

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The influence of music on children's cognitive development and overall academic achievement has received considerable attention in the field of psychology and education in recent years. Several studies in the Western world have documented that music stimulates intellectual abilities in early childhood (Bolduc, 2009). Further, it has been argued that singing and listening to music influences the development of vocabulary and comprehension skills, while an active participation in playing musical instruments such as the piano keyboard enhances greater achievements in mathematics and spatial reasoning (Hetland, 2000; Vaughn, 2000). A preliminary report from the early childhood music summit by the National Association for Music Education in the United States compiled many long term benefits of music for young children that included the following: music is a significant mode of communication for infants; music helps develop cognitive skills like memory, language, reasoning, logic and arithmetic; music creates important contexts for life skills like cooperating, collaboration and group effort; music develops rudiments of an aesthetic sense; and that music contributes to school readiness (Holland, 2011).

In Africa, the existing body of research has revealed that the term 'music,' as understood in its application and usage, pervades many social activities that include 'dance, songs, and play. African words for music sometimes also refer to play. For instance, studies conducted in Ghana have revealed that the Akan word '*agoro*' for play and music are one and the same (Addo, 1996). In Nigeria, the word '*nkwa*' means song, dance, play (Bjokvold, 1992), and in Namibia, among the Oshindonga, the word '*okudhana*' means to dance or to play, and '*uudhano*' is the generic noun that includes children's music and dances (Mans, 2000). In this respect then, the reference to music as used in this study refers to children's play and the associated music activities.

This study that focused on the role of indigenous music in the cognitive promotion of Zambian children attempted to look at music and play activities as processes through which children

gained knowledge and skills necessary for learning purposes as theorised by Piaget (1962), and Vygotsky (1978). Further, the study looked at play as “ a gateway to children’s acquisition of the complex range of social, linguistic, cognitive, and ethical functions that are valued in adult life” (Marfo and Biersteker, 2011: 75). African scholars have observed that African children are expected to assume social responsibility from a young age and develop social cognition (Nsamenang, 2006), social responsibility is a form of intelligence (Serpell, 1993, cf. Mtonga, 2012).

Although the title of this dissertation referred to the role of indigenous music in the promotion of cognitive development of Zambian children, the study only explored play and music activities in Senanga and Shangombo districts as one example of children’s play and music activities or repertoire in Zambia. The study drew its inspiration from Mtonga’s (2012) seminal work on ‘Children’s games and play in Zambia’ which was predominantly conducted in Eastern province and in some selected urban areas of Zambia. It is interesting to note that the late professor Mtonga did his study in the Eastern Province of Zambia where the sun first rises from, while I conducted a similar study in the Western Province where the sun later sets in.

According to Mtonga (2012), the Chewa and Tumbuka believe that ‘affective culture’ or feelings expressed through music, dance, plays, and games are the cornerstones of cognitive development in the very young. Examples of such games involving intellectual stimulation include the trick games or puzzles described as *manyele* or stone counting games, logical mathematical games like *nsolo* (a kind of board game). Players in this game have to make intelligent calculations as stones are passed from one hole to another. Similar observations about the intellectual underpinnings of these games have been noted by other scholars elsewhere in Africa (cf. Nyota & Mapara, 2008).

Despite their apparent rich intellectual values, indigenous children’s games, plays, songs, and stories are scarce in most school curricula. Mtonga (2012) observed that the state of children’s games, plays, songs, and stories was on the decline. The decline in indigenous games and plays in most school curricula also has the potential of creating a possible decline in the acquisition of indigenous knowledge, traditions, and life coping strategies. According to Senanayake (2006: 89), “with the decline or loss of indigenous knowledge, valuable knowledge about ways of living sustainably both ecologically and socially are lost too.” It should be stressed here that play and

music activities formed an indigenous way of learning and helped to preserve knowledge and gaining of social skills. African scholars have equally voiced concerns that “when children are denied meaningful education that is grounded in local realities, their ability to be productive adults is compromised (Marfo & Biersteker, 2011:73).

Mtonga’s observation that cognitive development for an African child occurs in a sociocultural mediated context through games and play has been supported by findings obtained from this study. As a sociocultural mediated activity, play serves a variety of functions, prominent among which is a mechanism for enculturation. It has been noted that children have the opportunity to learn not only the social and cultural values but also the skills and competences necessary for survival and become productive community members. Indigenous knowledge has been singled out as the basis for problem- solving strategies for local communities especially the poor. Further, it has been observed that indigenous knowledge is the consequence of practical engagement in everyday life and is a product of many generations of intelligent reasoning, and that it has been instrumental in sustaining the survival of the local communities (Senanayake, 2006). Unless there are practical steps aimed at preserving what is in existence today, there is a looming possibility of losing even the little that has survived the onslaught of Western technology. Thus, Mtonga’s pertinent desire to preserve the local games and play that we have by incorporating them into an all inclusive curriculum is not only visionary but compelling and irresistible.

1.2 Theoretical framework

Piaget’s theory of cognitive development in children is an influential theory in psychology. The theory focuses on how children’s intelligence develops. Although this theory was formulated in the 1930s and ‘40s, its popularisation in the English-speaking world in the 1960s is linked to the American psychologists such as Flavell (1966), Bruner (1966), Ginsburg and Oppen (1969), and Furth (1969). However, popular Piagetian intelligence tests that arose in the wake of the theory being popularised have in the recent past received criticisms as being narrowly focused and incapable of explaining other forms of intelligences (Davidoff, 1987). On the other hand, the emergence of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory posited that cognitive development is the result of social and cultural interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). Sociocultural theorists maintain that an individual’s participation in social interactions and culturally organised activities is important for

development (Dillon, 2005). Human activity is mediated by the use of tools and signs for communication and making sense of the world, and language is one of culture's tools. Music and language are cultural tools that are closely related.

According to Gardner's (1999) theory of Multiple Intelligence (MI), music is a form of intelligence which should be used as a tool to help an individual achieve goals, and that "a study of musical intelligence may help us understand the special flavour of music and at the same time illuminate its relation to other forms of human intellect" (Gardner, 1983: 99). Gardner further observes that each culture has its own symbol system, its own means of interpreting experiences. Rogoff (2003) contends that children derive their understanding from direct engagement in cultural practices.

1.3 Statement of the problem

An increasing body of research in the Western countries has in the recent past attested to the observation that music promotes cognitive development especially in the early years of children's developmental process. While the value of music and play has had a significant impact in Western countries (Segall et al, 1990), this has largely remained a contested matter in non Western countries including Zambia.

Although children's indigenous music and play games have the potential to be used as educational tools, they have remained unutilized and neglected. Through his wide experience accrued over the years in teaching at both primary and secondary school system, the researcher has observed that less emphasis on indigenous music and play is attached to this potential cultural resource. Instead, there is much emphasis on foreign pedagogies at the expense of the local and indigenous ones. If this situation is not addressed, there is a possibility of children failing to make connections between what they learn at school and their experiences at home. Hence this study sought to assess the cognitive affordances underpinning indigenous play and music activities as practiced by developing Zambian children in Senanga and Shangombo districts to establish how such activities could be utilised for possible curriculum enrichment and educational purposes.

1.4 The Purpose of the study

The study sought to assess how indigenous music demonstrated through children's play activities could influence cognitive processes and subsequent development of thought patterns. By documenting and analysing different Lozi children's play and music activities, the study endeavoured to reveal the potential benefits associated with children's participation in such activities for possible curriculum enrichment in schools.

1.5 Study Justification

This study drew its inspiration from the seminal work of Mtonga (2012) on 'Children's games and play in Zambia' where it has been observed that there were few studies from the Zambian perspective on children's play and games despite the rich potentials that these activities had to offer to developing children. Mtonga (2012:1) had observed that:

“Every national, ethnic, and cultural group had its own wealth of children's play and games which had great educational values but which [unfortunately,] were in danger of being lost or distorted due to swift social changes.”

Further, Mtonga had succinctly argued that through music, dance, poetry, play and games, intelligence in different indigenous people was conceptualised and a sense of identity achieved.

Musical play games, songs and dances provided an indigenous avenue through which knowledge was gained. Mapoma (1980) observes that story songs were a means through which children were taught ways to solve problems, correct social behaviour, traditional religion, and the art of public speaking. Musical story telling enhanced memory development and stimulated intellectual processes among children. Children's play and music activities inspired a lot of imagination in understanding the local environment. Studies from some parts of Africa have shown that music assisted new pupils entering the corridors of the school environment to develop a sense of belongingness and a feeling of security (Croft, 2002). This, in the opinion of the researcher, can also reduce absenteeism and high dropout rates in schools. Unfortunately, Zambian schools which were supposed to act as repositories of these rich cultural values have been singled out as being less effective on this matter. Most of the schools do not have well stocked books containing indigenous songs or play games. The current Grade 2 Teacher's Guide

(MOE, 2002) was found to be a case in point. Most of the songs and play games used in this textbook appear to lack indigenous play and music activities. Research in child development grounded in indigenous understanding is, therefore, very vital. As Serpell (2011:126) has rightly observed, “if systematic inquiry regarding African [Zambian] child development is to achieve recognition as a source of guidance for African [Zambian] families, service practitioners and policy makers, the science that it generates must...also resonate with indigenous understanding.” Using play and music activities in teaching is likely to help rural children and those from low socio-economic groups to understand concepts better as they can easily make connections with what they already know rather than using alien concepts and pedagogies that they do not understand. On the other hand, there are no known studies from a psychological point of view that have been done on this subject.

1.6 Research objectives

1.6.1 General Objective:

The general objective of this research was to assess the role of indigenous music in the promotion of cognitive development in Zambian children.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives:

1. To assess how songs and dances help learners’ mind to develop and the social processes involved.
2. To analyse the extent to which playing traditional musical instruments (*silimba* & drums) can instill a sense of cooperation among learners.
3. To identify some substantive themes, values, and practices of indigenous culture in the study that could be used to articulate the case for their inclusion in the Zambian education curriculum.

1.7 Research Questions:

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived cognitive outcomes and social processes involved in participating in songs and dances?

2. How does playing traditional instruments (*silimba* & drums) help instill a sense of cooperation in learners according to local informants?
3. What are the substantive themes, values, and practices of indigenous culture in the study that can be used to articulate the case for their inclusion in the Zambian education curriculum?

1.8 Significance of the study

The study is significant in that, firstly, the research findings it will generate may provide relevant information that may be useful to the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational and Training and Early Education to recognise the importance of promoting the creative arts that include music, dance, drama, and poetry by creating an enabling environment in which pupils can develop their special talents and aptitudes as well as aiding learners to attain academic excellence in other subjects. The current approach in schools tends to place a heavy focus on mathematics and science with the expressive arts almost ‘dying out’ especially in view of an overcrowded curriculum. Secondly, the findings from the study may highlight the benefit of learning from indigenous pedagogies and approaches to effective teaching and learning strategies. Additionally, the findings from the study are likely to benefit the education system on the need to use and preserve local musical instruments in the absence of the Western instruments that may not be easily accessed due to limited financial resources. This is very much in line with the emerging themes of incorporating the indigenous forms of gaining knowledge and localising the curriculum to meet the needs of the developing child. Lastly but not the least, the findings that the study will generate may help to provide information on the topic that has not been much researched and thus contribute to the body of existing knowledge.

1.9 Limitations to the study

This research was conducted based in a time frame of five (5) months. It was therefore not possible to cover many areas in this short time frame and hence the findings are likely not to be a representation of what is found in some other parts of Western Province. Therefore it may not be wise to conclude that the non existence of some children’s play and music activities that were not found in the areas where the study was conducted is indicative of the non existence of such activities in the whole province. Lastly, the research instruments used in the study were designed

by the researcher. It is possible that these instruments were not sufficiently broad enough to cover many aspects of the research design since they had not been used before.

1.10 Sampling

A convenience sample of 4 schools was drawn from 2 districts of the Western Province of Zambia, namely Senanga and Shangombo.

1.11 Operational definitions of significant terms and acronyms

Affordance-The term is adapted from Gibson (2000), and has mainly been used in the abstract form to imply information about how an aspect of the environment can be used as a resource for action.

Basic Education- The Primary level in the Zambian education system.

CTS- Creative and Technology Studies

DEBS- District Education Board Secretary. This is the principal education officer in the district.

ECD- Early Childhood Education.

ECCDE – Early childhood Care and Development Education.

Expert- As used in this study, the term refers to a participant chosen on account of his/her reputed skills in music.

Indigenous music- Traditional music as practiced in the local area.

Matangu- Folklore stories told to children in the evening.

Manyumbo -Children's play riddles usually done in the evenings.

Tukwaci- Children's play puzzles usually done in the evenings alongside folklore stories and riddles.

MOESVTEE- Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational and Training and Early Education.

Music- As used in this study is synonymous with children's play songs and dances.

Pitch- Refers to how high or low a particular sound is.

Role- Refers to a particular function.

SESO- Senior Education Standards Officer.

Silimba- Refers to the wooden xylophone mostly found in Western Province of Zambia.

Silimba player – Refers to a xylophone expert player.

Silosi- The lingua franca spoken in Western Province

1.12 Summary

Although the influence of music and games has been widely acknowledged by some Western studies as being essentially relevant for developing children's intellectual processes, research on this vital topic that is grounded in an indigenous perspective in Zambia has largely lagged behind. This study sought to assess the cognitive affordances underpinning children's indigenous play and music activities in Senanga and Shangombo districts in Western Province to reveal the potential benefits associated with children's participation in such activities for possible curriculum enrichment in schools.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Research in the field of psychology of music education in recent years has yielded valuable insights into what music can offer not only in aesthetics as earlier perceived, but in other disciplines too. It is now widely believed that music has many benefits to offer to children especially those in the pre-school and primary levels. This in turn has triggered volumes of scholarly work on the topic.

This section presents a review of some studies that have been previously carried out in an attempt to reveal the role that music education plays in influencing cognitive processes among children and some adults. The studies have mainly been cited from various online Journals, paper presentations organised by major international organisations on music education, dissertations/theses and from books on cognitive development. The review begins with studies conducted in Western societies focusing on the cognitive developmental consequences of listening to music and/or learning to play musical instruments. Beginning with the seminal research of Rauscher, these studies have shown with various degrees of reliability that the experience of learning to play musical instruments enhances the individual's cognitive functioning in the domain of spatial-temporal reasoning. Other strands of Western research have shown a positive influence of learning to play musical instruments on early literacy development, and on mathematical cognition in the middle school years. However, empirical research designed to test these effects on children's cognitive development has yielded mixed results, ranging from strong confirmation to disconfirmation.

In the next section of the review, several factors are considered that are lacking from the research published to date in the Western countries that make it difficult to derive strong implications for educational policy in Zambia. These include-

- lack of a clear and consistent distinction between the effects of listening to music and of learning to play musical instruments;
- lack of a clear theoretical account of the cognitive mechanisms involved; a number of disconfirmations by apparently well-designed studies;

- the narrow concentration of published research within Western cultural settings only.

The review then turns to a consideration of more socio-emotional influences of music on children's development, drawing on the cultural psychology tradition of Cole (1996), Rogoff (2003), and Serpell (1993) and incorporating insights from anthropology (Blacking, 1967b; Merriam, 1964; Mapoma, 1980; Mtonga, 2012; Nyota & Mapara, 2008). While studies on children's indigenous music and play activities have been documented in other parts of Zambia, they have not been very much pronounced in Western Province, hence the need to fill this gap.

2.2 Western countries' studies on music and cognitive development

In recent years, an immense body of research has accumulated in music education following Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligence (MI). According to Gardner (1983), intelligence encapsulates the following: verbal, mathematical, spatial, bodily- kinaesthetic, musical, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and naturalist skills. For Gardner, intelligence is defined as the ability to solve problems, or fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural settings (Gardner, 1983). Music in this framework is seen as its own discrete domain of intelligence, not particularly associated with linguistic, mathematical, or spatial intelligence (Rauscher, 1999), and that it is capable of helping some people organise the way they think and work by enhancing development in other areas such as mathematics, language, and spatial reasoning.

Major research interests in music cognition among scholars in recent years trace their genesis to the studies of Rauscher and colleagues (1993, 1994, & 1997). In their study on 36 undergraduate students on the effects of listening to music and adult spatial abilities, Rauscher, Shaw, and Ky (1993) found that there was a significant relationship between listening to music and performance in the spatial reasoning and mathematical abilities. Spatial-temporal reasoning processes according to Rauscher (1999) are used in tasks that require combining separate elements of an object into a single whole by arranging objects in a specific order to match a mental image. The students in the study listened to a Mozart sonata for two pianos in D major for 10 minutes and when their scores were recorded, they were found to be higher on subsequent spatial- temporal tasks than after they listened to relaxation instruction or silence (Rauscher, 2003). Because of the noted performance resulting from listening to the Mozart sonata, the term

‘Mozart Effect’ was coined. Since then, there has been an unprecedented interest among researchers and educators to prove or disprove this claim, and this has resulted in an endless debate.

According to Graziano, Peterson, and Shaw (MENC, 2002), piano keyboard training along with computer based spatial training enhanced greater improvements in mathematics than when spatial training was combined with computer based English language training. This finding was supported by the meta-analysis of Winner and Hetland (2004). The two researchers’ comment was that, although a causal link between some form of music instruction and some form of mathematical performance did exist, no firm conclusion however could be drawn because the study was only based on six studies.

Schlaug et al, (2005) have suggested that the processes involved in language may still apply in music. They have observed that phonemic awareness skills were likely to improve by music training because both music and language processing require the ability to segment streams of sound into small perceptual units. This observation of music’s potential to foster phonological awareness has also been noted by other scholars who have observed that among preschool going age children, “songs provide an opportunity for children to become attuned to the sounds of words” (Baker, Serpell, & Sonnenschein, 1995: 246).

A study that attempted to establish dance in relationship to language development was conducted by Ericson (1996) in Sweden in 1985 in which 11 first grade classes and 12 second grade classes were studied. Dance lessons were recorded on video tapes in every class at the beginning and at the end of every session. Results obtained showed significant gains in language development. However, it was observed that research in dance education was scarce (Ericson, 1996, Hetland & Winner, 2004,).

2.3 Implications of Western studies on music and cognitive development

Current perspectives on research in music appear to agree that music is associated with higher cognitive abilities. Much as the studies pioneered by Rauscher have given some insights on what music can offer, there are however some reservations. It has been shown that when the music lessons are discontinued, the connections made from the music lessons would die. In order to sustain progress, music lessons must be ongoing.

While there have been some cognitive gains as noted above, there have however, been some observations that cognitive gains from musical instruction were in most cases not durable. They only remained as long as the training programme lasted. To confirm this observation, a study by Costa- Giomi (1999, cited in Rauscher, 2003), found that 9- year- old children who were provided with piano instruction scored only higher than controls on a spatial- temporal task immediately following the instruction, but could not do so after two years. A follow-up study found no differences between the music group and the control group on a similar task. A similar experience has been noted by Vaughn (2000) who, having found a highly significant and positive relationship between music instruction and subsequent mathematics performance, found no significant improvements in the test scores of the students who had undergone a musical instruction when a meta-analysis follow-up was made 4 to 6 months later.

In view of what has so far been unearthed in relation to some accessed existing literature on this topic, it should however be noted that most of this body of enormous research is largely drawn from the Western perspective with very little from other parts of the globe. Kreutzer (2001), has noted that many cognitive scientific advances are largely in respect of Western musical systems and perceptions coupled with experimental methodological designs. The studies that follow are drawn from cultural settings that are outside the domains of Western tradition. A brief overview of the conceptual framework of child development anchored in the social constructivist theory is presented first to lay the groundwork for understanding how music and dance enhances cognitive development.

Studies from the West that have yielded similar results as those from the African perspective in general and Zambia in particular, are those that have focused on play. In the section that follows, a few studies from the West regarding the significance of play have been highlighted.

