciation. Karenga (1988, p.403) describes Afrocentricity as a "fundamental building bloc in the conceptual edifice" of African knowledge systems. Terms like 'relocation' (Asante, 1998, p.3) and 're-membering' Ngugi (2009) signify the need to restore African traditional values from Western appropriation and distortion. Afrocentricity entails seeing things 'from the standpoint of Africans as the key players rather than victims' (Asante, 1991, p.172). Sesanti (2016, p.4) prefers the term 're-Africanisation' to 'Africanisation' because the latter creates the false impression that Africans adopt Western concepts.

As is the case with any other theory, proponents of Afrocentricity sometimes have to respond to criticism. Verharen (1997) dismisses Lefkowitz's accusations that Diop's claim that philosophy originated in Africa is unfounded. Bernal (1996) notes that Lefkowitz erroneously mentions 1836 as the year in which hieroglyphics were first interpreted, yet Champollion, who interpreted them, died in 1831. As Carruthers (1999) had forewarned that the pursuit of truly African history and culture would be resisted by Western intellectuals and brainwashed Africans, University of California history lecturer, Clarence E. Walker argues that Afrocentricity's claim that Western civilization was derived from Egypt is a "therapeutic mythology" (Rockwell, 2001). Asante (2021) accuses Walker of mistaking Afrocentricity for claiming universality, yet it maintains its relativity. Said has also clarified that it is Eurocentrism that claims universality (1978, p.23).

METHODS.

Bearing in mind the objectives of the article, identifying aspects of climate change that Mtukudzi mentions in 'Pindirai' and examining the relevance and effectiveness of aspects of African oral art forms used to convey the message and the feasibility of solutions the song projects (if any), the study employed purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method, so this enabled us to exclude data that falls outside the purview of this study. 'Pindirai' serves as a case study of songs that raise awareness of climate change through traditional oral art forms. Keywords such as

'Afrocentrity', 'African oral art forms and climate change/mitigation/resilience', and 'Application/relevance of African indigenous knowledge systems to climate change/ mitigation/ resilience were initially typed. Various prefixing and suffixing "Oliver Mtukudzi's song 'Pindirai' to these different searches increased results. Relevant data (which were all accessed from the internet within a month) that were relevant to the study were stored for use in sections such as the introduction and theoretical framework.

We settled for Mtukudzi's song because 'Pindirai' not only bemoans the damage caused to the environment and its effects on people but acknowledges the mistakes people, including the persona, have made. The study deployed critical discourse analysis (CDA), a qualitative means of identifying words and examining their frequency, usage, and implications in a text. CDA enables the study to infer meanings and motivation behind the way messages are encoded, which facilitates interpretations based on the context.

Oliver Mtukudzi was purposively selected because the musician received enormous global acclaim, which was punctuated by numerous awards and honors. Five years after his death, Mtukudzi remains the only Zimbabwean artiste to have graced the front page of Time magazine (2003) and received KORA Best Male African Artiste as well as the Lifetime Achievement awards in 2003. The musician was involved in numerous humanitarian initiatives like being UNICEF Regional Goodwill Ambassador for Eastern and Southern Africa and receiving a cavalier of the Order of Merit by the Italian government.

In 2014, 'Tuku', as the singer was affectionately known, received an honorary doctorate from Great Zimbabwe University. Mtukudzi was part of Mahube, an intercultural ensemble made up of musicians from Southern Africa, and regularly attended jazz festivals in South Africa. The late singer is the only Zimbabwean artist to be conferred with a national hero status.

RESULTS.

After listening to 'Pindirai', taking note of the lyrics and instrumentation, results brought several observations, which were organized according to themes. These themes sought to achieve the study's objectives: identifying the aspects of climate change that Mtukudzi mentions in 'Pindirai' and examining the relevance and effectiveness of aspects of African oral art forms that he uses to communicate his message and the feasibility of the solutions he projects (if any). However, these issues are by no means mutually exclusive. They are intertwined so the different subheadings serve as a guideline of the leitmotifs of the song's lyrics and create 'breaks' that facilitate understanding for the readers. The following six themes were noted: The community as a family, taking responsibility, the hierarchical order of the Shona community, a serious concern, when a few words say a lot, and the need for education.

Theme 1: The community as a family.