One of the earliest scholars in the Western world to come up with a classification of play activities was Foster. According to Foster (1930), categories for play activities include the following: **catching, throwing, kicking** that include base ball, basketball, marbles; **chasing, fleeing-** for instance king of the hill, pom-pom pull away; **hiding, seeking-** for instance hide and seek; **jumping, hopping-** for instance leap frog, jump rope; **folk dances-** for instance singing, London bridge, ring games; **informal dramatisation-** for instance playing houses, store, office, dolls; **following directions-** for instance do this, do that, follow the leader; **table games-** for

instance old maid, snap; **active play** which may be individual- for instance skating, swimming, sliding; rather **inactive play** which may be individual- for instance painting, sewing; and **group games** of the **guessing type**- for instance buzz, telephone, lead man.

Developmental psychologists like Piaget (1962), and Vygotsky (1978), have, through their cognitive theories, emphasised the role of play for learning, and further noted that play is children's 'daily work' as it helps them to build their knowledge and skills in their interaction with peers, friends, by themselves, and with the environment. According to Marsh (2011), as children interact with each other and with their environment, they gradually acquire competence to deal with their physical and social world and constructing knowledge related to this. In a study conducted at the University of North Florida to validate the benefits of play, Almon (2004) found that preschool children who had attended play oriented programmes did better academically than those who had only attended academic oriented programmes. This was a clear evidence of the benefits associated with play.

Campbell (1998), has observed that play generally involves song, structured movement or dance, and an accompaniment of musical instruments. Play has been found to be a fundamental way of learning, engaging both intellect and affect. This is because through play, children come to grips with reality within the framework of their given environment. Through an interactive process with the environment, children's cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions develop.

According to some studies conducted in Australia among school children aged between 7 and 12 years, handclapping games were found to be more identified with girls than boys (Davey, 2004). The study further observed that there was no evidence of such games being played by boys in the past years. Similar findings on girls being better at handclapping than boys have been confirmed in a study by Schleuter and Schleuter (1985). According to these researchers, accuracy in chanting and clapping improved with age with girls scoring higher in rhythmic accuracy than boys. However, these studies have not explained why boys appear not to be as good at handclapping as girls.

In terms of the benefits associated with classroom attentiveness, studies have revealed that children's attentiveness in music activities were more pronounced than in non music lessons (Forsythe, 1975), and that children tended to be even more attentive to rhythmic activities than

singing activities (Moore, 1987). In a related study in the United States, a study involving 4 to 7 year olds in a school setting observed for three weeks of daily music lessons showed that young children enjoyed moving and singing together and showed preferences for songs with more actions (Moore, 2002).

2.4 Socio emotional influences of music on children's development

The cognitive development of a child as conceptualized in the social constructivist approach of Vygotsky theorises that development is a result of the social and cultural interactions mediated by language as a tool of communication (Vygotsky, 1978). Culture, which is defined as a 'system of shared meanings that both reflect and inform other socially shared phenomena such as practices, institutions, and technology'- (Serpell & Boykin, 1994), plays a vital role in the whole developmental process. The child interacts with the various contexts through a socialization process that includes guided participation, co-construction, and apprenticeship (Rogoff, 2003). The result of this interactive process helps the child to be finally integrated into the social system (Serpell, 1993b). Thus, the cognitive processes that involve changes in the child's thinking and intelligence, are largely shaped by the social cultural setting.

In many societies and cultures of the world, music plays a significant role in their daily activities. A study of child development from an African perspective in general, and Zambia in particular, may be incomplete without reference to how music helps individuals to be integrated in social systems. It is through participation in cultural activities that involve an extraneous use of music and dance that both the social and psychological processes of an individual are enhanced. Cole (1996) makes a cardinal point when he states that "the structure and development of human psychological processes emerge through participation in culturally mediated, practical activity involving cultural practices and tools," (cited in Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003: 21). According to Bruner (1996), learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting and are always dependent upon the utilisation of cultural resources. Music, acting both as a cultural practice and tool, provides a "rallying point around which the members of society gather to engage in activities which require cooperation and coordination of the group" (Merriam, 1964:227). Further, music can express social attitudes and social processes and is therefore essential for the very survival of humanity (Blacking, 1973).

The literature reviewed below has demonstrated that different cultures have different perceptions of what they consider to be the significant role that music plays in their societies and cultures. Unlike in the Western tradition whose literature has just been reviewed, the non- Western societies in Africa and Zambia in particular look at music to regulate the society to bring about social harmony by validating social institutions and values (Merriam, 1964). Thus, even in the concept of cognition or intelligence, researchers in non-Western countries in recent years have found that cultures often have ideas about intelligence that differ fundamentally from those that have shaped Western intelligence tests (Serpell, 1993a). This may, in some respect, apply to music as well. The value of a particular culture may shape the direction in which a child develops.

Among the Venda people of South Africa, children observed in an ethnographic study by Blacking (1967) acquired skills of music and dance either directly or indirectly. They acquired the skills indirectly when they attended to a wide variety of societal activities and directly when they learnt from their peers or immediate seniors. Venda children were encouraged to sing or listen to some songs even before they could speak Venda sentences of which some were in counting form. Display of emotion, except when appropriate for certain occasions of life, was considered unintelligent, and participation in songs and dances helped children how to think and act, how to feel and relate. Thus, Blacking concluded that, the effectiveness of dance and music in Venda children's cognitive development depended on the ways in which they used and made sense of them.

In their study among the Shona children of Zimbabwe, Nyota and Mapara (2008) observed that games and play songs among African children were an indigenous way of gaining knowledge acquired mainly through guided apprenticeship. The developmental process of an African child as demonstrated in their research occurred in a social cultural context of which apprenticeship was commonly owned and shared. They contended that in most cases children tended to exhibit what they had learnt from the adults during their play time at the outskirts of the village. Social apprenticeship was therefore a form of cognitive development.

In her studies among the Namibian children, Mans (2000) noted that music, dance, stories, narratives, games, and rituals had always been major ways through which knowledge, life skills, and social values were transmitted. Through the process of socialisation, children acquired

certain behaviours, morals, and values considered useful to function in the daily activities within a given community. She further observed that learning was mainly done through an enculturation process by means of imitation, through adult or peer intervention.

In their observation of the different genres of games or plays found in Africa, Mans, Dzansi-McPalm and Agak (2003) had cited the following as common play games: clapping with body actions; dancing ; clapping with singing; leg stretching and touching; stone passing; mind games; running in a circle; music-drama play; pounding/stamping; narrative games; dancing and throwing objects in the air. In South Africa, Nompula (1988) identified seven categories of children's songs which were as follows: cradle songs; storytelling songs; herding songs; dance songs; game songs; and hunting and working songs.

Children's indigenous play games have been singled out as having educational benefits that could be linked to the existing curricula in most African countries. According to Wyk (2005), play, as a cultural activity, is a relevant tool to help achieve a link between what happened outside the classroom in order to assist what happened inside the classroom. Further, it has been noted that if manipulated well, cultural activities and play are an indigenous way of learning the school curricula and help relate subjects like mathematics to the learners' everyday lives. Undoubtedly, indigenous play and music activities may have educational benefits that could be helpful to children.

In Zambia, a study by Mtonga (2012) has revealed that as children engage in games and play that focus on society's values and norms, they develop a sense of social responsibility and social intelligence. In his study, Mtonga came up with the following as common play and games in Zambia: Songs, poetry and narratives; games, play, and dances; chasing games; catching games; slapping or beating games; duelling or exerting games; throwing and hitting games; seeking games; guessing games; daring games; acting and role playing games; dancing and singing games, and language games. It may be noted that some of the games cited in this list also appear under Foster's (1930) list presented earlier in this section.

A study by Mufalali (1974) on some children's common play songs and dances in Western Province has revealed that there is a repertoire of such activities in the province. Many of these activities have also been noted to be adult songs and dances. Some of the songs and dances

involve handclapping, dancing in pairs or using one's shoulders. Further, performance of such activities could also involve the accompaniment of some musical instruments such as the xylophone (*silimba*) and drums. Many of these activities have been documented for use in the Zambian school curriculum for Physical Education (P.E.). However, the contents of this study have not been reviewed to ascertain the cognitive or social benefits that they may have on children.

Among the Bemba of Luapula province of Zambia, an ethnographic study conducted there has revealed the different functions and roles that music plays. Songs and dances are performed during initiation ceremonies of girls as a means of training them (Mapoma, 1980). Among the Luales who practice male circumcision, the boys undergoing the initiation period are taught music and other skills on how to conduct themselves in the community. Songs also play a vital role in the oral literature of the children and form a means through which children are taught ways to solve problems, correct social behaviour, traditional religion, and the art of speaking. Songs also help in the acquisition of children's language abilities and fosters linguistic development.

Research on some instruments such as the *Silози* xylophone (*silimba*) is very scarce. The only pioneering studies are those that were done by Kubik (1994) among the Makonde and Makuua people. Among the Baganda people, Kubik noted that xylophone playing was mainly associated with the royal establishment. This observation has also been noted by Brown (1984) in Western Province. Other research studies accessed during a preview of related literature include those of Seavoy (1982) among the Sisaala people of North West Ghana, and Brown (1984) among the Lozis and the Nkoya speaking people of Barotseland. Among the Sisaala, the xylophone is the principal instrument, occupying the position equivalent to drums. From about the age of six, when children begin to identify with adult roles, boys especially, are allowed to play the musical instruments. Through constant exposure and practice, children begin to learn and perform adult music at an early age. Among the Lozis and Nkoyas, the personal observations are that a similar trend appears to exist. In both these societies, the xylophone has more than 10 wooden planks that are played on when performing.

From the findings of the different research studies conducted, it can be observed that most of the research on music and cognitive development have been done in the Western countries with very

little on Africa (Ericson, 1996; Hetland & Winner, 2000; Kreutzer, 2001; Mapara & Nyota, 2008). It is also noted that music's contributions to cognitive development cannot be solely restricted to the academic benefits as seen from some researches cited where the understanding is restrictive. Different cultures have different understandings as to what they may consider as intelligence. According to Serpell (1976), cultural differences influence the choice of cognitive styles and the degrees of complexity and types of congruence of different skills. This has been noted from the Venda studies earlier on cited in Blacking's ethnographic studies. There is therefore a need to do some more research on this topic and understand it better from the Zambian perspective. Cognition from the Western studies reviewed so far appears to be inclined heavily towards academic achievement while that may not be the case elsewhere because of the different cultural values. Therefore, ethnographic studies attempting to find out the role of music in the culture of a Zambian school going child may help to clarify the relationship between music and cognitive development from a socio- cultural context point of view.

African scholars in recent year have argued convincingly that the present curricula in most African schools do not contain indigenous forms of knowledge vis a vis indigenous learning materials. Teacher training colleges do not equip their students with knowledge drawn from the African heritage (Hyde & Kabiru, 2006), yet studies conducted in some parts of Africa where there has been a smooth integration of the indigenous forms of learning have yielded significant results (Mwaura & Marfo, 2011; Serpell, 2008). In Zanzibar for instance, government's integration of local games, songs, and stories through the Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) for ECCDE programmes has been cited as one of the most successful programmes. This programme has the benefit of encouraging problem solving and self- directed exploration among the learners (Moris, 2009). Further, the Madrasa Resource Centres in other East African countries have equally recorded significant progress in the provision of holistic education. These centres of learning employ instructional methods that build on local approaches to teaching children including the use of stories, songs, as well as imaginary play objects and activities to stimulate thinking and exploration among children (Mwaura & Marfo, 2011). It has been argued that the Madrasa Resource Centre programme should be of interest to those engaged in research on capacity building in Africa. Therefore, a passionate call to the African governments in general, and Zambia in particular, to rethink their current educational structures at this critical moment is very timely. In Zambia, a study by Kalinde (2010) found that teachers did not consider game

songs as tools that they could integrate and use in their teaching. Further, Mumba (2000) noted that music was among the subjects that received least attention from the teachers in a rural school in Mpika district of Zambia. This research that draws from both psychology and education may assist to identify some substantive themes from the indigenous music practices that could be helpful for developing a curriculum that bridges the child's home and school environments as well as upholding the moral and cultural values of the Zambian society in the educational system. The seminal works of Serpell (1993a); Kakuwa (2005), and Mtonga (2012) in Zambia have laid the ground work for more enquiries in the area of children's play and how that can spur intellectual development but much still needs to be done especially from a psychological perspective.

2.5 Summary

The body of literature cited in this chapter from the Western countries has revealed the benefits that music has in stimulating the intellectual processes in children. However, these studies have focused on cognitive development only in terms of academic achievements without considering the socio-emotional cognitive processes as well, as shown by some studies done in Africa and Zambia in particular. Nonetheless, despite their perceived intellectual and socio-emotional benefits, children's indigenous music and play activities have received little attention from the education managers in Zambia.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study was qualitative in its approach. The methodology that I used in the collection of data for this study was mostly based on participant observation. The approach used by Mtonga (2012) in his study on children's games and play in Zambia was incorporated to describe the play and music activities that I found for my study. A wide range of organised play and music activities displaying cognitive and social skills were observed and recorded.

In order to collect in depth information of primary data based on naturalistic observations of musical performances, and what music means to the participants in the study, an ethnographic design was used. Ethnography was seen as being closest to ethnomusicological research, a research design that attempts to understand music in the context of human behaviour and is concerned primarily with the role, functions, and concepts behind music behaviour (Merriam, 1964). Further, research, especially one with a psychological bias, was expected to gain from a theoretical overview of musical experience.

Ethnographies have another advantage in that they allow for the use of structured or unstructured interviews with participants and give some freedom of expression if further probing from an informant is deemed necessary. Since the present study aimed at revealing some cognitive underpinnings of how indigenous songs in their different cultural settings and uses helped learners' minds to develop intellectually, this approach seemed to be appropriate.

3.2 Target Population

The target population were the school children (boys and girls) within the age range of 10 to 14 years enrolled at the respective schools in Senanga and Shangombo districts of Western Province. The researcher was of the view that children in this age range could adequately answer interview questions. In Senanga district, the following schools were targeted: Namalangu Middle Basic and Lukanda Basic Schools. Namalangu Basic School had a constellation of different pupils from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds situated within the township. Lukanda Basic School on the other hand had more of the typical rural children. These two

schools were far apart to avoid participants in the study influencing each other. Expert players of traditional instruments such as the xylophone (*silimba*) were found there too.

In Shangombo district, the schools included Sioma Basic and Sitoti Basic Schools. These schools were far apart from each other but were all dotted along the main road from Senanga to Sesheke making it possible for me to move easily during the time of data collection. The schools were primarily selected for this very reason and secondly, these schools were more rural in nature when compared to the schools in Senanga district. Convenience sampling was used as these schools were likely to provide more of original indigenous play and musical performances. Other participants in the study included some informants who were expert performers in playing traditional musical instruments especially the xylophone (*silimba*) and drums.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

3.3.1 Sample Size

The sample consisted of 44 participants who were interviewed by the researcher during the period when the study was conducted. Two schools from both Senanga and Shangombo districts participated in the study. In Senanga district, I interviewed 16 pupils from two Basic schools that participated in the study. This meant that 8 pupils per school, 4 boys and 4 girls were interviewed. These pupils were selected from the different grades especially those from grade 3 to 6. Initially, I had anticipated that pupils in these grades were capable of answering interview questions. However, after the experience I had from the pilot study, I opted to involve expert pupils from grades 5 to 7 as well as these were found to be slightly better equipped than those in grade 3 for participation in the interviews. The selection of these 8 pupils at each of the two schools in Senanga was based on the information that I obtained from the teachers and pupils after a careful inquiry about their expertise in music or play games. The number of participants chosen from each of the two schools was conveniently decided because I was of the view that I could elicit enough information from them. As for expert the teachers in music activities, I ended up interviewing 2 teachers per school from the two Basic schools in Senanga district instead of 1 teacher as earlier planned. I decided to have a balanced representation from both male and female music teachers as observed from my experience during the pilot study. These teachers were selected for the interviews after making some consultations with the school managers. I

also interviewed two informants reputed for playing the *Silozi* xylophone (*silimba*) in the Senanga district who were selected based on the inquiries that I got from the local community.

The same process of selecting participants done in Senanga district was used in Shangombo district. Therefore, I interviewed 40 participants from the four targeted schools in the two districts and 4 local expert informants making a total of 44 participants in all. I had taken into consideration the fact that some of the interviews would not be long depending on the way some participants responded to the interviews. Most of the interviews lasted between 40 minutes to an hour. The video recordings took longer periods of time ranging from about two hours to three hours.

3.3.2 Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling method was used in selecting both pupil participants and the expert music teacher respondents for the research interviews. This was achieved through consultations with school authorities in identifying expert music teachers, who, in turn helped in identifying the pupils who were good at some play and music activities. In this respect, snowballing sampling was also partly used to identify key informants. Music and play activities included game songs, storytelling, playing musical instruments (*silimba*/drums), as well as dancing. Expert performers in playing the *silimba* were identified through careful inquiries from the local community. I endeavoured to create a friendly relationship with these key people to learn more from them on how indigenous education was conducted.

3.4 Pilot Study

Prior to the commencement of the study, a preliminary pilot study was undertaken to establish the suitability of the research tools that were to be used. Below is a brief description of the pilot study that was conducted and some preliminary results that I obtained.

A pilot study on the general state of music teaching and learning in schools with specific reference to children's game songs and play activities in Western Province of Zambia was conducted through interviews with the Senior Education Standards Officer (SESO) responsible for expressive arts at the Provincial Headquarters office in Mongu. This was also meant to enlist a safe entry point to the schools that would participate in the study in the province. The pilot

study was carried out firstly in order to gain familiarity with the assessment instruments that were to be used, and secondly, to finalise and polish some of the assessment instruments. Useful insights on the state of music, and games and play activities were obtained. A similar process was extended to the district offices of education in both Senanga and Shangombo and letters of permission to conduct the study in the sampled schools were given.

At Senanga Basic School, the pilot study was conducted for a period of two weeks. During this time, 12 pupils comprising 6 boys and 6 girls were interviewed. Most of these were drawn from the grade 5 and 7 classes. These pupils demonstrated some of the games and action songs I got from my personal in-depth interviews with them as well as the games and plays mentioned to me by the expert teachers of music. In order to get more information on the nature and type of games, plays and songs, I ended up interviewing 3 teachers, 1 male and 2 female. Class observations were made after making arrangements with the teachers for specific classes that both taught Creative and Technology Studies (CTS) in which music was fused according to the current curriculum design or language lessons where stories were to be taught. The songs, games, and plays that I gathered from my interviews with both the teachers and pupils were usually demonstrated by the 12 pupils who were identified as expert players among these children. I sometimes allowed other children to join because of the deep interest that they showed. This was done deliberately to identify more skill and expertise from the pupils as well as responding to the inclusive orientation of indigenous culture. To exclude some children would have been counterproductive as it would appear counterintuitive to local children, and that would reduce their motivational commitment to the whole process.

Following a successful completion of the pilot study, useful insights for the main study were established and an amended version of the interview guides (labeled as appendices A, B, and C) were used.

3.5 Research Methods

The study employed in-depth semi structured interviews, participant observations, audio and video recordings and documentary analysis. For the main study, I used the amended semi-structured interviews generated after the pilot study. They were semi-structured in design because of the different situations that I encountered. Semi-structured interviews proved useful

in that they allowed me the freedom of making further probing on the respondents' views and opinions on topics under discussion and were not therefore highly restrictive in nature.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Following were the ways in which data for the study was collected.

3.6.1 Observations

Data collection was done through observations of musical performances both inside and outside the classrooms at the 4 schools in the districts where the study was conducted. This included both inside and outside school activities that involved musical activities especially those that related to play songs, storytelling, and other cultural activities. Permission was sought from the school management, and I sought guidance for identifying teachers who were experts in musical activities at the respective schools. I carefully identified trained music teachers to learn more of the schools' musical activities and programmes. Out-of-class activities included those organised by the teachers, school authorities, or simply during the times that children were found playing within the school premises.