The way the main speaker, who appears to represent male adults during their conversation with their female counterparts, speaks on behalf of the entire community, which is presented as a family, 'mhuri yedu' (our family) and vana vedu (our children) shows that these people are a close-knit community. The speaker interchangeably refers to elders as 'yakuru' and 'madzimambo' chiefs (also see Theme 4). Whether these elders are alive or dead (ancestors), they protect and preside over the entire community. Supporting vocalists 'speak' almost the same number of times as the lead singer, implying a harmonious relationship in the community; From the beginning, in the opening stanza, they respond with a single word 'pindirai' which affirms the lead singer's feelings. This trend punctuates the entire song and strengthens the idea that there is cohesion between the speakers. To further show that they are not 'just' backing vocalists, female singers dominate two consecutive stanzas (Stanza 4 and Stanza 5) that signal a break from the other stanzas because they reveal the problems.

The community no longer has, among other things, poles 'hatichina mapango', swimming areas, 'duhwino hatichina', among other natural resources. The last of these stanzas reinforces the idea that society is now a far cry from its ecological self-using the proverb, "aiva madziva ava mazambuko". Shona/ African people use proverbs to describe, in truncated form, their aspirations and experiences. When the main speaker steps in again, it is not because the speaker is overwriting what has been said by previous speakers, but, as the patriarch, supports their cause. Just as Mtukudzi advises in 'Handiro Dambudziko', a track that, like 'Pindirai', features in the album 'Nhava', Mtukudzi urges the listener to identify the cause of the problem instead of concentrating on symptoms, the speaker diagnoses the problems; reckless cutting of trees and sweeping impurities into water bodies are some of the reasons why the community is in this environmental crisis 'vanotema miti vasina ruzivo' (they ignorantly cut trees), and 'kutsvairira munzizi segomba remarara' (sweeping waste into rivers as if it is a garbage pit).

Theme 2: Taking responsibility.

As mentioned earlier, this subheading is not distinct but a corollary of the previous one. The main speaker not only reveals the causes of society's problems in Stanza 6 but also explains how dire the situation described in Stanzas 4 and 5 is. Although the persona speaks on behalf of the communal family, 'mhuri yedu', and identifies activities that have plunged the community into the environmental abyss in which it finds itself, the speaker does not name and shame the culprits; 'vana vedu' (our children). Everyone is responsible, as in Paragraph 11, the representative goes on to admit that they (adults) have failed to protect natural resources which are represented by 'masango' and 'nzizi' when the speaker says, 'Tatadza kuchengeta masango, kutadza kuchengeta nzizi'.

Ironically, the staccato sound in the main speaker's teary voice as the speaker 'reports' the youth to their ancestors, 'vanotema vasina ruzivo, vagovhiya chidembo vamire kumhepo' presents the elders of the community as children who are seeking help from their parents.

By presenting acceptance of responsibility, 'Pindirai' breaks the tendency of human beings to shift blame or strategically essentialize themselves as victims, explained in the methodology, characterized by appeals for divine intervention and donations. Although 'Pindirai' is an invocation of spiritual beings, it is addressed to ancestors, which means they are the physical authority that coordinates messages between humans and God.

Theme 3: The hierarchal order of the Shona community.

The African community is hierarchical. Children are in the basement, and as the ranking rises, women trail men who interact with ancestors who, in turn, intercede with God as highlighted in Theme 2. However, as in a bureaucratic system, issues only escalate if one level fails to adequately deal with them. It is also worth mentioning that, though the young generation seems to be presented as a uniform group, there are subgroups from that group that are mainly based on age and entail responsibilities. Community elders pass issues that they have failed to resolve to the ancestors who they provide with a briefing. The Shona people have a proverb, 'kukwira gomo hupoterera/ husendemara' which captures the importance they place in doing things, not least addressing the elderly. Therefore, the problem is only specified in Stanza 4, the continued decrease in swimming areas, and wooden poles, among other things. The young generation is contravening age-old practices through the reckless cutting of trees, probably in terms of frequency and manner, so the elders of the community are panicking.

The word "mhupo" denotes wind, though it also has spiritual connotations because ancestors are believed to reside in the east (mhupo). Therefore, it is not uncommon to hear references to 'those who are in the wind', as Connie, a friend of the eponym in the film *Neria*, does. Therefore, the youth skinning of a skunk facing that the main speaker mentions in Stanza 7 line 2, 'vagovhiya chidembo vamire kumhepo' is as disrespectful as it is dangerous because it spells doom. A skunk is a small mammal that belongs to the stoat species and produces a pungent liquid directed at its attacker. Therefore, skinning a skunk also means that an issue that has grave repercussions on the community should be discussed privately by appropriate people.

Similarly, 'kusvipira mutsime' (spitting in the well) is derived from the idiom 'kutundira mutsime' that Mtukudzi seems to have skilfully altered because its imagery is somewhat obscene as it translates to 'urinating in the well'. Either way one interprets it, a well is a communal source of water that sustains life, so the slightest pollution has ripple effects since the whole community will suffer. One can draw parallels with Chirikure's poem 'Hakurawi' in which the speaker admonishes a deviant whose recent

deplorable acts include burning the granary, scolding his grandmother and her siblings, and selling the family's inheritance. The main speaker maintains that this time the rogue has gone too far, defecating in the well so the offender needs to be dealt with accordingly. In 'Pindirai', as in 'Hakurawi', the speakers are annoyed by the undesirable behaviors creeping into their communities, though unlike the punitive action suggested in the latter, the former offers measures which are more corrective.

Theme 4: A grave concern.

The effect of sound compliments the repetition of similar words in creating tone. After appearing in Stanza 5, 'raiva dziva, rava zambuko, aiva madziva ava mazambuko' occupy the last 7 stanzas, from the first line of stanza 16 to the last line of the last stanza of the song (22). In addition to repetitively calling the elders 'vakuruwe' to draw their attention to urgent challenges bedeviling the community, the main speaker hoarsely moans 'raiva dziva rava zambuko' in the penultimate stanza. The poignant sound of the 'guitar' (which is signified here by the 🎸 emoji) interspersed between the female voices that say 'hatichina mimvuri hatichina mapango-o 🎸 hove hatichina-a 🎸 raiva dziva rava zambuko 🎸 raiva dziva 🎸 rava zambuko 🎸 aiva amadziva 🎸 ava mazambuko' is palpable. On the contrary, silence, represented by an ellipsis in 'raiva dziva... rava zambuko... aiva madziva ava mazambuko-o', contributes to the simplicity of the tone. Furthermore, since Mtukudzi and the backing vocalists sing the chorus 'vatora marara kuwunganidza muberere' twice, this creates a sound that can be mistaken for a musical instrument. Perhaps fittingly, the last 'word' is provided in the form of the sound of the conga (drum).

Different forms of repetition are noticeable in the lyrics of 'Pindirai'. For example, the title appears 31 times, four of them in the first six lines, 'vakuruwe pindirai imi (pindirai)', is mentioned eight times, 'vanotema miti...kusvipira mutsime, pindirai' are two identical stanzas which are in Stanza 6 and Stanza 7. This serves two purposes, to simulate the frequency that culprits commit the undesirable acts and to convey the message to the elders.

Although 'Mhuri yenyu' is mentioned once, in line 1 of stanza 2, it has an element of repetition, the idea that the community is at its wit's end. Synonyms, 'ruzivo' and 'njere' in 'mhuri yenyu yapererwa neruzivo, vana vedu... nenjere, pindirai', which is said twice, denote knowledge. Similarly, nouns like vakuru (lines 1 and 3) and "madzimambo" (line 5) are used interchangeably as stated in Theme 1, to avoid monotony and to sound more persuasive to the ancestors.

Moods are features of verbs that demonstrate relationships to reality or truth. Mtukudzi utilizes several moods to give the listener a sense of how events are proceeding. Imperative moods such as 'pindurai', which is attached to 'wo' to become 'pindurawo' indicate that there is something that needs urgent intervention from the elders. The cry of the main speaker for help suggests that the ancestors have deserted the community or may have overlooked the gravity of the crisis. The infinitive prefix

'ku' in verbs such as 'kutsvairira', as in 'kutsvairira munzizi', 'kuunganidza muberere', 'kutadza kuchengeta masango / nzizi', 'kusvipira mutsime' paints a hopeless atmosphere. The indicative 'no' in the current continuous form 'vanotema' in 'vanotema miti' vividly conjures images of wanton tree cutting. This is crystalized by another indicative form 'vagovhiya' whose 'go' communicates how they hop from one abominable act to another, this time desecrating the ancestors/ God because as explained earlier, the smell of a skunk represents the worst form of pollution. Overall, the gravity of the song is underlined by the combination of various sounds which lend a dirge-like feel.

Theme 5: When a few words say a lot.