Other out-of-school activities included making deliberate follow-ups to where expert children lived in the hope of finding them engaged in play activities. During these times the school teachers were not involved. Since it was not all that easy for an adult to get into children's activities, I adopted Smorholm's (2005) strategy in her Ng'ombe study in Lusaka of befriending children. Entry into children's out-of-class activities was achieved by enlisting their willingness to be photographed while they played. Permission to do this was granted by the parents of the children. This afforded me the opportunity to get first hand information from natural settings. During these occasions, I took the role of a learner and participant. I tried to find out more about the academic performance of the expert children from the teachers as well as from the existing school records.

3.6.2 Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with key experts. These included expert children, teachers, and master silimba players. As stated earlier, I came to know these through careful inquiries from the head teachers, teachers, pupils, and local community. The role I took while with these

people was one of a learner and observer. For the expert players of silimba, I attempted to establish rapport with them and invited them to play their instruments. I requested them to be video-recorded while they played their instruments. My earlier anticipation that both children and adults would be inclined to like to be video filmed and that this would be my entry point was confirmed in the field. I later invited the players to watch the replay of what I had recorded and this strategy strengthened my interpersonal relationship with them. When we met for more follow-up interviews, the reception I received was impressive. Questions and topics formulated on the semi-structured interviews focused mainly on the roles and functions of music in daily activities and how this facilitated children's cognitive development and helped them to become integrated members of the society. Much of the data that I collected in this respect was recorded on the spot without interpretation and had to be interpreted later.

I made further inquiries from the expert informants on how children acquired and became master instrumental players especially those who played the silimba. Expert informants from the community were included in the study to elicit accounts of how indigenous values were transmitted and imparted to the learners with a view to deducing how best this would be applied within the present school education system.

3.6.3 Video recordings

Video recordings of children's participation in the game songs, storytelling, dances, and playing musical instruments were made at each of the schools and village settings. These were intended to provide vivid illustrations for purposes of disseminating research findings and helped me to remember more accurately the accounts encountered during the course of conducting the study.

3.6.4 Documentary analysis

Relevant documents were obtained from the schools where I conducted the study. I also obtained some material from the offices of the District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS) from the two districts, as well as from the daily newspapers in relation to national education policy matters and pronouncements regarding the school curriculum.

3.7 Data Analysis

Since the study was largely ethnographic in nature, data derived from participant observations interviews, documentaries, and audio recordings was transcribed, organized and categorized for further analysis. Firstly, data was systematically grouped into themes in an attempt to identify patterns and relationships that emerged. The basic thematic relationships derived were the basis for data classification. The procedures suggested by Braun and Clarke's guide to the 6 phases of conducting thematic analysis (2006) was used to analyse the data based on the relationship established and come up with the major themes from the study.

Cognitive principles underpinning the indigenous musical practices were mainly assessed through the analysis of children's responses to questions 4,5,6, and 9 from the questionnaire (see appendix A), which forms a cluster of questions designed to reveal how an expert Lozi child perceives the cognitive skills that he/she has. I also got more insights from the responses of expert players of xylophone (*silimba*) on questions 4 to 7 of the questionnaire (appendix B) on what an expert Lozi musician perceived to be the cognitive underpinnings of his skills. Expert music teachers; responses to questions 2 to 6 on the questionnaire (appendix C) also provided more insights on the cognitive benefits underpinning the indigenous play and music activities. Academic achievements of expert children players were assessed from the school records as well as analysis of teachers' responses to question 7 on the questionnaire for teachers (appendix C).

3.8 External and Internal Validity

External validity in this study was achieved mainly by follow up visits to the respective respondents to ascertain whether what I had written was the true reflection of the views and sentiments that they intended to give during the interviews that I had with them. Secondly, this study was conducted in naturalistic settings in the respective schools where it was carried out without any undue interruptions from my observations. During the study, I took the role of a participant observer most of the times, and sometimes my video camera was used by the expert music teachers to do the actual filming. I interacted with the respondents freely. Children sometimes sought for me for the appointments we had made for some video recordings. Additionally, most of the schools sampled also had a wide representation of different ethnic groups found in Western Province.

In order to obtain internal validity and eliminate social desirability effects from teachers, I explained my study as one that sought to establish the relationship between what was taught in the teacher education colleges and school musical practices in terms of children's play and music activities. Classroom observations were arranged with the respective teachers. I sought the permission of the school management and the teachers in whose classes observations were to be made and then went with those teachers into their classes. While in the class(es), I avoided paper and pencil work to avoid disruptions of the learning and teaching processes. Instead, I recorded class proceedings using my voice recorder that looked like a mobile phone. This was very effective in that lessons were not disturbed in any way.

As stated earlier, I made efforts to ensure that informants' point of views was what had been recorded. This was achieved by getting back to respondents to validate whatever they had given out during initial interviews with them.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Approval to conduct this study was granted by the psychology department under the auspices of my supervisor Professor Robert Serpell of the University of Zambia in consultation with the Directorate of Graduate and Research Studies. There were no serious ethical concerns and after seeking audience with the chairperson of the ethics committee of the University of Zambia, I proceeded with the study. Permission to conduct the study in the two districts of Senanga and Shangombo was sought from the Ministry of Education in Western Province. Participants in the study were informed about the nature and purpose of the study, and informed consent was sought from the school authorities as well as parents before interviewing the children (See appendix E). This process was also done with the expert informants. After explaining to the respondents about the nature and purpose of the study, they willingly accepted for their names to be disclosed, and an acknowledgement of this consent has been made. The respondents were informed that the information gathered was purely for academic purposes.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has outlined the research method and design that was used in collecting data. The study was ethnographic in its approach and was conducted in four schools in Western Province where two schools from Senanga and Shangombo districts respectively were selected. 32 children aged between 10 and 14, and 12 adults aged between 30 and 65 comprised a purposive sample of 44 participants in all. The study took five months to conduct (from October, 2012 to February, 2013). Research methods used included participant observations, in-depth semi-structured interviews, video recordings, and documentary analysis to collect data. Cognitive principles underpinning the indigenous children's musical practices demonstrated through games, plays, songs and playing of traditional instruments were assessed by analysing the different question items from the semi structured interview guides. Data obtained was coded, categorized, and analysed using Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis to establish emerging themes.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the study findings on “The role of indigenous music and games in the promotion of cognitive development in Zambian children” with specific focus on Lozi children in Senanga and Shangombo districts of Western Province. The presentations of the findings are clustered around the three research questions on which the study was anchored namely: 1) What are the perceived cognitive outcomes and social processes of participating in songs and dances? 2) How does playing traditional instruments (*silimba* & drums) help instill a sense of cooperation in learners according to local informants? 3) What are the substantive themes, values, and practices of indigenous culture in the study that can be used to advocate the case for their inclusion in the Zambian education curriculum? The aim of the study was to assess and reveal the potential educational benefits associated with children’s participation in indigenous music and play activities for possible curriculum enrichment in schools.

In this chapter, I will present the information with regard to the first research question which sought to assess how songs and dances help learners’ minds to develop, and the social processes involved. In order to obtain this information, an ethnographic study involving systematic field observations and video recordings of several games and play activities of primary school going children in the two districts was conducted and documented. This was accompanied by in-depth interviews with pupils, expert music teachers, and expert music players of xylophone (*silimba*). The duration of the study lasted for five months from September 2012 to February 2013. This was first preceded by a pilot study that lasted for two weeks aimed at perfecting the research questions. The information presented is qualitative data elicited from the respondents’ elaborations during the interview schedules.

4.1 Existence of indigenous games/game songs

4.1.1 Teachers' knowledge of indigenous play and music activities^A

When the respondents were asked to mention whether they had any knowledge of the existence of indigenous games and game songs, all the four teachers in the four schools visited expressed knowledge of such games and game songs. Comments like the following were noted:

“Yes, they are there. They play these games and game songs. They play games like *muyato* and *mulabalaba*.”(12).

“Yah... I have seen some pupils within the school playing these games or doing them.”(11).

“Yes, some of the games that I have seen within the school are those where they clap their hands or chase one another.”(21).

“Traditional games are there like *muyato*, *mulabalaba* and many others too.”(32).

It was clear from these observations that the teachers had knowledge of the existence of the indigenous games and game songs. When they were asked to mention or give titles of these games and game songs, only few of them managed to do so. Titles of the given play games and songs could not exceed five in number. Common known games and game songs that were listed included the following:

Muyato, Mulabalaba, Nakutambekela, Waida, Pisi, and Butongwe.

4.1.2 Pupils' knowledge of indigenous play and music activities^B

Findings from the study regarding pupils' knowledge of the games and game songs revealed that they knew of such games and game songs. When they were asked to mention these games, they listed even some Western games. However, after further explanations on what indigenous¹

^A This section is based on interviews with four teachers from the four schools visited during the study. I have only assigned the serial numbers to each respondent. For a summary of the key demographic characteristics, see appendix k.

^B The comments cited in this section are only a sample of some responses from pupils from the four schools. Children's responses tended to be similar. I have only assigned the serial numbers to each respondent. For a summary of the key demographics, see appendix k

¹ In this study an indigenous game refers to a local traditional game.

games and game songs meant, they were able to state such games and game songs. The most known cited common games and game songs included the following:

Muyato, Mulabalaba, Muipato, Butongwe, Pisi, Sidunyu, Peba ni kakaze, Mbambamba ngulube, Ndindo-ndindo, Bana ba sikolo kwatae, and Nakutambekela.

When the children were asked to explain how they had acquired their expertise in the play and music activities, they revealed that they had done so through observations. They stated that they developed interest in the activities that their fellow friends were doing. The comments that follow show how they acquired their skills:

“I used to go out to play and watched how my friends were performing the games. I started asking my friends who later invited me to join them.”(24).

“We played together on the village play ground and my friends began to teach me how to play the game.”(09).

“My parents did not teach me this game but it was my friends who showed me how to do it.”(36).

“When I came from Kaoma to Senanga, I started teaching my friends the *Nkoya*² games and dances that we used to dance on the *silimba*.”(34)

“No one taught me how to dance. I only observed how the school cultural group was dancing and I developed interest and started practicing also.”(14).

“I learnt that game when I was still very young. Others taught me. As for *muyato* I learnt that through the coaching I received from my elder sisters who are very good at this game.”(23).

A complete list of all the cited indigenous music and game songs is shown in Appendix G. A list of some games that the researcher was told as being rarely played and were perceived to be on the decline is given in Appendix H.

² *Nkoya* is one of the ethnic groups found in Kaoma district in Western Province.

4.2 Cognitive outcomes of participating in indigenous play and music activities

The intellectual values associated with the games/ songs presented in this section with regard to the first objective were elicited through the interviews that I had with the pupils and the expert music teachers. I shall present the types of the games and accompanying songs first before providing the findings from the informants for an easy overview of the type of games and songs under review.

4.3 Types of play and music activities

Table 1: Summary of play and music activities and their intellectual and social affordances according to local informants

S/N	Type	Game Play/Song	Perceived Cognitive Affordances	Perceived Social Processes Involved
1.	Stone passing/catching games/songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nakutambekela*</i> • <i>Muyato</i> • <i>Mulabalaba</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination • Concentration • Critical thinking • Finger dexterity • Speed and accuracy • Problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation • Socialization
2.	Aquatic play games/songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kutapa silozi</i> • <i>Butongwe</i> • <i>Muipato</i> • <i>Mezi mezi mulenaka*</i> • <i>Kwena ya mo*</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming skills • Dodging skills • Depth perception • Intelligent calculations • conservation of water & environmental management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation • Socialization • Perseverance

3.	Hand clapping play games/songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mbambangulube*</i> • <i>Ndindo-ndindo*</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligent decisions • Psychomotor development • Alertness • concentration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility • Unity • Cooperation
4.	Work songs (pounding & cultivation songs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Naba sitela bo John*</i> • <i>Ma Monde ku lima butuku*</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music rhythmic Patterns • Diplomacy • Accompanying lyrics to the correct tempo of the song 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation • Recognition of gender awareness & gender roles • Teaches value of work • Promotes thriftiness
5.	Stories/Story songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Matangu</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes memory management • Didactic thinking • Cognitive effectiveness • Promotes intelligent reasoning • Promotes listening & speaking skills • Enhances comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation • Motivation • Socialization • Obedience • Teach social values
6.	Pretend play games/songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mandwani</i> • <i>Silokee silokee*</i> • <i>Ani siti boma *</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction skills/cooking skills • Simulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation for social life skills • Cooperation

				Promotion of relational skills
7.	Chasing play games/songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Peba ni kakaze*</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity • Dodging • Critical thinking/intelligent judgment • Accuracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social cooperation
8.	Riddles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Manyumbo</i> • <i>Tukwaci</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes critical thinking • Mental testing • Creative thinking • Problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaches social values
9.	Catching play games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pisi</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making intelligent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation
10.	Songs and dances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Siyemboka</i> • <i>Sinjangili</i> • <i>Sipelu</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening skills • Dancing skills • Singing skills (singing to the correct pitch) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes social harmony • Cooperation • Socialization
11.	Traditional musical instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Silimba</i> playing/ drumming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination • Harmony identification • Listening skills • Playing skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes social harmony • Cooperation • Socialization
12.	General play songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kulukulu uya kai*</i> • <i>Pule pule inele*</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of seasons/environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation of the local environment

* play games accompanied by songs

4.3.1 Stone passing/ catching games and game songs

These games involve the passing on of a stone object or any other similar object to a participant in the game. The games in this category that I came across during the study include the following:

a) *Nakutambekela*

This is an action performing game accompanied by a song which is sung to the rhythmic movement of the stone being passed or relayed from one participant to the other. During the time that I observed this play song, 14 children participated in it. The play song requires a sizeable number of participants for it to be interesting. Participants play this game in an open air area for more space while kneeling down in a bended or squatting posture in a closed ring formation. The participants play the game in a synchronised manner of relaying the stone from one participant to the other. As the tempo of the song increases, some participants end up failing to relay the stones. When the game is halted, those with heaps of piled stones in front of them are disqualified and the game begins all over again.



Figure 2: Children demonstrating the *Nakutambekela* play game song

Following are the words of the song:

Lozi

Nakutambekela sona sika se

Usike wa fosa weze sina na

English

I am passing along this thing [stone]

Do not make a mistake, do as I have done

The song is repeated over and over again until it is halted.

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

During the interviews with the expert music teachers on the intellectual underpinnings of this game song, the following views were brought out:

“To me, it is a coordination game in that participants will want to increase their speed to avoid a heap of stones.”(02)

“This game keeps the child very alert that there is something that should be done, and that they must do it exactly the way it is done in the whole system. The child must ensure that the chain of relay is not interrupted. In this respect, it is an intellectual skill on the fact that it requires the brain to ensure that the receipt of the object and the relaying of the object are not disturbed or not halted.”(01)

“It [*Nakutambekela*] focuses on concentration of passing stones.”(12).

“This game is an action game song. You make the children be in a circle and you give an item that they are going to pass on. *Nakutambekela* encourages learners to pay attention to what they are doing. They have to pay much attention because if one misses the stressed part, then that child will be removed out. You go to the very end until you have very few players remaining. Players have to concentrate and focus their attention on the game.”(02)

“The action game demands a lot of thinking on the part of the player to think or reason on how s/he is going to give the other player the stone or item they are using. The fastness and the pace at which the players get involved in the game song need much thinking and this is what makes it to be an intellectual activity.”(32).

Mobilisation of the intellectual processes according to the informants was achieved mainly through the coordinated process of the eyes and hand in picking and passing the stones. The views of one female teacher in Shangombo on this point were that:

“The game requires the player to critically reason on how s /he is going to give the other player the stone they are using without disturbing the harmony of the game itself. The coordination involved in the game is the cognitive element that the play has. The player is expected to be alert³ while participating in the game.”(22).

Commenting on the social values of *Nakutambekela*, it was observed by one expert teacher from Namalangu in Senanga district that:

“In the royal establishment system, it is a typical example of how information is passed from the king to the subjects without any distortion of the information. You are given something and you are expected to pass it along to the other with accuracy. Even during the *kuomboka* ceremony⁴, the paddlers have a coordinated way of paddling without hitting on the barge.”(02).

b. *Muyato*

This is one of the commonest games that the researcher came across during the study. Played mostly by girls, it is played either as a pastime activity or as a competitive game in which a winner emerges at the end of the activity. Some expert music informant pupils disclosed to me that *muyato* could either be accompanied by a song or not.

The game involves the digging of a sizeable small hole in which some small stones or seeds or small round objects can be used for scooping. A fairly large stone or round object is used for throwing in the air in time for the scooped stones/seeds to be taken back and forth into the hole by the hand of the player. During the throwing intervals, the player takes the required number of seeds into the hole and scoops them again until all the seeds have been transacted on. The informants disclosed to me that there were four types of *muyato*. The first three forms of *muyato* required the players to use 4, 6, or 12 seeds/stones only for playing. The fourth one required

³ Alertness as used here refers to awareness or vigilance while playing the game.

⁴ *Kuomboka* ceremony is an annual traditional ceremony of the Lozi people when they move from the flood plain to the higher land. The ceremony takes place in March or April and attracts thousands of spectators from within and outside Zambia.

between 70- 100 seeds for playing. However, in the fourth type, players were only expected to scoop what they could instead of taking the whole contents of seeds/stones out from the hole. If, for instance, player A managed to get 20 seeds before being disqualified, player B would manage about 25, while player C would only manage 17, and so forth depending on the number of players. This type of *muyato* differed from the other first three in that players were only required to get one seed at every throw until they got disqualified. At the end of the game, the participants counted the seeds to find who had more seeds. That explains why in the fourth type of *muyato*, players were expected to have more seeds depending on the number of interested participants.



Figure 3: Children at Namalangu Basic School playing *muyato*

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

When asked to cite the intellectual affordances that *muyato* as game had, children's responses highlighted a lot of interesting views. Comments such as the ones listed were very common:

"We find from it the arithmetic of addition and subtraction." (18).

"A person may gain some skills in arithmetic through *muyato*." (27).

"*Muyato* can aid someone to know how to count especially the one for 12 seeds. An individual first begins to take 2 seeds into the hole, then 3 seeds, etc, etc." (33).

"*Muyato* and *mulabalaba* can aid in doing mathematics. As a person continues to play *mulabalaba*, s/he gains knowledge." (05).

The teachers' observations on the perceived affordances of the game included comments like:

"The game needs much concentration. There is some kind of addition and subtraction involved in the game. I also think it builds the learner's thinking capacity in that it helps the learner to think faster." (01).

"What I normally see when the children are playing *muyato* especially the one involving twelve seeds from a local tree known as *mukusi* (teak) is that children learn multiplication in that game. This is because they have to first begin by taking one seed at a time, then two seeds, then three, four, five, six, and so forth up to twelve. Again, what I have observed is that this game helps the child to think very fast. This happens mainly through the coordination process involved in taking the seeds out from the hole while there is an object thrown in the air. During this time, she is expected not to allow the thrown object to fall on the ground otherwise she will be disqualified. Therefore, this process quickens the thinking process of the child for the coordination between the hands and the scooping of the seeds to happen." (22).

"Children who play games like *muyato* appear to do very well even in some other subjects at school. Even at home a child who has been very much fond of playing *muyato* will assimilate things very fast. A child will not find difficulties in writing and doing mathematical problems that involve counting." (11).

"These games (*mulabalaba* and *muyato*) also mould the children's thinking capacities. *Muyato* and *mulabalaba* help the children in that the games help to facilitate the process of thinking. These things have to go with the number of seeds. There is counting which is an arithmetic skill. There is addition and subtraction. So all the four principles of arithmetic are done there." (12)

"*Muyato* is a game that makes a child have the knowledge of arithmetic by knowing how to subtract and add. As she throws the object, she knows how many [seeds] should go into the hole, and how many should remain outside. When you look at that, you will realize that it is arithmetic involving subtraction. Other seeds remain until when all those outside have been completed." (32).

According to the informants, mobilisation of the intellectual processes is achieved through an intelligent process of making additions, subtractions, multiplication, and division while throwing the stone in the air. In observation of this process, one expert music teacher had this comment:

“Intellectual processes are mobilised through the process of determining how many seeds outside the hole should be taken back into the hole. During this time, a player gets involved in a lot of critical thinking⁵ and makes intelligent calculations on how she should separate the desired number of seeds at a time from the scattered ones before the stone falls back into her hand.” (31).