Consistent with Shona's oral traditions, symbolism is used in 'Pindirai' to bring ambiguous meanings. For example, metonymy in the reference to reckless cutting of trees represents the destruction of all forms of natural resources, as does skinning a skunk and shoving litter to the wall. Singular nouns include 'hove' and 'duhwino'. Fish represent all forms of aquatic animals that serve as a pleasure and provide balance to the ecosystem; the swimming place symbolizes water bodies that include streams and rivers, and 'vana vedu' (our children) represents the young generation, not necessarily the biological children of the speakers, because, as the saying goes, 'it takes a community to raise a child'. Mtukudzi makes a pun on 'duhwino', which also refers to the act of swimming.

Proverbs are an oral aspect that indirectly illuminates African experiences. The main speaker's lamentation, 'raiva dziva rava zambuko', appears in Stanza 4 and 5 where it is mentioned twice in each case and in the accompanying third line, 'raiva' is replaced by 'aiva' in aiva madziva ava mazambuko, the form in which the proverb appears in the oral literature of Shona. This suggests that the current crisis began with a single seemingly insignificant act before degenerating into the current state.

In addition, the use of exaggeration creates a sense of fear, which jolts one to act accordingly. For example, 'mhupo yekufema yangova hutsi' (the air is now filled with smoke) is an overstatement because if that were the case, people would immediately die. Similarly, 'kusvipira mutsime' (spitting in the well) is not something that can be pinned on a group of people because its occurrence is insignificant, but the message is that one incident is one too many.

Theme 6: The need for education.

Adults have failed to educate members of younger generations about the importance of preserving natural resources so they cannot be blamed for acting out of ignorance, 'vasina ruzivo'. This ignorance extends to other things, which include skinning the skunk without observing the direction of the wind. The Shona people say, 'kuziva mbuya huudzwa' (to know your mother or

grandmother, you must be told) nothing can be done properly without getting the proper knowledge from someone. Even community elders seek guidance on what to do from their elders, presumably ancestors so that they fix problems bedeviling society and pass the knowledge to the young generations who will assume the mantle of being elders someday.

Oliver Mtukudzi Pindirai Song Lyrics.

<i>Vakuruwe</i>		<i>pindirai</i>
<i>imi</i>		elders,
get involved		
(<i>Pindirai</i>)		
	get involved	
<i>Vakuruwe pindirai imi</i>		
(<i>Pindirai</i>)		
<i>Madzimambo</i>		<i>we</i>
<i>Pindirai</i>		esteemed
kings, get involved		
(<i>Pindirai</i>)		
<i>Mhuri</i>	<i>yenyu</i>	<i>yapererwa</i>
<i>neruzivo</i>		your family is at its
wits' end		
<i>Vana vedu,</i>	<i>kupererwa</i>	<i>nenjere</i>
(<i>pindirai</i>)		our children are at a
loss		
<i>Mhuri yenyu yapererwa neruzivo</i>		
<i>Vana vedu, kupererwa nenjere (pindirai)</i>		
(<i>Pindirai</i>)		
<i>Vakuruwe, pindirai imi (pindirai)</i>		
<i>Vakuruwe, pindirai</i>		
(<i>Pindirai</i>)		
<i>Hatichina mibvuri, hatichina mapango</i>		<i>we</i>
no longer have shade, poles		
<i>Duhwino hatichina, hove hatichina</i>		<i>we no</i>
longer have swimming pools, fish		
<i>Raiva dziva rava zambuko</i>		<i>what</i>
was once a big dam is now a road		
<i>Raiva dziva rava zambuko</i>		
<i>Aiva madziva ava mazambuko (pindirai)</i>		<i>big dams</i>
have become roads (get involved)		
<i>Raiva dziva rava zambuko</i>		
<i>Raiva dziva rava zambuko</i>		
<i>Aiva madziva ava mazambuko (pindirai)</i>		
<i>Vanotema miti vasina ruzivo</i>		<i>they</i>
chop trees without the knowledge		
<i>Vagovhiya chidembo vamire kumhepo</i>		
and slaughter a skunk facing the wind		
<i>Kusvipira mutsime (pindirai)</i>		<i>spitting</i>
into the well (get involved)		
<i>Vanotema miti vasina ruzivo</i>		
<i>Vagovhiya chidembo vamire kumhepo</i>		
<i>Kusvipira mutsime (pindirai)</i>		
<i>Kutsvairira munzizi segomba ramarara</i>		<i>sweeping dirt</i>
into rivers as if they are a rubbish pit		
<i>Votora marara kuunganidza muberere (berere, berere)</i>		<i>then they take litter and shove</i>
it		