The social benefits that *muyato* has includes enhancing cooperation among players. The researcher’s observations were that players who got disqualified in the game did not need to be told that they had misfired but voluntarily surrendered the throwing stone to the next player without complaining.

Despite the above cited social benefit, a few respondents disclosed that some parents did not approve of playing *muyato*, and hence such parents tended not to allow their children play the game. The researcher found that this attitude was due to some culturally held beliefs that viewed *muyato* as something that could bring bad luck. *Ki mwiila ku swalelela ku bapala muyato kakuli muyato wa kona kutolela mutu.* (It is a taboo to continuously play *muyato* because it can bring bad luck to a person) (18). This deep rooted cultural view associated the hole that children dug in the ground with the grave. Thus continuous playing of *muyato* is seen as some kind of lurking omen, and hence the reason why some parents discouraged it.

Other informants had different views on this deep rooted cultural attitude when they observed that the taboo simply acted as a deterrent to stop children from being involved in playing the game for longer hours at the expense of work. They noted that:

“*Muyato ki papali yende hahulu kihona kuli banana ba kona ku palelwa ku eza misebezi ya kwa malapa haiba haba hanisiwi ka nzila yenwi.*” (*Muyato* is a very interesting game therefore children may fail to do their assigned chores if they are not discouraged in some way).(42).

⁵ ‘Critical thinking’ (*ku nahana hahulu*) as used here refers to much mental calculations.

c. *Mulabalaba*

Mulabalaba is a traditional game involving the movement of some stones/seeds from one hole to another. Unlike *muyato*, this game involves two players at a time who are expected to face each other and make their movements in opposite directions to each other. These movements are done in small holes arranged in about 4 vertical lines (or columns) and 8 horizontal lines (or rows) respectively. Horizontal lines can sometimes go to about 12. Players agree on the number of seeds to put in the holes. When the seeds being moved end in an empty hole on the side facing the other opponent while the opponent has some seeds in those direct holes on his side, then such seeds are declared captured.



Figure 4: Children at Sioma Basic School playing *Mulabalaba*

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

Mulabalaba's cognitive underpinnings involve making intelligent calculations when moving seeds from one hole to another. Each movement made is highly calculated. Expert music teachers' views on this point were that:

“Concerning some games like *mulabalaba*, there are of different types. There is one for twelve⁶ which we all know that when the children play, they have to do a lot of thinking. And through the thinking process involved, the child’s mind develops. There is another one involving the movement of objects in some holes. Even this one too, it is very helpful because there is some arithmetic involved in it. As a child makes some movements, there are some calculations involved in determining the number of seeds in some holes and counting them to know where the seeds will end at. And these are things that are found in mathematics.” (31).

“*Mulabalaba* enhances intelligent calculations during the process of playing. It helps in solving problems especially in counting. When they are playing those stones, their aim is to get the stones from their opponents. Their target is to win and they know that when I get this number of stones, then I am going to win. So this increases a lot of creativity and has some mathematics too. Intellectual ability is attained through counting the numbers of stones which are in those holes, and they become faster thinkers because they know that if I put this number, then I will reach there, so they become very fast in thinking.” (22).

“*Mulabalaba* teaches children how to count. The mind of the child critically learns to follow things. In fact some children have learnt how to count from doing *muyato* and *mulabalaba*. By the time the child goes to school, s/he has already learnt how to count.” (22).

“*Mulabalaba* helps one to think critically. For them [children] to do *mulabalaba*, there should be accuracy and that accuracy entails them to have a target.” (31).

Some expert children informants observed that:

“*Mulabalaba* teaches children how to count and follow what is happening.” (23).

“*Mulabalaba* increases one’s knowledge in mathematics.” (26).

⁶ I tried to find out if children played this type of *mulabalaba* but it appeared they did not know the game. As a researcher and one who has grown up in Western Province, we used to play this game while we were still young. The game is played on a board somehow similar to the way chess is played. Details of how this game is played are given in appendix I.

In *mulabalaba*, the intellectual processes were mobilised through intense and logical observations of the movements of the opponent player. This, according to the informants, led a player to make critical and logical judgments about how he/she moved about. Their views were:

“*Mulabalaba* makes the one moving to first think on how he/she is going to move.” (06).

“In just a short time, the player has to know how many seeds have to remain in the hole. In this way the child grasps things fast.” (24).

Findings obtained from the informants as well as my personal observations on the cognitive benefits of playing stone passing/catching games were that these games had the potential to enhance children’s numerical skills. Playing these games required the participants to engage in logical thinking and problem solving strategies to obtain desired results. Cooperation among learners was also another element cited by some of my informants as being a notable feature in *mulabalaba*. As a result of the cooperation created, people easily engaged in relaxed social intercourse especially those who were good at the game.

4.3.2 Aquatic Play Games

Findings obtained from the key informants revealed that, among the Lozi people of Western Province, aquatic games are culturally considered very important. Swimming, also known as *kutapa silozi*, is not only a game but a survival skill that one needs in this annually flood prone province. During my study, the following were some of the common local aquatic games cited to me:

- *Kutapa silozi*
- *Butongwe*
- *Muipato*

Game songs accompanying these games included:

- *Mezi mezi mulana’ ka* (Water, water, my master)
- *Kwena ya mo haina meno.* (The crocodile that lives here has no teeth)

In this category, '*kutapa silozi*'⁷ (swimming), was cited to me as an activity that accompanied many activities among which were fishing and agriculture. Many people whose pieces of land for farming were situated on the other side of lakes and rivers had no alternative but to know this skill, as dangerous incidents of canoes capsizing during some storms were a common phenomenon. Sometimes during the floods whole villages would be swallowed up overnight with water. The skill was also reported to be a necessary requirement for any one paddling in the royal barge during the annual celebrations of the *kuomboka* ceremony. Some of my informants told me that in the past, children learning how to swim were usually told to swallow some tiny live fishes, known locally as *tushiba / tumbala*, for one to quickly assimilate the art of '*kutapa silozi*' (swimming).

- ***Butongwe***

This is a touching/chasing game done in some deep water. Players must know how to swim known in the local language as *kutapa silozi*. Although both boys and girls can play the game, they play it separately. The one assigned to chase others is expected to touch any other participant for him/her to be cleared of the 'bad luck' associated with the game. During the chase, those being chased challenge their opponents by dodging, going down to the bottom of the river/lake, or by swimming very fast. Some children in Lukanda expressed the following views regarding the social skills they get from playing *butongwe*:

"The other type of *butongwe* involves one player remaining on land while others get into the water. Those that are in water will be required to get down for some time without coming out. If one comes out earlier than others s/he will be tasked to start chasing others." (16).

"*Butongwe* is a nice game because through this game we learn many things. For instance one who does not know how to swim will be encouraged to learn how to swim when s/he sees expert swimmers go into the deep water." (03).

⁷Lozi people especially those living in the Barotse plain tend to think they are masters in swimming because of the abundance of rivers, hence their reference to a skill in swimming as *ku tapa silozi* (lit. to swim like a Lozi).



Figure 5: Children playing *Butongwe*

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

One expert teacher observed the intellectual affordances that *butongwe* was capable of providing to the children when he gave the following explanation:

“In *butongwe*, the game involves making intelligent calculations as the person goes down in water. When a person does that, s/he has to make some calculations involving approximate measurements to determine how s/he will reach the other person. The process of making approximate measurements is a skill found in mathematics.” (31)⁸.

- ***Muipato***

This game is like *butongwe* except that in this game, players are mostly expected to hide themselves in water, usually where it is deep to avoid being easily spotted by the one who has been tasked to look for the others. Good swimmers usually go down to the bottom of the river to escape being caught. Both *butongwe* and *muipato* are games that played at home during children’s free times.

The intellectual underpinnings that these games have include the following as noted by my pupil informants:

⁸ This skill is known as subitising. It involves a rapid and confident judgment at a glance without counting to identify the number of objects within a visual scene.

“We learn how to swim.” (03).

“People see the value of water.” (16).

Some teacher informants noted that:

Muipato and *butongwe* help participants to learn more about depth identification- how shallow or deep the playing spot is. It develops the skills of speed, dodging and swimming which are sometimes very useful in escaping crocodiles and hippos later in life. (02).

My female expert music informant confided to me for that she was an excellent swimmer despite her physically challenged legs. Jokingly, she stated:

“*Ni bubebe hahulu mwa mezi hani tapa.*” (I am very fast in water when I am swimming)
. (32).

Mobilisation of the cognitive processes were noted to be achieved through the skills of swimming and learning how to make intelligent calculations of depth, as well as dodging, to avoid being caught while playing. Socially, the games were likely to promote social understanding and cooperation among children.

- **Aquatic play songs**

Following below are two of the commonly sung aquatic songs observed during the study:

- ***Mezi mezi mulena’ ka.***

The findings revealed that this song was sung in appreciation of the indispensable value of water. People in Western Province were known to be associated with water due to many rivers there. Usually players sang this song towards the end after playing the other aquatic games earlier reported. Sometimes the song was sung in class for motivation purposes as noted from the comments from one informant at Namalangu cited below:

“This one... (laughs, then continues)..., it is normally for motivation when played in the class. However, at the river they [children] play it while they are in the water half way. Actually, I think it helps them to determine even the depth of the river. From there, they are also trying to appreciate the wonders of the water.” (01).

The words to the song go as follows:

Caller: *Mezi mezi mulena'ka kamuso na ta' mulena* x2 (Water, water my master, tomorrow I will come again)

Group: *Mezi mezi mulena' ka kamuso na ta' mulena* x2 (Water, water my master, tomorrow I will come again)

Caller: *Epu* [equivalent to 'oh yes']

Group: *Kamundingili- ndingili* [imitating the sound of a drum being beaten]

Caller: *Epu* (See above)

Group: *Kamutekula mema* (As we draw the water)



Figure 6: Children singing *mezi mezi mulena ka*

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

The intellectual underpinnings in this game song according to the informants were that it helped the players to recognise the value of water. Their observations were that:

“This song shows the value of water. We use water for bathing, washing, and drinking.”(15).

“We get the fish we eat from the water.” (13).

The teachers had this to say:

“When the children have finished swimming that is when they sing this song. I think they do this to bid farewell to the water knowing that they will come the following day again. Water is perceived as a master because they cannot live without it. When they sing the words *Kamutekula mema*, in *Mbunda* language this simply means the way we usually draw water for use and for bathing. Children see the value of water in their local environment. Unfortunately, here where we are children do not play games like *butongwe* in the river because there are many crocodiles. But where there are no crocodiles *butongwe* and other aquatic games provide a lot of fun for the children.”(22).

“It teaches learners the need to conserve water because water virtually supports all forms of life.” (01).

“I think it is also good for environmental education on the need to preserve water as a natural resource.” (31).

These informants observed that the intellectual underpinnings in the song were mobilised through intelligent considerations and recognition of what role water played in supporting life in the local environment.

- ***Kwena ya mo, haina meno***

The findings revealed that this was a mockery song suggesting that the crocodile in the river was toothless. During my stay in Sioma, I heard numerous accounts from the local community of how crocodiles attacked people, with school children being the most vulnerable⁹.

The words to the song are as follows;

Caller: *Kwena ya moo* (The crocodile in here)

⁹ Sioma area is within the Sioma- Ngweze game reserve, hence the presence of these dangerous reptiles. When I reported at the school for my study, I was informed that the school had lost three children due to crocodile attacks in 2012 alone.

Group: *Haina meno* ([It] has no teeth)

This may be repeated as desired until when the children get tired.

During my visits to the river for video filming, I did not see any children playing in the river at Sioma or Sitoti in Shangombo districts because these areas were heavily infested with crocodiles. I needed the company of my research assistants to go to the river since visitors were believed to be victims to crocodiles. The video pictures that I successfully filmed were obtained from Senanga.

According to my teacher informants in Sioma, the song was composed in protest of the violent activities of crocodiles not only in attacking humans, but even people's livestock as well. Children who were interviewed during my field observations on the other hand narrated to me that they sang the song to mock any colleague who was not able to catch others in play games that involved catching or chasing others. My interview with the expert teacher at Namalangu School revealed a slightly different view:

“In real life, this song can apply to leaders who are incompetent in executing their duties that they are likened to a toothless crocodile. Somehow, the game song is a way of mocking someone who is a failure. A crocodile is a strong and vicious animal.”(02).

The study outcomes on the intellectual values associated with the aquatic games and accompanying songs suggested that these activities provided a forum for children to acquire good knowledge in nature and environmental education. The values that the second song was likely to enhance in learners were social in nature in that the song aimed at discouraging laziness among players. Instead, players were encouraged to develop self esteem and perseverance in doing things.

4.3.3 Hand clapping play games

The following traditional games were listed as belonging to this category: *Mba mba ngulube*, *ndindo-ndo*, *Zambe- zambe*, and *Ma Nasilele*. Only the findings of the first two games in this category have been reported in this section.

a. Mbambangulube.

Players in this game begin by choosing two strong leaders. These then decide what items they would offer to entice some players on their sides. The two leaders then face each other and begin to clap their raised hands while the other players make a single file and pass through under the raised hands of these leaders. The last person in the line is trapped and asked to choose from the items the leaders have to offer. This is done in whispers to prevent others from hearing the items on offer. As the single file of players passes through the raised hands of the leaders, the following song is sung:

Lozi

Callers: *Mbambamba*¹⁰ *ngulube bana ba bendi ngulube* x2

Group: *Mbambamba ngulube bana ba bendi ngulube* x2

Callers: *Sakanyika mbambamba oyo kweche*

English

Pig, these are your children

Pig, these are your children

Sakanyika (person's name), you have been caught

After the callers (usually the two leaders) have sung the last part, the last person in the line is trapped, hence the words '*kweche*'(trapped).

After every one has made a choice, a tug of war follows. Players who cross the line separating the two groups automatically join the stronger team.

¹⁰ *Mbambamba*- These are meaningless syllables



Figure 7: Children demonstrating *mbambambangulube* game song

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

According to the informants, this game helped learners to make intelligent choices. These choices were mobilized through a careful analysis of the items being offered by the two leaders. In elaborating their views on this issue, some pupils noted that:

“One has to make good choices. If you do not think before choosing, you may join the group that has few members.” (34)

“A person is expected to be wise in deciding the goodness and badness of an item.” (10).

The social process that this game has involves teaching one to be fully responsible for the choices one has made in life. It was also observed that the game was potentially beneficial for promoting physical fitness and was therefore good for psychomotor development.

b. Ndindo-ndindo

Participants in this game normally form a circle and bend as they clap their hands. As the game progresses, accompanied by a song, the first and third players in the circle are expected to raise their heads while the second in between them remains bending awaiting for his/her turn too. This process of raising the heads of the first and third player at a time in a coordinated form makes the game to be full of fun. A player who fails to meet this expectation is disqualified.

The accompanying game song is sung as follows:

Caller: *Ndindo-ndindo ee* x2, (Ndindo, repeated here, is the name of a person),

Group: *Ee ee* x2 (*Ee* for response as ‘yes’),

Caller: *Ndindo* (repeated as desired)

Group: *Ee njakumwene, ee njakumwene* (repeated as desired) (Yes, I have seen you).

Ee njakumwene is Mbunda¹¹; meaning, ‘Yes, I have seen you.’



Figure 8: Children at Sitoti Basic School playing *ndindo-ndindo* game song

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

When I tried to find out from the expert music teachers on the intellectual processes that the game had, most of them cited alertness as a factor that this game was likely to promote in players. They observed that:

“Players have to be alert all the time and be observant to avoid being disqualified.” (01).

“There must be concentration while pupils play the game.” (32).

¹¹ Mbunda is one of the ethnic groups found in Western Province.

During the process of playing, a player who fails to coordinate with his/her partner at the time when he/she is supposed to look at the partner automatically gets disqualified.

Commenting on the social values that *ndindo-ndindo* had, two of my informants stated that:

“This game play is a unifying factor for both Lozi children and Mbunda as it shows the Lozi children’s appreciation of Mbunda play games.” (01).

“The song also fosters cooperation among the players.” (22)

As a researcher, I confirmed this view when I observed that many of the game/game songs recorded were both in Mbunda and Silozi languages.

4.3.4 Work / Calming songs

These were songs that were associated with work activities or used for calming children as lullabies. Popular among the work songs that the researcher came across in the study was the song ‘*Naba sitela bo John.*’ Some of the children in their villages were found engaged in actual pounding of maize and willingly gave their consent to be video filmed.

The song is sung to the pounding rhythm of the pestle and may involve one or two girls pounding. These are the words to the song:

Naba sitela bo John (I am pounding for John)

Basali kunama bo John (While John is simply relaxed with out stretched legs)

Ni mumba tuna bo John (With a very big protruding stomach)

Inge lisheshi bo John (That looks like a big frog [lisheshi])

Shipu, shipu, shipu, shipu. (Imitating the sound made by the pestle).



Figure 9: Girls in a village pounding while singing *nabasiela bo John*

The work song continues until the girls switch on to another song. Meanwhile, there will be mountains of fine flour in the big dishes as a result of pounding done by the girls.

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

When children were asked to explain why they sang the song, they explained that the song, among other things, motivated them to work hard. They expressed the following views:

“This song only motivates¹² us to work more, and we do not easily get tired when we are pounding maize or millet.” (15).

“It only entertains us while we pound maize and reduces on the boredom.” (26)

“We sing songs so that we direct our minds to what we are doing so that we finish the work fast.” (06).

I tried to find out why the name of John was the one used instead of a female name, they made the following explanation:

¹² Motivate as used here refers to ‘inspire’ (*kususueza*) to do something.

“This song shows that John is a lazy man who cannot work. Therefore, the singers want him to work.” (15).

“Women are the ones who work very much.” (01).

“This song is a mockery directed against lazy people.” (06)

During my discussions with the teachers at Sioma Basic School on the same work song, they explained to me that other than being a mockery song, it was also a protest song regarding the social gender imbalances. They noted that:

“It is a message to the men that the gender roles should be done together.” (02).

During the interviews with the informants, the researcher was told that the song was a call to society to reflect and address the existing gender imbalances.

Another work song reported and noted during the study was ‘*Ma Monde*.’ This song is the opposite of ‘*Naba sitela bo John*’ in that it is directed towards lazy women who have a habit of failing to complete their cultivation fields. The words of the song are:

Lozi	English
Caller: <i>Mamonde</i>	Monde’s mother
Group: <i>Kulima butuku</i>	Cultivating is a painful thing
Caller: <i>Kuca munati</i>	Eating is a sweet thing
Group: <i>Kulima butuku</i>	Cultivating is a painful thing

When asked about the relevance of this song, my respondents replied:

“This song shows that some people do not like to work, they just want to eat. The song then is advising such people not to be lazy.” (15).

“The song is sung to ridicule lazy women. You know there are some people who are just lazy. When they go to the field they only cultivate a small portion and then get back home.” (42).

“It teaches children the value of working and not just to be waiting for food prepared by our parents.” (31).

The sentiments expressed by the respondents reflected the social benefits of getting involved in agriculture which is a social responsibility that society wanted to be seen in growing children.

One of the calming songs that I came across during the study was entitled ‘*Wena mwanana u lila hahulu*’ (Child, you cry too much). This song, according to the informants, was a lullaby meant to lure the child into some sleep to allow the mother to work. One of the *silimba* informants told me that in the olden days, it was common for this song to be accompanied by playing a rattle, known locally as *mulai*. It was usually made by putting small seeds/ stones in a tin that had a lid. A stick was thrust through the tin to the inserted lid.

Sometimes, mothers danced as they sang the song accompanied with a rattle (*mulai*) while singing:

Lozi	English
Caller: <i>Wena mwanana</i>	<i>You</i> Child
Respondents: <i>U lila hahulu</i>	You cry too much
Caller: <i>Bona ndataho</i>	Look, your father...
Respondents: <i>Hana mutanga</i>	[Father] Has no slave

The song would be repeated several times until the child sunk into sleep. In this way the parent would be free to work while the child slept.

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

The song was likely to provide a platform for fostering social teaching of hard work. One of the *silimba* informants who sang this song to me, and could not help laughing at the mocking words of the song made the following observation:

“Pina ye kiya mashendekela, sihulu ku shendekela luna baana. I shendekela baana babasika iposheka hande kakutokwa babeleki baba sebeleza basali ba bona.” (This is a mocking song,

especially directed to us men. It ridicules men who are poor and unable to provide a slave [servant] to work for their wives) (42).

4.3.5 Story songs

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

My interviews with the expert children on the values and intellectual underpinnings of folk stories (*matangu*), as well as story songs (*lipina za matangu*) revealed the following views:

“Songs in the stories can help us to remember the whole story.” (16).

“Songs in the stories are so nice that one cannot easily forget the story.” (28).

“It is a taboo to tell stories during day time.” (35).

“Songs can give people wisdom.” (23).

“A person can be intelligent¹³ through the lessons obtained from the stories.” (14).

One of the *silimba* informants expressed the following views on the intellectual values of stories (*matangu*) and songs associated with stories (*lipina za matangu*):

“Folk stories encouraged cooperation among children. All of them met together in the village to listen from an elderly person who knew how to tell the stories. Songs were necessary because people listened to them and enjoyed singing.” (44).

The teachers interviewed had these views:

“Through stories (*matangu*), children learn how they are supposed to conduct themselves, and they also learn of the things that took place a long time ago.” (22).

“Story songs promoted listening skills among children.” (01).

“Songs encourage the listeners to be alert and to be attentive. Sometimes the story is embedded in the song itself. The repetitions are helpful to make follow ups in the story, and this increases the level of cognition.” (31).

¹³ In Silozi, the term ‘intelligence’ (*ngana* or *maano*) is sometimes used interchangeably with ‘cleverness’ (*butali*). In the above context, it is cleverness that the respondent refers to.

“Songs help listeners to follow or remember the sequence of events. This helps to improve children’s memory.

Stories motivate listeners and learners to learn to socialize.” (32).

During the visits that I paid to some of the villages where prearrangements were made to listen to some stories and do some recording, children who were listening to the stories remained awake for longer hours. Many of them would be seen pushing the logs of fire on to the dying embers, and sending thousands of flying stars in the air in the process.



Figure 10: Children at Sitoti Basic School listening to a story during a CTS lesson

In the story that one grade six informant¹⁴ gave in class about a giant masked creature (*sikishi-kishi*) and a little boy, the little boy escaped from this awful and frightful monster when he sang a song to it. The story song was found to be quite popular and the words were as follows:

Lozi

Caller: *Kukwe kuku* x2

Group: *Ku mambongo kucima walyako ku mambongo* x 2

Caller: *Tente, tente* x 2

English

Grand pa, grand pa, x2

You eat the mambongo fruits [local wild fruits] x2

(Imitating sound of a drum)

¹⁴ This story was recorded at Lukanda Basic School on 11/10/2012 by informant (14) during class story time. Pupils’ participation in the listening and singing was very interesting. Children enjoy listening to stories.

Group: *Ku mambongo kucima walyako ku mambongo* x 2 You eat the mambongo fruits [local wild fruits] x2

In this story, the masked creature (*sikishi- kishi*) got tired and sank into sleep because of dancing vigorously to the nice and charming song. The little boy escaped from being swallowed up by this forest monster.

While the story was on, I observed high levels of concentration and maximum participation during the singing. Story songs on the other hand helped the listeners to follow the sequence of the story. In the story of the boy whose bird was eaten by the father told in class by a grade four girl¹⁵ at Sioma Basic School, the contents of the story could easily be remembered by the children in the reverse order of starting from the end of the story to the beginning. This was the song of the story to show how the sequence of events unfolded:

Lozi	English
<i>Musizana uni fe mulola wa ka, e;</i>	Young lady, give me back my soap;
<i>Mulola wa ka o zwa kwa kacembele, e;</i>	My soap which came from the old woman
<i>Kacembele ka felize nakatenge wa ka, e;</i>	The old woman had finished my small fish
<i>Nakatenge twa ka totu zwa kwa tucembele,e;</i>	My small fish came from the other old women
<i>Tucembele tu felize mafula a ka, e;</i>	The old women had finished my body lotion
<i>Mafula a ka a zwa kwa basizana,e;</i>	My body lotion came from the young ladies
<i>Basizana ba felize mabisi a ka, e;</i>	The young ladies finished my milk
<i>Mabisi a ka a zwa kwa balisana,e;</i>	The milk came from the cattle herd boys
<i>Balisana ba lobile mulamu wa ka,e;</i>	The cattle herd boys broke my club/walking stick
<i>Mulamu wa ka o zwa ku bo ndate,</i>	The club/ walking stick came from my father
<i>Bo ndate ba cile kaiba ka ka, e;</i>	My father ate my little pigeon

¹⁵ The story was given by informant (26) on 07/11/2012 during class learning time at Sioma Basic School.

Kaiba ka ka ka ka ka zwa mwa mushitu, e; My little pigeon came from the forest

Mwa mushitu o na wale wa Liwanika,e. The forest belongs to [king] Lewanika

Ka ka yonge, ka ka siyala. Let this end, let that one remain.

Mobilisation of the intellectual benefits was likely to be achieved through the listening and recall processes in which the songs acted as the main channel. Promotion of cooperation and obedience to the social rules of the society were also likely to be achieved.

Some respondents expressed fears that stories were on the decline. They cited the advent of new technologies especially the television, and lack of parental involvement in telling children some stories as the contributing factors. In their views, the following were the reasons:

“Parents have no time these days to be with their children and tell them stories. Stories are on the decline because of television. Some children enjoy watching movies about fighting.” (02).

“In the villages, some elderly people take more of their time in town than they do in the villages.” (21).

Commenting on the value of stories on health education, one teacher recalled some of the stories told to him when he was still very young:

“Some stories were meant to instill health principles among children and discouraged them from defecating anywhere and anyhow. I recall a story we were given when I was still very young of how fecal matter followed a man to his in-laws’ place because while on a journey to his in-laws, this same man branched off to relieve himself in the nearby forest where it was not allowed to do so.” (01).

4.3.6 Pretend play (*Mandwani*)

In this type of games, children imitate the village set ups usually done at the outskirts of the village. Younger children on the other hand play on the village play grounds known locally as

*'patelo.'*¹⁶ A number of village activities are also hosted on these play grounds. During *mandwani*, children construct temporary grass houses, usually made in a conical shaped form.

When asked to explain what things the children learnt at *mandwani*, many of the informants stated that they learnt many skills that made it easier for them to do some household chores. Girls gained skills in tasks that were done by women while their counterparts gained skills in masculine tasks. Many of the respondents admitted that they were not provided with food items by their parents as the following child observed:

“We learnt how to cook. Boys learnt how to build small huts. When it came to mealie meal, we used to steal these for our use at the *mandwani*. We cooked our food in the tins and ate the food. Sometimes it was not possible to have supper at home with the other family members after eating *nshima* from *mandwani* because we would be too satisfied to eat anything again. After learning how to cook from *mandwani*, I could prepare good food even at home.” (35).



Figure 11: Children in a village playing pretend play (*Mandwani*)

¹⁶ Lozi villages are usually built in a ring formation leaving a large open space in the middle of the village for major village activities. Children stage their play activities here especially at night during moonlight.

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

During *mandwani*, children choose different roles, or they may be assigned to do some of these roles. Such roles usually ranged from being a village head man to lower roles, such as being a dog or cockerel. But children performed these duties happily and dutifully. The interviews I had with the teacher informants on whether children played such games in their spare time at home revealed the following views concerning *mandwani*:

“Children here also play *mandwani*... I did that when I was a child. It prepares someone to be responsible when they grow to know things that are done by adults. They learn that as parents, father should do things like this, mother should do things like that so that when it comes to real life, such children become good children because they know their roles.” (32).

“In *mandwani* children imitate what their parents do at home. They learn about life. To me it is like it is a school. It really helps young ones to learn how to become responsible citizens. Boys were doing the jobs of males. The girls were acting the roles of parents. They also had terms like *bo mulamu* (brother-in-law). It was a semi structure of the actual village. They were given roles; if you are father, you have to do what the father does. By doing that when they came back home from playing, the children really helped their parents because of what they were imitating at *mandwani*.” (12).

“When we used to play *mandwani*, sometimes parents did give us some things to use, but certain other things like salad and relish; we used to steal because parents would not allow this as they saw it to be a waste of resources. But I think the idea was good because we learnt how to prepare things from there. I remember I learnt how to prepare *chibwantu* [local drink] at a tender age through *mandwani*. This time now I am proud that I am an expert and I can teach others too.” (12).

“*Mandwani* helps a child to know things while he/she is still very young.” (22).

“There are not many things that a child may learn in life if he/she does not play *mandwani*.” (21)

“Children learn how parents live in their own homes because such children will become parents too.” (11).

Children's views concerning *mandwani*'s socio- cognitions included the following:

“*Mandwani* helps a child to learn many things while still very young.” (34).

“At *mandwani*, we learn how to cook *buhobe*. Boys learn how to fetch firewood.” (33).

“When we go to play at *mandwani*, we cook *buhobe* and relish. I learnt how to cook nice food from *mandwani*.” (35)

Two local *silimba* respondents on the other hand, had contrary views when they observed that:

“Children devote most of their time playing, and they have no time to go to school. Some of them end up making *mandwani* even on the way to school.” (44).

“*Mandwani* are bad because children may become wasteful. Many children have a tendency of stealing such things as salt and mealie meal.” (42)

While playing *mandwani*, those who became trouble makers risked being banned from playing with others. In order to institute discipline, banishment songs were usually sang:

Caller: *Silokee, silokee uka bapala ni sitoho sa hao*. (Alone, alone, you will play with your own head).

Group: *Silokee, silokee u ka bapala ni sitoho sa hao* (Alone, alone, you will play with your head).

The outcomes of the study revealed that this song was meant to ridicule the offender, and acted as a deterrent to would be offenders. The song was repeated several times to help the offender see his misdemeanour. If s/he showed remorse, acceptance to join the group was granted.

Other notable play songs especially for the very young ones, according to the informants included the following:

Ani siti bo ma, ni sita muloi (I am not pounding my mother, I am pounding the witch/wizard)

Ani siti bo ndate, ni sita muloi (I am not pounding my father, I am pounding the witch/wizard)

Ani siti bo kuku, ni sita muloi (I am not pounding my grand mom/father, I am pounding the witch/wizard)

Ani siti munyana' ka/ muhulwana' ka, ni sita muloi (I am not pounding my elder sister/elder brother, I am pounding the witch/wizard)

The findings of the study regarding this song showed that children expressed their hatred for witchcraft, and suggested that they were pounding the witch/ wizard, and not any member from the family circles. Again, this shows children's fears of losing any of their family members, hence their wish not to have such evil people around.

Generally, the views of the respondents revealed that *mandwani* and associated songs were a necessary factor in children's developmental process. Children demonstrated their intellectual development by carrying out simulations of adult activities.

4.3.7 Chasing games

- ***Peba ni kakaze* (Mouse and Cat)**

In the study, this was another common and popular play song found among school children. The game involves players forming a circle, and then two players are chosen, where one acts as a cat and the other, a rat. Both boys and girls play together. The cat and rat are expected to chase each other by moving in between the spaces of the players who form the circle. The idea is for the cat to catch the rat, while the rat should escape the cat by dodging¹⁷ it.

While the cat and the rat are involved in the chase, the players sing the following song:

Caller: *Amubone bana peba ni kakaze*, (children, look at the rat and the cat)

Group: *Amubone bana peba ni kakaze*, (children, look at the rat and the cat). This song is inviting children to see how the cat is chasing the mouse.

This is repeated several times until the cat successfully catches the rat, or the cat is unable to catch the rat. Any omission of not moving in the spaces between the players deems the defaulter disqualified.

¹⁷ Dodging (kupicuka).

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

In this play song the intellectual processes noted according to the teachers were as follows:

“This play needs creativity¹⁸. Players will be very careful and creative not to be caught by the other person.” (32).

“It teaches players to be fast in doing things.” (12).

“It strengthens the body for physical fitness.” (22).

“An individual must have the intelligence of dodging things.” (02).

“Players gain the skills of running and dodging.” (11).

The research participants cited facilitation of doing things accurately with some degree of speed as the intellectual processes that the play promoted in players, as well as making intelligent calculations of dodging the cat. These intellectual skills were mobilized through calculated movements in between the spaces without actually getting disqualified.

4.3.8 Riddles

Mental testing games were found to be in two types, namely: *Manyumbo* (riddles), and *tukwaci* (puzzles). These were found not to be accompanied by songs.¹⁹

a. *Manyumbo* (riddles)

Many of the riddles that the children cited to me mostly centred on the natural activities and environment of the Lozi people. For instance:

Caller: *Akoo* (This is a formal way of calling for attention from the respondents)

Respondents: *Keye* (Yes, let it come)

Caller: *Musali yo mutelele kalipaswana*²⁰ (A tall and beautiful woman)

¹⁸ Creativity as used here means ability to plan- (*kulela*) ways and means of escaping.

¹⁹ These play games have been included in this study because of their ability to develop the thinking processes of developing children and that they are usually performed alongside stories and story songs. During my study when I asked for indigenous play and music activities, these games were included on the list, hence I felt compelled to include them too.

Respondents: *Ki nuka* (It is a river).

Caller: *Akoo*

Respondents: *Keye*

Caller: *Kanwela ka tumuka* (What sinks and comes out [while one is on water])

Respondents: *Ki silabo* (It is a paddling stick)

Caller: *Akoo*

Respondents: *Keye*

Caller: *Ndu ya musumo ulimunwi* (A house with only one pillar)

Respondents: *Ki mbowa* (It is mushroom)

Caller: *Musali yo munde ya pila mwa mubu* (A very beautiful woman and yet she leaves underground).

Respondents: *Ki ngulu* (It is sweet potato).

A discussion of these will be done in the following chapter

b. *Tukwaci* (puzzles)

In this type of mental testing games, respondents were expected to explain or figure out the solution to a given problem. Following were some puzzles commonly noted:

“Ona foo, nekuna ni muzumi yana izo bulaya liputi ze faifi. Hato libuha sa fumana feela mikata ye mine. Ki sika mani seo?” (Once there was a hunter who killed five antelopes. After skinning them off their hides, he only remained with four hides. What is that? (17).

When this puzzle was given, none of the respondents managed to get it correct. Among the Lozis, when one fails to give a correct response to a puzzle, s/he is expected to admit this failure

²⁰ *Kalipaswana* means something that is dazzling. Figuratively this signifies beauty.

by saying, '*Pwapwa*' (I have failed). The correct answer given was stated as the human hand since it had five fingers and four spaces between the fingers.

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

Mental testing games were cited by the informants as being potentially useful for promoting critical and logical thinking among children. The teachers I interviewed made the following observations:

“Riddles can help children to develop their ‘intellects’- (*ngana*). When the children grow, they will have learnt a lot things like good morals and also behave accordingly.” (32).

“Riddles promote ‘critical thinking’- (*ku nahanisisa*)- because it is something like a puzzle, so the children must think deeper to come up with what is required.” (21).

“Riddles and puzzles encourage ‘creative thinking’- (*munahano o panga lika*).” (01).

“Riddles are ‘pregnant’²¹ with meanings’- (*ku lwala litaluso*). If you’re not sharp, you may not actually get the answer correctly.” (02)

“Riddles and puzzles have the potential of ‘sharpening the minds’²² of learners. They require kids to have a specific way of ‘solving problems’²³.”

“Puzzles require critical thinking.” (12).

4.3.9 Catching games

- ***Pisi***

Participants in this game first choose a player who is expected to call others to his side. When such a player has been chosen, the players will make two circles about 25-50 metres apart. The caller will occupy one circle while the all the players will go to the other circle. As the caller calls, the other players will be expected to respond. When the caller reaches the last part, then the

²¹ This is an idiomatic expression. Pregnancy in Lozi is *mulwalo* from the verb to carry (*lwala*). In this context it means to carry a lot of ‘meanings’ (*litaluso*).

²² Sharpening the mind refers to ‘making the mind to be clever’- (*kutalifisa munahano*). *Munahano* is mind, and the verb- ‘think’ (*nahana*) is derived from *mu-nahano*.

²³ Solving problems or ‘finding solutions to problems’ (*ku fumana likalabo kwa butata*).

other players on the other side attempt to escape by running to where the caller was while the caller also approaches them to make a catch. Below is the way the process of calling is conducted:

Caller: *Pisi* (*Pisi* [name of the game])

Respondents: *Yabula* (Pick it).

Caller: *Ndombe* (Bubble fish).

Respondents *Mwa poto* (In the pot).

Caller: *A ba kushapa* (When they give you some caning/thrashing).

Respondents: *Wa lila* (You cry).

Caller: *U lila ni?* (Why do you cry).

Respondents : *Bukuba* (Foolishness).

Caller: *Bwa mani?* (Whose?).

Respondents: *Bwa hao!* (Yours!).

Caller: 1

Respondents: *Makalelo* (Beginning/starting).

Caller: 2

Respondents: *Kuitukiseza* (Getting prepared).

Caller:3

Respondents: *Kuziba ko u ya* (To know where you are going).

Caller: 4

Respondents: *Kumata* (To run).



Figure 12: Children at Sioma Basic School playing *pisi*

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings.**

The intellectual process underpinning this game was cited as learning how to escape through tactful dodging (*kupicuka*) and mobilized through intelligent decisions of either avoiding to be caught, or planning when to be caught to avoid being assigned to become a caller if one happens to be the last person to be caught. These games required a lot of thinking on how to escape some danger. Some of the views I got from the respondents included the following:

“Children are given the skills of ‘dodging’ (*kupicuka*)’ (31).

“Children also count and make intelligent calculations²⁴ of either joining a group or not.”(31).

“Little children learn to count before they get into formal school²⁵. For instance, children learn to count up to four.” (21).

²⁴ Making intelligent calculations implies ‘making intelligent decisions’ - (*ku keta ka swanela*).

²⁵ Most of the children as well as teachers viewed this counting process as being good for children who have not yet started formal schooling.

4.3.10 Songs and dances

In the study, songs and dances performed by the pupils revealed the various functions that music played in facilitating intellectual and social development among children. Most of the songs and dances observed included the *siyemboka*, a dance usually associated with the girls' initiation ceremony, *sinjangili*, a local Mbunda dance usually performed in pairs between participants of the opposite sexes, and *sipelu*, mostly performed by Lozis in pairs involving the participants of the opposite sexes too. Songs that were commonly observed were classified in types, namely: Praise songs, mockery songs, or general songs²⁶. The study findings presented below focus on two of these praise song types.



Figure 13: Children at Lukanda Basic School performing a *siyemboka* dance

a. Praise songs.

These were songs that were directed at praising certain people for their contributions to society, or they only praised important Lozi events such as the *kuomboka*. Two songs that were directed at important events among Lozi people were: *Mukolo wa mulena- Nalikwanda* (Nalikwanda-the royal barge), and *Bafuluhi ba mulena* (The royal paddlers).

²⁶ Most of the dances and songs that the children performed in their cultural activities were mainly centred around the two types that I have given in this dissertation.

- ***Mukolo wa mulena***

This song depicted the way the royal boat (*Nalikwanda*) usually moves during the *kuomboka* ceremony of the Lozi people when they move away from the flooded Barotse plain to the upper land. The content of the song attributes the way the boat moves during this important function. These were the words of the song:

Lozi

English

Caller: *Mukolo wa mulena x2*

The king's royal's barge

Group: *Nalikwanda u taha u twiima x2*

Nalikwanda is approaching moving gracefully

All: *Mukolo wa mulena Nalikwanda u*

Nalikwanda is approaching moving gracefully

taha u twiimax2

The other song was *bafuluhi ba mulena*. (The king's royal paddlers)

Lozi

Caller: *Bafuluhi ba mulena'a yo munwi wa ku bona na libezi, oo na libezi ndelwa;*

Wa swanela ku ilibala' a mukiti wa mulena ki o mutuna, oo ki o mutuna lyombokisa

Ki o mutuna, ki o mutuna

All: *Ki o mutuna lyombokisa, bafuluhi ba mulena, yo munwi wa ku bona na libezi, oo na libezi ndelwa; Wa swanela kui libala'a mukiti wa mulena ki o mutuna, oo ki o mutuna lyombokisa.*

Caller: *Mukolo wa mulene,'*

All: *Mawe mukoloo, katuka twende.*

English:

One of the king's royal paddlers forgot the headgear; it was possible for him to do this because kuomboka ceremony is a big function.