onto the verandah
(verandah, verandah)
(Pindirai)
Kutsvairira munzizi segomba ramarara
Vatora marara kuunganidza muberere (berere, berere)
(Pindirai)
Vakuruwe, pindirai
(Pindirai)
Vakuruwe, pindirai imi
(Pindirai)
Tatadza kuchengeta masango we
have failed to protect the forests
Kutadza kuchengeta
nzizi failed to look
after the rivers
Mhepo yekufema yangova
hutsi breathing air has been reduced
to smoke
Kusvipira mutsime (pindirai)
Tatadza kuchengeta masango
Kutadza kuchengeta nzizi
Mhepo yekufema yangova hutsi
Kusvipira mutsime (pindirai)
Vakuruwe, pindirai
(Pindirai)
Vakuruwe, pindirai
(Pindirai)
Kutsvairira munzizi segomba ramarara
Vatora marara kuunganidza muberere (berere, berere)
(Pindirai)
Kutsvairira munzizi segomba ramarara
Vatora marara kuunganidza muberere (berere, berere)
(Pindirai)
Hatichina mibvuri, hatichina mapango
Duhwino hatichina, hove hatichina
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Aiva madziva ava mazambuko (pindirai)
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Aiva madziva ava mazambuko (pindirai)
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Aiva madziva ava mazambuko (pindirai)
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Aiva madziva ava mazambuko (pindirai)
Raiva dziva (raiva dziva) rava zambuko
Raiva dziva rava zambuko
Aiva madziva ava mazambuko (pindirai)

Synopsis of song.

To set the tone, in the opening line, the speaker calls on the elders to intervene though at this point it is not clear what is it that needs their urgent attention. The speaker then states that the community is at a loss as to how to avert the crisis; they no longer have shade, poles, pools,

clean air, and animals. This is due to the random cutting of trees and activities which cause air and water pollution. On behalf of older members of the community, the speaker takes responsibility for failing to bring the young generation traditions that value living in harmony with nature.

DISCUSSION.

In 'Pindirai', Oliver Mtukudzi identifies climate change as a serious cause for concern. Through the consistent use of a collective voice, he outlines how deviation from the African way of living harmoniously with nature through human activities such as the wanton cutting of trees, and water, and air pollution is causing global warming. Shona words which can be understood by people around Zimbabwe, oral art forms like repetition, rhetorical figures, and figurative expressions that provoke introspection through avoidance of apportionment of blame to individuals, call and response are means which Mtukudzi utilizes to appeal to every member of society. Though 'Pindirai' is sung in Shona, issues raised in the Shona apply to any country. Instrumentation and variation in voice intonation create a poignant atmosphere which contributes to the understanding of the gravity of the song's themes. The song debunks the notion that every educational track is boring and its synchronization of Western instruments like guitars and drums, which are quintessentially African, increases its appeal to a global audience.

CONCLUSION.

'Pindirai' is largely sung in a simple Shona language using different devices to convey the message. The call-and-response format, which is derived from ancient storytelling and praise poetry, reinforces the subject, in this case, an appeal for intervention from powerful forces to rescue the environment by inspiring residents of the community. The collective pronoun 'ta' (we) not only unites people for a common cause, their environment but urges them to admit their mistakes and seek advice when needed. Music is a powerful force for driving social transformation.

LIMITATION.

There is no other song that tackles climate change using African oral art forms. This limited this study to one song, 'Pindirai'. The inclusion of one or more songs with a similar theme would have facilitated a more rigorous analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Other musicians, especially 'big' ones ought to leverage their influence to promote responsible behavior in society so that crises such as environmental degradation can be avoided. Governments, businesses, educational

institutions, and cultural connoisseurs should partner in promoting material that tells the history of African culture and values through online and hard copy formats.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS.

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Roya, W.: Lead Researcher, the conception of the research idea, collected and analyzed data, and drafted the manuscript. Ngcobo, S.: supervised research, restructured and edited manuscript, corresponding author.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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SOURCE OF FUNDING.

No funding was received for this study.

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Student's Journal of Health Research Africa
e-ISSN: 2709-9997, p-ISSN: 3006-1059
[Vol. 5 No. 3 \(2024\): March2024 Issue](https://doi.org/10.51168/sjhrafrica.v4i3.1004)
<https://doi.org/10.51168/sjhrafrica.v4i3.1004>

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Publisher details.

SJC PUBLISHERS COMPANY LIMITED



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Location: Wisdom Centre Annex, P.O. BOX. 113407 Wakiso, Uganda, East Africa.