Kuomboka ceremony is a big function; one of the royal paddlers forgot the headgear; it was possible for him to do this because kuomboka ceremony is a big function.

It was clear that these two songs were directly referring to the *kuomboka* ceremony and the activities that were associated with this function. The children that I interviewed concerning this told me that *kuomboka* was their most important annual ceremony. It was an important cultural event that taught them more about who the Lozi people were. Some pupils made the following observations regarding the value of songs:

“Songs contained some cultural values,” (18).

“The games and songs played are meant to preserve our cultural identities” (07).

b. Mockery songs

These were songs that were directed at criticizing behaviour that was not wanted in society. The aim was to help the wrong doer to reform without actually causing any direct physical confrontation with him. The following was one such type of a song given under this category:

- ***A ne ni ya kwa Livingi***

Caller: *A ne ni ya kwa Livingi, ba ni yumbula b'obe busunso ba li ni leke x2; busunso ba li ni lee-*

All: *Busunso ba li ni leke; a ne ni ya kwa Livingi, ba ni yumbula b'obe busunso ba li ni leke.*

English:

When I went to visit in Livingstone, I was given buhobe [cooked mealie meal dough] without any relish. I was told to buy relish instead.

The findings revealed that this song was a strong and stern criticism against any form selfishness, and failure to show hospitality to the visitors. I was informed that hard economic times were not an excuse for someone to fail to execute what was expected of him or her to do in the Lozi tradition that is, being kind and hospitable to others.

The intellectual lessons that children learnt in the songs cited above were lessons on diplomacy and tactfulness, communication skills, hospitality and respect for authority and love for one's own culture and values. Social affordance included learning how to leave with others in harmony. The songs acted as the channels of communication to transmit important messages.

Dances

- *Siyemboka*

Siyemboka was a dance that was mostly associated with the initiation ceremonies of girls. The dance was open to all, men, women, and children. When performed, it was done in a ring formation, while all the musical instruments that included xylophones and drums would be inside the ring. Participants danced to the music being provided by the musical instruments²⁷. Expert soloists were expected to lead the procession.

Other than being conducted for girls' initiation ceremonies, *siyemboka* dance was done at weddings, or during the *kuomboka* ceremony. It was an occasion for happiness and feasting. *Siyemboka* is a very popular dance in the whole province.

- *Sinjangili*

This was cited to me as one dance that was quite popular among the Mbunda speaking ethnic group. This dance could be performed in a ring formation like *siyemboka*, or it could be done in two rows comprising boys in one row, and girls in another. Participants danced in pairs half in the centre of the ring or rows. The dance was mostly accompanied by hand clapping by all the participants. The dance was mostly recorded and observed in Senanga at Lukanda Basic School. This was because the area was inhabited mostly by the Mbunda speaking people.

- *Sipelu*

This dance was found mainly in Shangombo district at Sioma Basic School. This dance was similar to *sinjangili* except that it was mostly performed by the Lozi people. The dance traces its origins from the Subiya and Shanjo ethnic groups of Sesheke district. Like *Sinjangili*, the dance

²⁷ My observations at Lukanda Basic School where a full ensemble was organized showed how essential the musical instruments were in providing the required accompaniment to *siyemboka* dance. Recordings were done on the 15/10/2012- 17/10/2012 in the afternoons.

is performed in two rows comprising boys in one row and girls in the other. Participants were observed to be very skillful at hand clapping.

The three dances provided the participants with intellectual skills in dancing. The dances also helped participants to socialize as well as providing refreshment from boredom.

4.3.11 Traditional musical instruments

Silimba and playing drums constitute important components to many traditional activities in western province. During my interactions and interviews with local expert *silimba* players, vital information regarding the role that these instruments play among the local people was gleaned. It was observed that *silimba* and drum playing graced many important celebrations ranging from girls' initiation ceremonies to the grand annual festival of the *kuomboka*. I was informed that it was not socially right to stage important village functions without these instruments²⁸.

During my interactions and observations with the expert players, I observed that they played these instruments very skillfully. During my interviews with these experts, I was informed that *silimba* sometimes acted as soloist while the drums provided accompaniment. The informants disclosed to me that these instruments were important in creating aesthetic qualities especially for the big village functions. Music was considered significant to the people when these instruments were also present. I observed that these instruments were an important social factor in strengthening the bonds of social harmony in the way the children expressed their happiness. This was very evident to me at Lukanda where a complete ensemble of *silimba* and drums were provided during one of my video recordings. In the villages where I conducted the interviews, I noticed similar observations.

²⁸ Personal interviews with the *silimba* experts in Senanga district. Interview numbers 41 and 42.



Figure 14: Expert musicians playing drums and *silimbai* in the village

4.3.12 General play songs

The game songs noted here include the following:

- *Kulu kulu uya kai* (Tortoise, tortoise, where are you going)
- *Pula pula i nele* (Rain, rain, come)

a. Kulu, kulu u ya kai

This game song was recorded mainly in Shangombo district and depicted the movement of a tortoise when it goes to lay eggs on land. The song goes as follows:

Caller: *Kulu, kulu, u ya kai?* (Tortoise²⁹, tortoise, where are you going?)

Group: *Niya kwa litongo*³⁰ *ku yo zwala* (I am going to the dry to lay eggs)

The children imitate the slow movement of the tortoise.

• Cognitive and social underpinnings

The music teacher informants cited the following as intellectual underpinnings to this game song:

²⁹ Tortoise (kulu) is a general name for all kinds of tortoise.

³⁰ *Litongo* refers to a dry mould in the plain.

“Children learn that when they see a tortoise on land, there is something that it is going to do. It might be going to lay eggs.” (31).

“Children learn that tortoise lay eggs when the rains begin to fall, in the rain season.”(32).

According to the informants, this had the potential of helping children to learn about the seasons. This was good knowledge in nature or environmental education.

b. Pula, pula i nele.

This was a song sung by little children when the first rains fell. The song was sung in appreciation of the rain season, and subsequent signal of the arrival of the season of plenty of food. This was how it was presented:

Pula, pula, in nele luce malaka (Rain, rain, come so that we eat cucumbers)).

Pula, pula, i nele luce malaka (Rain, rain, come so that we eat cucumbers)

- **Cognitive and social underpinnings**

The study outcomes revealed the following regarding the intellectual processes of the song:

“Children learn that different seasons bring different types of food.” (21).

“Children appreciate the good things that come along with the onset of the rain season.”(31).

“Children also learn that there are certain types of bird species whose chirrup is seasonal and is not heard except during the rainy season. Again they learn of the peculiar croaking of the frogs alerting them that the rain season is on or is approaching.” (32).

According to the informants, the two songs had the potential of teaching learners about seasons, and the type of fruits they were likely to eat during the rainy season³¹. In this respect, children learnt about the traditional calendar and the different activities associated with each season, thus developed good attitudes to such activities. Additionally, children learnt more about nature and

³¹ I tried to find out from the children how familiar they were with the seasons and the type of natural changes they knew. I was impressed to learn that the children could imitate the sounds of some birds cited by the teachers.

appreciated their local environment. Rain provided water that sustained human, animal, and plant existence. These cognitive processes were noted to be mobilized by an intelligent process of keen observation of environmental changes.

4.4 Perceived outcomes of participating in indigenous games and musical activities³²

The findings revealed that teachers' observations of expert children and even of those who participate in most games and related musical activities tend to be rated high in most of the subjects at school. This was clear from their comments:

"In most cases these children are good. The learners who are active inside are also active outside. But you find that even those children who may not be good in class, when you bring them outside, they are really very active. When you increase game songs, it motivates learners to participate in most activities in class. The children's minds will be very sharp." (21).

"They [children] do excel, except there is a problem on the grounds that the educational system has not yet recognised the significance of the child player and the child musician so much that there is no recognition given to children's talents. Sometimes such children may come at logger heads with the teacher... because the teacher will keep on reminding the child that, 'You are too playful'... assuming that maybe it is only through reading books that one can excel in life. If only there was a complementary approach." (32).

"Oh!.. What I have observed, the children who are involved in these activities, even at school, they are sharp... they are sharp. They are very fast at going things. We can say that they are very fast learners, they catch things easily. Because, I remember when I was teaching the children in Creative and Technology Subjects (C.T.S), and in Physical Education (P.E), you find that slow learners do not catch the things very easily. Now for those who are good at game songs, even in class they are good." (12).

"These pupils are mainly seen to be so creative even when it comes to classroom situation. You will find that they are not shy; they may ask questions even in broken English. So, it is like the games remove the shyness. So these songs help the children to assert themselves and gain self confidence." (11).

³² This section is based on my interviews with the eight teachers from the four schools on the perceived affordances of indigenous play and music activities.

“Concerning their performance, children who are active in games find it easy to learn because they are not shy, they can easily interact with others and even ask question to their friends. Such children usually enhance child to child interaction with their fellow peers.” (01).

“In the classes where these children learn, it has been observed that they grasp things very fast. They also have the courage to stand before others in class and ask questions where they have not understood. They have open minds in doing things, and their academic performance is generally good in class.” (22).

The teachers also disclosed that children’s participation in indigenous games and musical activities had some other associated benefits in that they encouraged attendance to the school programmes and drastically reduced truancy among pupils. Teachers’ observations like the ones listed below were common in all the schools visited:

“What I can say is that cultural activities are very important. They encourage all the children to come to watch even if they are not involved in the cultural activity itself. In this way, it reduces the level of truancy in school.” (12).

“In terms of these children’s attendance, it is good. However, not everyone who participates in games does very well on this issue. There are some who devote their minds to playing only. But others have combined two things: they play and also do the required things at school.” (22).

“We observed one thing when we were having cultural activities recently during your (researcher) visit. Many children kept coming to school, and I noted that even those who have not been in regular attendance had greatly improved their attendance. I am currently combining two classes, but the attendance was not good before the musical activities that are going on started. But these days, with the cultural activities taking place, my class is ever full. This is what my fellow teachers have observed. Even those in grade 7 who have just finished writing their final examinations, they have been coming too. We wish you were around throughout.” (22).

Some of the teachers attributed good school attendance to the fact that indigenous games and other musical activities provided a link between the school and the home environment as

children saw marked similarities in terms of activities. Two teachers in the study made these remarks:

“Indigenous games are important because children will see a link between what they do at home, and what they find at school. If play is encouraged, then children’s perception of school will increase, and they will have a feeling that they are losing if they do not go to school. So, it increases attendance. Again, children do not get bored while learning in school.” (12).

“Some of the games encourage children to like to go to school because children see these similar games being played at home.” (32).

The findings of the study on the songs and dances also revealed that children’s participation in these activities was a vital component in the enculturation process and development of the child. Comments and observations like the ones below were noted:

“Children are easily attracted to songs and through the process of listening, they get important lessons. In the past, songs were composed to address specific issues in the community. Maybe there was a particular message that the composers wanted to communicate to people, and this was the easiest way of transmitting messages.” (02).

“Children sometimes imitate important cultural functions like the *kuomboka* of the Lozi people especially on such major national events like the independence celebrations. It is very thrilling to see the skills that the children exhibit in their cultural activities. They make such things like the royal drums and the royal badge while they themselves imitate the royal paddlers. Crowds of spectators are in most cases left bewildered with excitement. This just shows how their social cognition processes have developed.” (31).

As children perform these things, they learn about things that happened in their own societies. For instance, in the song “*Sitino sa Mwanambinyi*”³³ that the children performed, they learn that there are some specific words or names that they have to use when referring to certain things. They cannot use the common word of “grave” to refer to the burial place of the king. In this case when they say “*Sitino sa Mwanambinyi*,” they are referring to the grave (tomb/sarcophagus) of

³³ Mwanambinyi was one the early Lozi kings who established his kingdom in the southern part of western province after some quarrels with his elder brother Mboo according to the Lozi oral history. The southern part of Western Province where this study was conducted is sometimes referred to as ‘Mboela’ (South) or ‘Lwambi’ because of this historical fact.

Mwanambinyi using the accepted Lozi word of “*sitino*.” In this respect some of the songs enhance children’s vocabulary.

Through imitated songs and dances that children engage in, they are provided with an opportunity of becoming active participants in their own cultural activities and learn their cultural identities.

Pupils on the other stated that they had gained the skills of doing the indigenous activities through the observations they had with their friends while playing. The expert pupils interviewed also revealed that they were willing to accept corrections from their friends when they made mistakes at the initial stage of learning. This was evident from their comments:

“I knew how to play this game by observing others during the time that we played together. Then I started training until when I gained the skill. I can only say that my friends are the ones who taught me.” (37).

“I learnt this game [kankolwe] from my friends. No, my parents did not teach me.” (36).

“I got the skill from the house servant by way of observing her as we played together. No, I did not get annoyed when she corrected. I really wanted to be like her. Now I am also very good at this game.” (23).

4.5 Learning *silimba* as an intellectual process

4.5.1 Playing traditional musical instrument (*silimba*), how it helps instill a sense of cooperation in learners

During the interviews with the expert players of *silimba* on how Lozi children acquired the skills of playing *silimba*, it was revealed that the construction and playing of *silimba* involved many intellectual processes. The views that emerged from the interviews and observed findings have been clustered under the following themes:

- Playing *silimba* as a guided learning process.
- Intellectual processes involved in the construction and playing of *silimba*.
- Outcomes of participating in playing *silimba* according to the local informants.

- *Silimba* as a musical instrument that promotes cultural activities.

Theme 1: 4.5.2 Playing *silimba* as a guided learning process ^c

Findings obtained from this study revealed that the first step in this life long journey to become an expert player began with the observations that the made on seeing the expert *silimba* players performing. The interviews that I had with some expert pupils at Lukanda and Namalangu Basic schools in Senanga district on how they had acquired the knowledge of playing *silimba* confirmed the views of the local experts. According to the local informants, children also made their own play xylophones although these had to be tuned by the adult experts. All the four expert informants disclosed to me how they gained the skill of playing *silimba*. They made the following observations:³⁴

“I learnt how to play *silimba* by observing the elderly people who were experts during the times that they used to construct *silimba*. Together with my friends, we used to come close to these people. We then observed how they were making *silimba*.” (43).

“I started by practicing on a child’s *silimba* to ward off loneliness. I first observed my elder brothers who were also good players of the instrument. At that time, I was 8 years old while my brothers were over 18 years I suppose. What a child needs to do to get the skill is that, whenever an expert player of *silimba* goes into the forest to look for the planks, the child should follow him to see how he does the actual work, more especially for those who are not in school.” (42).

“I acquired the knowledge from my father and my fellow friends who knew how to play *silimba*. Once I had acquired the knowledge, then I started making one for myself on the ground. Of course my father helped to tune it for me. Even my brothers at times showed me how to play.” (41).

“Xylophones that are usually found on the ground are made by children. A parent or an elder brother will then tune it for the child and help mentor the child. There is no expert player that I have seen who begins on the mounted xylophones for elderly people.” (44).

³⁴ ^c This section is based on the interviews I had with the four expert *silimba* players



Figure 15:A seven years grade 1 boy learning how to play on a toy *Silimba*

Theme 2. 4.5.3 Intellectual processes involved in the construction and playing of *silimba*

All the informants disclosed that constructing the *silimba* (xylophone) was a very technical process that required a lot of intelligence. They observed that constructing a well tuned *silimba* required them to do the exercise at night when there was what they referred to in local language as ‘*mbunyunu*’ (moisture), for them to arrive at a desired pitch³⁵ level. For the *silimba* (xylophone) to resonate fairly well, the informants revealed that they usually put spider webs or plastics at some small holes made through the gourds that acted as sound amplifiers below the vibrating planks. Additionally, the study found that only a specific type of tree called *mulombe* (teak) was used in the construction process, as noted from their explanations:

“What usually helps us is the consideration of the pitch at which people sing. When every maker of *silimba* begins the construction process, he usually sings in his heart [mind]. As he does so, he will find that what he has been singing agrees with the people’s usual pitch. Tune comes by knowing how to relate with the singers.” (42).

“*Silimba* is constructed using planks from a dry *mulombe* tree [teak]. A sizeable furrow is then dug in the ground to be used for the tuning and pitching purposes. Getting the rightful tune is also another form of intelligence and involves a lot of thinking. Experts

³⁵ Pitch refers to how high or low a musical sound is.

usually construct their xylophones [*silimba*] at night so that the planks are exposed to *mbunyunyu* [moisture].” (44).

“Skillful players usually place the gourds [*miuku*] to the ear while the planks are beaten on the ground to detect the correct sound and pitch. The pitch of the planks on the *silimba* is raised by sharpening the ends of the plank while carving in the middle of the plank lowers the pitch.” (42).

“When *silimba* has finally been tuned, it is mounted on well constructed twigs of trees to ensure strong support. We usually put spider webs at the small holes punched through the resonating gourds to provide vibrations. These days most of the players use very thin plastic papers instead of spider webs.” (43).

According to the informants a key factor that distinguished their expertise was how to get and determine the acceptable pitch. Another aspect relating to the intellectual process underpinning *silimba* as found in the study was the way *silimba* was played. According to the local informants, playing *silimba* required a lot of thinking and use of intelligent calculations to create acceptable sounds and harmony. Below is what their views were:

“*Silimba* also is another form of difficult mathematics. When you go to fetch the planks, you have to tune them. You have to know which one is high and which one is low. When a person plays *silimba*, he skips some planks, and that involves addition and subtraction.” (41).

“The mathematics involved in playing *silimba* is mainly concerned with specific knowledge on which planks should be skipped; therefore, there is addition and subtraction involved there.” (44).

When playing *silimba* according to the informants, the other cognitive processes they observed were mainly found in the coordination that existed among the players, who in some cases were two or more. Some of their views were as follow:

“When a person plays *silimba*, there must concentration of mind to avoid making mistakes.’ (41).

There must be coordination in the player’s mind for him to play well.” (43).

Some expert teachers who were interviewed on the perceived intellectual underpinnings of *silimba* explained that *silimba* was constructed in accordance with the Lozi traditional pentatonic³⁶ mode of singing. Children learnt this art of singing at an early age through constructing their own xylophones usually played on the ground. Such children acquired a lot of intellectual skills involved. These skills involved knowledge of the type of wood, the technical process of arriving at the relative pitch³⁷, the knowledge of structuring *silimba* according to the length of the planks and size of gourds. Playing *silimba*, according to the expert teachers was a good way of preserving the traditional way of singing that had its own unique flavor. One of the expert music teachers in Senanga made the following observations regarding the intellectual processes involved in playing *silimba*:

“It is quite interesting when you observe the pupils play *silimba* during the school cultural activities. The pupils are able to tell you that someone is delaying the rhythm when they say to the slow player, “You’re making my work difficult to get into the tempo of the song, please increase your speed.” That kind of realization involves some form of intellectual process. Even in singing, for the caller to get into the actual process when the drums and xylophone are playing, it requires a lot of intellectual abilities there too.” (21).

Mobilisation of the intellectual processes according to my informants was achieved mainly through careful and coordinated process of playing *silimba* itself. Players of *silimba*, who, according to the local informants sometimes exceeded two in number, were expected to be alert and attentive to the sounds they were producing. Listening skills were developed in the process.

Further, it was also discovered during the study that *silimba* that was meant for children was constructed on the ground and not mounted on some supporters. The expert informants disclosed that a furrow that was dug in the ground was made to be shallow at one end but became deep at the other end to act as sound amplifier. In short, there are mathematics and science concepts learnt in the art of making *silimba*.

³⁶ *Silimba* is usually tuned to the pentatonic scale.

³⁷ An explanation of what constitutes regional pitch has been given in chapter five under 5.2.2.

Theme 3. 4.5.4 Outcomes of participating in playing *silimba*

The informants revealed that playing *silimba* was vital in ensuring the continuity of the cultural activities. They observed that playing *silimba* contributed greatly to such traditional activities as initiation ceremonies that constituted the rite of passage for girls. *Silimba* was also a means of providing entertainment for social functions as well as a pastime activity to avoid boredom in life.

When the informants were further asked to establish whether playing *silimba* at home influenced a child's academic performance at school especially in mathematics, they gave mixed opinions. Two of them were of the view that playing *silimba* could influence a child's performance in class to some extent as they made the following noted observations:

“A child who knows how to play *silimba* can also know how to do some mathematics because playing *silimba* is not just done anyhow. As a person plays *silimba* he/she knows in his/he mind that here I have to play this or that plank. A child can learn mathematics using *silimba*. A child must closely observe that there is some addition and subtraction in the process of playing *silimba*.” (41).

“As one is playing *silimba*, there is addition and subtraction of planks being played. (44).

The above views were observed by one pupil when he noted that *silimba* could be useful for helping children to know mathematics through counting of planks and gourds (20). Those who held contrary views stated that playing *silimba* had nothing to do with a child's academic performance in mathematics at school. According to them, a child's degree of assimilating things in terms of how fast or slow was what mattered. They made the following observations:

“Aid does not come by playing *silimba*. One's intelligence in grasping things is what matters most at school. Personally, I do not see any influence that may come as a result of playing *silimba*. We play *silimba* simply because of our love for our culture.” (42).

“Concerning school subjects, there is nothing that the child learns on the *silimba*. A child may only know the number of planks on the *silimba*.” (43).

One of the informants revealed that playing *silimba* could in fact become a form of addiction also that could affect a child negatively in terms of school attendance. Such children only

attended school when cultural activities were available. According to one informant, such children were mocked by their colleagues in the following song:

Caller: *Simasiku* (*Simasiku* [name of a person])

Group: *Silimba si mutenguzi* (He is addicted to silimba).

The song would be repeated as desired.

During their pretend play known locally as ‘*mandwani*,’ children played their own xylophones and imitated actual village activities. The informants explained that the only thing that could enable one to distinguish between the *silimba* made by a child and that of an adult was in the way they were constructed. The planks for the child’s *silimba* were not very smooth. Despite all this, findings from the study have revealed that children sometimes staged very exciting performances on their xylophones on the village play grounds known locally as *patelo* especially in the evenings during moonlight moments. This was what one informant narrated:

“During moon light, children play with *silimba* that even the elderly people normally come out to join in the dancing.” (44).

According to these informants, during such times, both the young and the elderly mingled and danced freely. For the elderly, much of their dancing was an appreciation of the mastery that the young were exhibiting in upholding cultural activities. When both the *silimba* and drums were played, it was sometimes irresistible for one to stay away but to go and see how the children performed.

The study had also found that *silimba*, according to the local informants, had undergone many transformations over time. According to the informants, an indigenous *silimba* had only 9 planks, and this was played by only one expert player. One informant explained to me how the process of transformation occurred:

“Present xylophones are not like the old ones. In past, a xylophone had only nine planks. It later moved to ten, then twelve. Today xylophones begin from twenty five to thirty and even more.” (42).

According to these informants, the transformations were brought about because of the changes in the songs that people composed and sang. The original *silimba* had tunes that were not fashioned according to the Western musical instruments. Those that were being made presently were tuned like Western musical instruments because even the types of songs that were being played on them were like popular songs on CDs and tapes.

Theme 4. 4.5.5 *Silimba* and promotion of social cooperation

Findings of the study from the village music experts have also revealed that *silimba* played a major role in strengthening harmony in the villages. During major village activities, *silimba* played a cardinal role in acting as soloist³⁸. Dancers followed suit as expert players played leading songs on *silimba*. Songs sung during the girls' initiation ceremonies for instance were meant to communicate important lessons to the initiate, while those that had deviant behaviours were ridiculed. Girls' initiation ceremonies known locally as *sikenge*³⁹ are an important cultural function. In one cultural activity that was performed at Lukanda using a hired *silimba* from a local expert, the following song was done and just showed how music was instrumental in bringing social harmony in the community:

Lozi	English
Caller: <i>Musala' nduna x 2</i>	[The] wife of the village headman)
Group: <i>Na u zwize lihapu kupuka mulo x 2</i>	[She] stole a water melon and even drunk the fluid contents)
All: <i>Musala' nduna na u zwize lihapu ku puka mulo x 2</i>	The wife of the village headman stole a water melon and even drunk the fluid contents

³⁸ My personal observations during the school and village recordings revealed that *silimba* acted as 'caller' when played under expert hands by providing a lead in tune of the song being played.

³⁹ *Sikenge* is an initiation period that Lozi girls who have experienced the first menstrual period are subjected to in order to be accepted as grown up women. When they graduate from this period of exclusion that lasts three to six months, a traditional ceremony called '*ku zwa mwa sikenge*' (to pass out from initiation) is usually conducted.

This song, according to the children that I later interviewed, was meant to discourage any form of petty theft. Leaders and their spouses were expected to be exemplary in their conduct. Other songs composed for social purposes could be praise songs. Commenting on this finding, one of the informants made the following observation:

“The songs that we compose on the *silimba* are usually made when we realize that someone has done something bad or has a behaviour that is unacceptable and we would want such people to change. The songs that we compose are like parables through which we are able to communicate effectively without injuring anyone.” (44).

Findings from the study have also revealed that *silimba* was likely to act as a bridge between the old and the new generation. Despite the major transformations earlier reported in this section, the presence of *silimba* at an initiation ceremony for a girl symbolized the fact that it was a genuine indigenous occasion. Some pupils who were interviewed with regard to this issue noted that it was difficult and humiliating to witness an initiation ceremony without a *silimba*. *Silimba* reminded them of the way things were done in the past. Other pupils had the following views:

“Playing drums and playing *silimba* helps people to preserve their own cultural identities especially through initiation ceremonies.” (13).

“The presence of *silimba* during an initiation ceremony makes the occasion very interesting.” (20).

When the four expert players were asked to state whether cultural practices allowed ladies also to play *silimba*, they observed that there were no such restrictions. This also applied to the playing of drums by ladies. However, ladies did not feel comfortable to be seen participating in playing *silimba* or drums as most of the people that knew how to play *silimba* or drums were men. *Silimba*/drums were mostly associated with men. One informant disclosed to me that their village had a reputation of ladies knowing how to play *silimba* also⁴⁰. Thus according to the informant, it was not a cultural restriction that inhibited ladies from playing *silimba* but the shyness that the women themselves had thus creating the attitude of not wanting to play *silimba*.

⁴⁰ Unfortunately, I did not see any girl playing *silimba* during my study.

The study has also revealed that *silimba* played a significant role at the royal establishment during the *kuomboka* ceremony of the Lozi people. The *Litunga*, who is the king of the Lozis, usually walks⁴¹ to the beat of the drums and tune of the *silimba* during the *kuomboka* ceremony. During other times, royal players communicate important messages to the *Litunga* through certain songs played on *silimba*. This way of doing things, according to my informants, provided cooperation and unity among the king and his subjects.

While other indigenous xylophones elsewhere had undergone major transformations, those at the royal establishment had remained the same. In his observations, one of the informants who was a 61 years old male made these observations:

“*Silimba* is very important in functions like initiation ceremonies for girls, when treatment of patients is done by local medicine men and women, and during local weddings. *Silimba* is equally very important during the *kuomboka* traditional ceremony. As the *Litunga* disembarks from the royal barge, he is accompanied by the beating of *silimba* played by the royal players.” (44).

4.6 *Silimba* and its perceived decline

Despite the many intellectual and social benefits that *silimba* provided, findings from the study revealed that *silimba*, unfortunately, was perceived to be on the decline according to the local informants. In the schools visited, the information provided to the researcher, coupled with personal observations, was that the schools had no xylophones (pl- *Bilimba*). At Sioma, pupils were video recorded without any drums being played except for big empty containers of cooking oil which were beaten as drums. Making her observation on this lack of *silimba*, one female expert music teacher made the following sad revelation:

“We do not have our own *silimba* at this school. We depend on hiring from the local people and this, sometimes, is very expensive. The local people are very cooperative to us despite the costs that we face.” (22).

Views expressed by the research participants in Shangombo district attributed the decline in cultural activities in schools to the beginning of the early 1990s in Zambia. These teachers

⁴¹ This type of a kingly walk accompanied by royal drums and *silimba* is referred to as *kutamboka*.

observed that from that time, there was an unprecedented perceived decline in cultural activities as cultural activities did not receive any support and promotion from the key stake holders like the Ministry of Education. On the other hand, the influence of Western media had had even more devastating effects on local cultural activities especially on music and songs. According to the informants, even major traditional ceremonies like girls' initiation ceremonies were conducted using modern radios and televisions. According to these informants, many people saw this as a modern way of living while using traditional instruments was seen as being backward. Some were even quick to point out that some initiation ceremonies were now mostly conducted at churches. One female teacher made the following observation:

“People these days are attracted more to the Western culture than to their own, and the local activities are dying out. Here the local people normally invite us to the local functions like initiation ceremonies for girls. But to our surprise, we only find home theatres [big modern electrical radios] instead of the indigenous musical instruments like *silimba*. The songs that they play are latest Zambian songs on the market and the traditional ones are mixed, sometimes even with gospel songs. Sometimes the songs that they play are not even understood by the listeners. People simply dance to the actual melody without understanding any meaning at all.” (12).

These perceived negative attitudes towards cultural activities and instruments have been cited as one avenue through which *silimba* continues to suffer its perceived steady decline.

4.6.1 Summary

The findings of the study presented above have revealed that the process of constructing and playing *silimba* involved a lot of intellectual processes as observed by the local informants. The child apprentice first acquired the knowledge through observations and participation in the construction and actual playing of *silimba* under the guidance of the expert players. *Silimba* promoted cultural functions and enhanced social cooperation among the players themselves, among the young and old people, as well as supporting the traditional ceremonies. The seeming decline of *silimba* arising from the intrusion of Western media would signal negative implications for the survival of the traditional activities inherited from many generations.

4.7 Substantive themes, values, and practices of indigenous culture in the study

The third research objective attempted to identify some substantive themes, values, and practices of indigenous culture in the study that could be used to advocate the case for an inclusive Zambian education curriculum. The interviews that I had with the teachers and pupils were analysed and grouped together and the emerging themes were noted and presented as shown below:

Theme 1: 4.7.1 Knowledge of indigenous play and music activities among school pupils

With regard to the existence of indigenous games and related game songs, the findings obtained from the study have shown that the indigenous games/ songs known by the pupils in the schools where the study was conducted were few. A comprehensive list of the games/songs both traditional and modern ones documented in the study appears under appendix G. Pupils showed knowledge of modern games/ songs and less of the indigenous ones. On the other hand, some of the pupils who could mention some traditional games/songs could not precisely recall to memory how these games/ songs were played or sung. In the same vein, my interviews with some expert music teachers revealed similar findings. Only very few of them managed to bring out the games/songs that were of traditional origin. Some teachers from Shangombo made the following observations:

“Traditional games seem to be diminishing slowly.” (32).

“We teachers who were exposed to games during our time did better in school.” (22)

Observations such as those noted above by the informants regarding the decline of some traditional games also confirmed the earlier views narrated to me by the SESO in Mongu during the pilot study. The SESO had lamented at the steady decline of local games including a once famous game known as *tindi*⁴². According to the SESO, *tindi* could be useful for teaching mathematical concepts of speed and approximations.

Findings from the study have also revealed that some of the games that children performed were adapted to suit modern trends. Two such local Lozi game songs included the following:

⁴² Personal interview with the SESO for expressive arts at the Provincial Education Office during the pilot study on 11/09/2012. For details of this local game as narrated to me, see appendix J.

- *Situtu sa tutuluka*
- *Mbambamba ngulube*

a. *Situtu sa tutuluka*

This traditional game found its modern version in a game called ‘Land rover, land rover’. According to the expert music teachers, *Situtu sa tutuluka* was played by forming a circle while participants held their hands together. One player was put in the centre of the circle and would be required to come out. To do this, the player in the centre of the circle would look for some weak points on the circle formed by clasped hands, and would forcefully attempt to make a break through. Similarly, land rover was played in the same format except that there was no circle that was formed but two separate groups facing each other while holding their hands. While participants in *Situtu sa tutuluka* sang as the player in the centre tried spot after spot for making a break through, participants in land rover expected one player to be called out by the opposing group to make a break through. The principle underlying the games in both situations was basically the same, that of identifying a weak spot to make a break through.

b. *Mbambamba ngulube*, reported earlier on under research objective one, entailed offering a trapped player modern things. For instance, the trapped player would be offered such modern things as T.V. and radio instead of indigenous things.

Adapting to new trends was seen by some informants as not being bad as long as the principles underlying the change did not alter the nature of the play game. Commenting on this issue, one *silimba* advanced the following view:

“Everything has got its own time. Today we cannot compel our children to do things the way we did them in the past. These are modern times. We only need to help our children to maintain an acceptable balance.”(42).

- **Cognitive and social benefits underpinning the indigenous games/ songs**

Findings from the study have revealed that most of the indigenous games/ songs investigated had many cognitive affordances attached to them. The principal informants in the study, the teachers and pupils, as noted earlier on, revealed the cognitive processes underlying the games studied. Indigenous games/ songs that were cited to have many potentials for enhancing concepts in

subjects like mathematics included *muyato*, a stone throwing game, and *mulabalaba*, a game involving the movements of some stones/ seeds from one hole to another. It was reported that playing these games required intelligent calculations on the part of the players.

A notable game accompanied by song cited as being potentially useful for enhancing mathematical concepts was *Nakutambekela*. The informants in the study observed that this stone passing game demanded alertness, speed and accuracy, and intense concentration and coordination among players when it was played. These intellectual processes were noted to be important for strengthening mathematical concepts in school children if playing the game at foundational stages of grades 1-4 was intensified.

In terms of language development, many traditional songs performed during cultural activities both at school and at home were cited as being good for broadening children's capacities in acquiring new vocabulary. Story songs were likely to increase the children's memory skills and ability to follow the sequence of events. It was noted that participation in these songs could help the children to learn and understand their social roles and obligations in their communities. Songs in traditional societies provided avenues through which messages were communicated.

It was further identified that play games and songs were also likely to enhance social processes of cooperation through socialization. As children interacted, they learnt to relate to one another and created interpersonal relationship necessary in adult life.

Theme 2: 4.7.2 Assessment of expert pupils' performance in play and music activities in relation to academic performance in class

The views of expert teachers interviewed with regard to performance of expert pupils in class revealed that most of such pupils were generally above average in terms of performance. The informants observed that playing outdoor activities created a warm and friendly environment for shy children to overcome their shyness and to become involved when playing with the other children. The teacher informants submitted the following observation:

“What I have observed in most of these children is that even at school they are sharp because they are very fast at catching things in class.” (12).

“In most cases, learners who are active in class are also active outside at games.”(01).

“ Most of these children do very well that I am not ashamed to let you know that if such children met the grade 8 pupils for debate, they would beat the grade 8s.”(22).

The informants also cited leadership skills as outstanding qualities that most of the expert pupils exhibited. They observed that active participation in games/ songs had the benefit of helping such pupils to develop self esteem and respect for others as well.

When the expert pupils were asked to explain how they acquired the skills that they had in the indigenous games/ songs, many of them stated that they acquired the skills simply by observing other expert pupils or children perform. They revealed that they were not ashamed to be corrected by their colleagues when they made mistakes while playing.

Theme 3: 4.7.3 Educational benefits of participating in indigenous play and music activities

According to the informants, there were many potential benefits associated with playing indigenous games/ songs. The teachers were of the view that participation in indigenous games was likely to promote children’s talents in some skills that were non academic and which would be useful in life. In the following statements, they expressed their views on how such benefits were achieved:

“When playing the games/ songs, players also learn the language. In this respect, indigenous games and songs can facilitate the acquisition of language development in children.” (12).

“Indigenous games and songs stressed issues related to hard work, truthfulness, tolerance, and cooperation. These are some of the virtues that are highly prized in our society, and in doing so, we are teaching our own norms and values to the children.” (02).

“Best teachers are the ones who bring indigenous musical activities in class and this livens the whole process of teaching and reduce on absenteeism. Regrettably, many teachers do not do that, and hence, the difference between the old and new teachers.” (22).

“Indigenous songs help to form relationships from among children.” (11).

During my stay at the four schools where the study was under taken, my observations were that there were high turn outs of pupils’ attendance. In Shangombo district, one expert music teacher confided to me that many of the pupils who had taken weeks away from school were seen because of the musical activities that were taking place in the afternoons. I was equally informed that attendance was always like that during the times that the school prepared for major musical activities for the province.

Pupils’ views regarding the perceived educational benefits of indigenous games/ songs were that:

“Games and songs are useful for imparting knowledge in life.” (33).

“The knowledge that I get in a story can help me to have wisdom in life.” (14).

Some pupils, especially the young ones could not clearly state their views. However, many of those who could express themselves admitted that indigenous games/ songs had potential educational benefits. They enjoyed coming to school and had more time to play with their friends. Play and music activities appeared to provide a link between the school and the children’s home environments.

The findings of the study as observed from the above cited views have shown that indigenous games/ songs could influence language acquisition, enculturation of cultural values, development of intellectual skills, motivation and reduction of absenteeism among school pupils, and formation of formidable and strong relationship among children.

Theme 4: 4.7.4 Negative Attitudes of some teachers towards indigenous play and music activities

The outcome of the study on this issue revealed that some teachers were identified as being not supportive when it came to promotion of indigenous games/ songs. Such teachers, according to the informant expert teachers I interviewed, viewed indigenous games and plays as backward and primitive. The expert teachers made the following observations regarding teachers’ negative attitudes:

“Some teachers do not see the value of the indigenous games and songs and therefore feel ashamed to associate themselves with such kind of backward things.” (01).

Nowadays most teachers are young men and young ladies who have been brought up in town. Because of growing up in town, they do not appreciate the indigenous games and songs but prefer the modern ones. (12)

My interviews with the pupils had the following outcomes cited below:

“At school, we are not encouraged to do the games that we play at home.” (17).

“We play these games during break times and during our spare times only.” (05).

My observations during some interactions with children usually found playing these games in the school premises in their free times attested to the views cited above. Lack of knowledge in teaching these indigenous games and songs by some teachers was equally found to be prominent feature in most of the schools visited during the study. It was later learnt that some of the teachers could not make significant associations between the things they taught at school in relation to what indigenous games/ songs could offer too. Many such teachers lacked innovativeness and resourcefulness.

Theme 5: 4.7.5 Expert teachers’ views on the school curriculum

One of the major finding in the outcome of the study centred on the inclusion of indigenous games and game songs in the school curriculum. The study found that most of the teachers interviewed expressed unhappiness in the way that the existing teachers’ guides were designed regarding the inclusion of indigenous games/ songs as may be noted from the following observations:

“Generally, we do not have many indigenous songs included in our curriculum, leaving serious gaps for the development of the child.” (12).

“Most teachers’ guides do not have enough of the game songs especially those that are found within our local areas.” (31).

“In the education sector, our curriculum should be localised and ensure that the concepts we have from our culture are incorporated into the new. Play games and songs that are found within our community levels should be found there.” (02).

“Most of the games that are found within our teachers’ guides are from other tribes outside Western Province. Many teachers do not know these games and songs.” (22).

“We do not need to go and buy things like stones or clay for a game like *muyato*. These things can be found locally. (01).

The perceptions of the expert teachers on the issue were that the teachers’ guides needed serious redress and be more inclusive to incorporate more of the locally known games and songs.

On the school curriculum, the informant teachers revealed that the curriculum was lopsided and tended to lean heavily on foreign materials especially those from the Western world. Reliance on a Western driven curriculum was too dangerous for the development of many children especially those in the rural areas. This was because such a move had the potential of making children fail to appreciate their own culture. One teacher made the following observation on this issue:

“When we teach much of the foreign things, we want the child we are teaching to look at the outer side and not the inside. Here we are not saying that the foreign curriculum is bad, no. But the thing is that we are using much of the foreign information and this has rendered our culture to be irrelevant.” (21).

On some songs from other local languages in Zambia, some expert teachers had this to offer as an alternative:

“These games could be put on some CDs by music specialists so that they are taught to the children the way they are from their respective tribes. (22).

The expert teachers’ further observations were that many of the indigenous games/songs would be of great value if they were incorporated in the curriculum. This would ensure their value and preservation in the present and for future use without losing them. On the other hand, some teachers were of the view that they lacked support from their school managers to buy some musical instruments for cultural promotion. This, in their view led to feelings of frustration

among them as they felt management did not value and consider cultural activities to be of any value to children.

4.7.6 Summary

The study findings as shown in this chapter have revealed that indigenous music and play activities had many educational affordances underpinning them which were potentially valuable for promoting children's cognitive and socio-emotional abilities. Constant participation in indigenous games was likely to improve children's numeracy and literacy skills. Participation involved the use of higher order cognitive skills such as logical thinking, problem solving strategies, and creativity. The content of the songs and play activities that were video recorded were designed to promote socially responsible intelligence as developmental outcomes. Singing and dancing were potentially relevant for helping children to discover and explore their talents.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF STUDY FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses and analyses the findings presented in chapter four in relation to each of the objectives of the study. Valuable insights emanating from the study have been linked with the wider existing body of literature from various previous findings. Further, possible implications arising from the present study outcomes have also been outlined.

In the discussion that follows, the themes that are discussed focus on the intellectual benefits underpinning children's music and play activities as they relate to the first study objective. The social processes are discussed later.

Theme One: 5.1.0 Intellectual benefits underpinning indigenous play and music activities

We have seen from the outcomes of the study in the previous chapter that indigenous play games and songs had significant potentials (or cognitive affordances) that could enable children to acquire skills in both numeracy and language. Rightly employed by teachers, these indigenous resources could significantly support the growth of their learners' abilities in numeracy and language skills.

5.1.1 Stone passing games

The outcomes of this study in relation to the stone passing/catching games have revealed that playing these games was likely to increase learners' competences in arithmetical skills. Games like *mulabalaba* and *muyato* in particular were noted to have the possible benefits of enhancing addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division competences in learners. An analysis of these games revealed that players engaged in logical thinking processes while playing the games. For instance, when the players were observed while playing these games, they tended to be relatively quiet and concentrated on making estimates, calculations, and evaluations on the number of stones to use during the play transactions⁴³. When I later interviewed the children regarding the potential benefits of playing *mulabalaba*, they explained that the game could help them in

⁴³ I observed that while the children played these games, they did not pay much attention to the activities that were happening near them.

mathematics. In chapter four, some of the pupils were quoted as saying that *mulabalaba* helped them to ‘count.’ The implication of what the children meant here was that *mulabalaba* could help them to know how to carry out some simple calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Thus, the game has the benefit of increasing learners’ knowledge in numeracy.

Studies that have been conducted in the Western world on board games like chess have revealed that playing chess requires higher order cognitive skills (Hong & Bart, 2007). According to Grossen (1991) cited by Hong and Bart (2007), higher cognitive skills such as analysis, evaluation, and logical thinking are prevalent in the game of chess. Higher order cognitive skills play a significant role in enabling students to identify potential responses when making decisions, and achieve self-regulated learning (Wehmeyer et al, 2001, cited in Hong & Bart, 2007). In Zambia, Mtonga (2012), and Serpell (1993a) have noted that as children play *nchuwa/nsolo*, which is a kind of board game, they learn to think logically and mathematically. *Mulabalaba* is the Lozi name for *nsolo*.

In my discussion with one male teacher at Sitoti, he had cited another type of *mulabalaba* played on board as shown in appendix I ⁴⁴ called *mulabalaba wa 12* (*mulabalaba* played using 12 stones). The correct name for this game is Twelve Men’s Morris introduced by the British in South Africa in the 1820s. This game is played on a board where each of the two players uses 12 stones to make some movements along the horizontal, vertical, or diagonal lines. This game is fully discussed in appendix I of this dissertation. Unfortunately, the game was reported as being no longer popular among Lozi children as it used to be in the past despite its perceived potentials to influence mathematical competences. The informant revealed to me that children were more familiar with draughts than this game. Studies in South Africa on this game have revealed that the game has much potential for influencing competences in mathematics because it involves calculations and deep concentrations when making movements while playing it (Ntsihlele, 2003; Nkopodi & Mosimege, 2009). Clearly, the processes observed in this game are the higher order cognitive processes noted earlier in playing chess. However, it is evident that the absence of some studies on *mulabalaba wa 12* (Twelve Men’s Morris) in Zambia to determine its

⁴⁴ For a more explanation on how this type of *mulabalaba* is played see pages 153-154 in this dissertation. My informant (31) lamented that this type of game though very ideal for mathematical skills was no longer very common among children. It may be obvious that the game is no longer popular and could therefore be on the decline since no child interviewed in the study mentioned this game to me.

educational values merits further research on the game. This game also appears to be widespread across Africa.

A stone passing game song like *Nakutambekela* had the potential of increasing children's levels of alertness⁴⁵, speed and accuracy, as well as intense concentration and coordination. We observed that at the end of playing the game, pupils counted the stones of those that had been disqualified. Counting is an intellectual process that is likely to strengthen mathematical concepts in school children when applied at the foundational stages of grades 1-4. Studies conducted on the game elsewhere in Africa (Andrea,2009; Abarry,1989; Mans,1998; Mans 2003; Ntsihlele,2003) have supported the intellectual benefits that this stone passing game has to strengthen mathematical concepts among children who play it. In Zambia, Mtonga (2012) has also documented its perceived intellectual values.

Other than the mathematical and language associated perceived educational benefits, play and music activities were cited by the local informants as providing psychomotor skills such as finger dexterity and coordination among players. In her analysis of stone passing / catching games, Ntsihlele (2003:229) notes that:

“...alertness [in stone passing] is essential on the part of each child to maintain a sense of rhythmic exactness of movement and harmony in the passing and receiving of the stone. The [stone – catching games] trains the child to develop eye, hand and stone coordination which would stand it in good stead when more than two actions are needed to be coordinated without faltering.”

In my study, similar potential educational benefits underpinning the stone passing/ catching games were observed.

5.1.2 Aquatic play songs

Aquatic games were reported to have many potential intellectual benefits for children. In playing the aquatic games reported in chapter four, knowledge of the flow of water and depth of the river were required. Aquatic game songs like *mezi, mezi mulena' ka* provided a forum for children to acquire good knowledge in water conservation and environmental management. Water supported

⁴⁵ Alertness as used here implies awareness.

virtually all the activities of the Lozi people that included fishing, agriculture, and the *kuomboka* traditional ceremony.

In a study conducted among the Balobedu people of South Africa, the researchers' (Tatira et al, 2012) observed that swimming as practiced by rural children intuitively taught learners about speed, depth and length as well as direction. In their collections of indigenous cultural activities and games for possible use among rural Shona children, Chikodzi and Nyota (2010) have equally suggested that mathematical concepts of width, depth and speed could easily be gained from swimming activities. Integrating aquatic games in the school curriculum could help children gain knowledge in water management and sustenance, and could be a teaching resource in environmental education, agricultural science, and social studies. Additionally, knowledge in swimming and paddling could help children to develop concepts on the physical properties of objects in relation to the object's mass and weight. This, in my view, could be a milestone in laying ground work in subjects like physics and mathematics.

5.1.3 Hand clapping play songs

Hand clapping games as observed from this study had the perceived benefits of improving children's psychomotor development. Playing these games required participants to exercise high levels of concentration, coordination, and alertness to attain harmony. Additionally, these games had the potential to enhance children's interpersonal relationships. In this study, girls were found to be more skilled than the boys. Similar findings were noted by Davey (2004) in a study among Australian school girls. Although Davey assumes that there was no evidence of these games having been played by boys in the past in Australia, I did not find evidence of this observation in my study. However, despite the above observation, participants were also likely to gain some numeracy skills as most of such game songs required them to count while clapping their hands.

5.1.4 Work songs

Work songs as noted from the study, aimed at inculcating right attitudes towards work. Hard work was emphasized while laziness was discouraged and frowned upon. Children were likely to learn what was accepted and what was not accepted through participation through work songs. They also functioned to express disapproval of certain practices. In this study, work songs were found to provide motivation and entertainment to children as they participated in daily work

activities. These findings support Mtonga's (2012, 74) view that work songs in which children are involved provided an opportunity for both formal and incidental learning among the Chewa people.

5.1.5 Story/story songs

Story songs (*lipina za matangu*), as noted in the previous chapter have associated benefits for intellectual development. The intellectual benefits that children were likely to benefit from participating in story songs as found in this study include the benefit of enhancing listening skills; enhancing memory improvement; enhancing linguistic competences, and becoming wise through application of learnt contents from stories⁴⁶. Stories and their accompanying songs in traditional societies provided avenues through which messages were communicated. Appropriate ways of living were emphasized while those that were seen to be inappropriate were discouraged. These findings

In his studies among the Tswana children, Simako (2009:154) found similar findings and noted that “stories and story songs steered imagination and inculcated divergent thinking skill as pupils had to recite them orally.” Stansell (2005) has noted that singing enables language to stay in the memory where it can build up connections. In short, singing, as observed from the children's story songs, has many intellectual benefits such as singing to the correct pitch and rhythm, language improvement, and listening skills. Songs are highly memorable; their repetitive patterning reinforces learning without loss of motivation and could therefore be used in teaching as a flexible and attractive resource (Murphey, 2001).

5.1.6 Pretend play songs

The play songs that have been analysed here include those that were observed in the classes and those sung during pretended play activities. The song “*a ni siti boma, ni sita muloi*,” (I am not pounding my mother but the witch/ wizard) presented in chapter four reveals something much about how the social structures were sometimes affected by existing practices. One such practice was witchcraft. Although most children did not know much about witchcraft, they knew it was a pervasive vice in society. This was expressed by their desire not to have such wicked people in

⁴⁶ I went back to the class after a week to find out if they had some stories to tell to me again. When I tried to find out about what they had told me the previous week, many children were able to tell me the contents of the stories learnt including the accompanying songs.

their midst. Death in the community was associated with witchcraft⁴⁷. In the context of the song cited above, all the family members were assumed protected as the witch/ wizard was deemed eliminated by way of pounding him/her. Children were taught not to entertain such practices, and when they grew up, they held on to the belief that death was caused by a witch/wizard.

A song like the one cited above is one example of the songs that the children themselves composed and taught each other during play. Clearly, it can be deduced that children were faced with the challenging issue of the existence of death, hence the desire not to have causers of death, the witches and wizards. The song in this respect acted as a channel of expressing that desire.

5.1.7 Chasing games

When the play game ‘the cat and rat’ (*Peba ni kakaze*) is analysed, the song developed in children some survival skills of knowing how to escape from danger. Knowing how to devise ways of escaping from threatening situations calls for levels of intelligence and creativity on the part of players (Mtonga, 2012). This would be important for the children later on in life. Children also learnt the value of keeping petty animals like cats to keep at bay the notorious activities of rodents like rats. This was a natural way other than resorting to conventional methods of using chemicals. In this play song, the children indirectly learnt about the food chain and predation as it exists in nature’s ecology system. This song also provided indirect lessons in environmental education. Akuno (2005) has observed that children’s songs can function as avenues through which they learn about their local environment.

5.1.8 Riddles

When analysed, riddles and puzzles (*manyumbo/tukwaci*) could increase the learners’ vocabulary and listening skills as well as sharpening the memory skills of children. Riddles and puzzles demanded for logical and critical thinking when playing them. They were also capable of helping the youth to identify and appreciate their culture. These views are consistent with the other findings elsewhere in Africa (Kagame, 1978).

⁴⁷ When I tried to find out from the children why they sang the song, they told me that death was caused by witches/wizards. This is a common held view in many communities including where I come from. Interview with some children at Lukanda Basic on 16/10/2012.

5.1.9 Catching games

We saw in chapter four that catching games had the potential benefit of helping children to develop skills of how to escape danger. Making such decisions involves intelligent calculations on how one has to make his/her way out of the problem. Mtonga (2012) observes that this is a form of intelligence or cleverness on the part of the player. The play game helps children to be prepared on how to cope with life's challenges when they later grow up and know how to solve challenges that would come their way.

5.1.10 General play songs

Play songs that were noted under this type included those that related to the onset of the rains, and reproductive habits of tortoises. The study findings have established that with the onset of the rains, children perform songs that show their gratitude for the rain season. Though the songs '*pula pula i nele luce malaka*' (lit. rain, rain come so that we eat cucumbers), and *kulu kulu u ya kai?* (Tortoise, tortoise, where are you going?) were childish chanting songs, the songs revealed the knowledge that Lozi children grew up with in terms of identifying the seasons. Apart from that, children also learnt about the croaking of frogs and chirrups of some bird species⁴⁸ known to be present only during the rainy season, thereby gaining lessons in environment education and management.

In his studies on the role of play songs among the Ga children of Ghana, Abarry (1989), noted that indigenous songs that focused on natural phenomena helped children to develop positive attitudes to natural phenomena and familiarized them with traditional calendar. Similar views have been advanced by Simako (2009) who has observed that Tswana children felt at home in the class when they learnt things that formed part of their local environment. Using simple songs like the ones cited would help the children to bring out what they know to the class, and teachers could easily build on that to introduce some related concepts. Unless children can make association with what they already know, attempts to teach them unknown things may prove fruitless.

⁴⁸ Some children I interviewed at this place (Sitoti Mission School-20/11/2012) even imitated the sounds made by these birds.

5.1.11 Intellectual processes involved in singing

In the study, the type of singing that the children performed was mostly done in unison. This implies that the traditional Lozi practice of singing in thirds, or those from the *silimba* that follows the pentatonic tune were not observed. However, the unison way of singing done by the children revealed that they were conversant with the music requirements.

Among the Lozis, singing off key is referred to as ‘*mutengu*’, while an inconsistent way of moving from one tune to another is referred to as ‘*malundu*.’ This is a figurative way of likening someone’s movement when climbing and going down some hills.⁴⁹

The child’s ability to detect these forms of unacceptable singing patterns confirms his/her intelligence. A good singer is figuratively referred to as ‘*munembo*.’ This is drawn from the local name of a song bird. My study among the thirty two expert children revealed that they were able to sing favourably well to the satisfaction of the researcher. Singing and dancing required participants to discriminate differences in tone, volume, and rhythm as well as mastery of lyrics. Hence, cognitive processes of discriminating different sounds are required. However, it should be noted that the fact that the children in the study could not employ the traditional way of using the thirds or octaves in their singing implied that the practice of singing in that fashion was declining. Children imitate things that they see and hear from their local communities.

Theme Two: 5.2.0 *Silimba* playing

Playing *silimba* constitutes an important component to many traditional activities in western province. During my interactions and interviews with local expert *silimba* players, vital information regarding the role that plays among the local people was gleaned. Although much of the issues about *silimba* are discussed later under objective two, I have decided to include *silimba* here again because of the intellectual processes that are involved in its construction.

5.2.1 Playing *silimba*/ as a guided learning process

In analysing children’s way of learning and acquiring expertise in constructing and playing *silimba* , useful insights on how to design appropriate pedagogies for effective teaching and

⁴⁹ *Malundu* (pl.) means hills.

learning purposes can be gleaned. The local expert informants disclosed to me that they had gained the skill of playing and constructing *silimba* through observations and constant mentoring from the famous *silimba* player in their local areas. In the classroom situation, the above pedagogy, if adopted, could benefit the learner to master new tasks. Creating interest and sustaining it is an important component in the learning process. Unfortunately, the practice of many teachers is that of seeing learners as *tabula rasas* or blank slates that need to be filled with information and knowledge from the teachers. The approach theorized by Freire (1970) of using dialogue to negotiate for meaning by both the teacher and learner is a preferred one.

Similar findings by Seavoy (1982) among the Sisaala people of North West Ghana have been documented. These findings are consistent with the current study findings on how children gained the skill of playing xylophone. In the study by Seavoy, boys aged six associated with the expert players of xylophones, attempted to play drums when adults were not playing these instruments.

5.2.2 Intellectual processes involved in the construction and playing of *silimba*

The intellectual processes underpinning the construction of *silimba* were singled out by as being portrayed in recognizing the right tree and arriving at a correct pitch. Playing *silimba* as I observed the whole process requires a lot of concentration. Striking the correct planks while playing involves having mental maps of the instrument to avoid striking wrong planks. Playing an instrument correctly is a sign of the skill and intelligence that the player has acquired. Studies that have been done in Zambia have shown that the concept of pitch was mainly influenced by the region⁵⁰ where an individual hailed from (Mensah, 1970).

Theme Three: 5.3.0 Knowledge of indigenous games/ songs among teachers and school pupils

5.3.1 Teachers' knowledge of indigenous play and music activities

The findings obtained from the study regarding the knowledge of play games and songs showed that both the teachers and pupils had knowledge of existing indigenous play games and songs.

⁵⁰ Regional pitch is a tendency by an ethnic group to structure their musical pitch perceptions according to the existing forms where they live. Musical instruments tend to be tuned in accordance with this perception.

However, the study revealed that much as the teachers could mention some of the existing play games and songs, many of the teachers interviewed showed that they only knew fewer than what was expected⁵¹. This trend was found in most of the schools visited during the study. It was learnt that some of the teachers could not make significant associations between the things they taught at school in relation to what indigenous games/ songs could offer too. Findings in other parts of Africa, in Nigeria for instance, have shown similar results. In a study conducted by Salami and Oyaremi (2012) among the Yoruba pre- primary and primary school teachers, it was found that the teachers' use of indigenous play games was low, although the teachers perceived the indigenous play games as being relevant to the educational development of their pupils. In the current study, the teachers who were interviewed revealed that they only used some of the play games that were found in their teachers' guide during the Creative and Technology Studies CTS lessons only. When this was analysed against the backdrop of the perceived underlying affordances to the other subjects like mathematics cited by the expert pupils and expert teachers, there was very little that the teachers did to relate the indigenous play games to their classroom teaching situations. Some children talked to during some random interactions with them in the four schools visited gave similar responses that their teachers did not encourage them to play the games or use the play games to teach some concepts in subjects like mathematics in classes. These findings are consistent with Kalinde (2010) who found that teachers in the Copperbelt in Zambia did not consider game songs as tools that they could integrate and use in their teaching.

5.3.2 Teachers' perceived negative attitudes to indigenous play and music activities

According to the findings from the informant expert teachers, it was revealed that there were other teachers within the teaching fraternity who viewed indigenous games and plays as backward and primitive. Such teachers felt they had nothing to do with traditional activities. However, my further investigations on the background of such teachers either showed that they were motivated to do so because of their religious⁵² beliefs while some of the teachers in this category did not have many activities that centred on indigenous play games. This lack of a strong orientation to indigenous activities manifested itself in the negative attitudes exhibited

⁵¹ Interview with teachers at Lukanda-19/11/2012. The teachers only gave me 4 indigenous play songs although I found that they knew quite a number of western songs.

⁵² This was noted at Sitoti Mission School. The School belongs to the S.D.A. Traditional activities such as dancing and playing drums/xylophone are not allowed on the mission station.

towards indigenous activities. In her studies in three schools in Kenya, Andang'o (2008) noted that failure to teach indigenous music by the teachers arose from the fact that some of the teachers did not have much access to indigenous music as they had not experienced it at school as students. It is quite clear that such negative attitudes can be more damaging to the pupils especially those from the rural schools whose only models for modernity are the same school teachers. The problem that is likely to arise from these negative attitudes among some teachers is that children are likely to undervalue their own culture and relegate it to something inferior and insignificant and thus cripple the socialization process. Socialization, according to Grusec and Davidov (2010), is the process by which children acquire the social, emotional, and cognitive skills needed to function in their social community. Children spend more of their time at school than they do at home. If these children begin to learn that African traditional musical forms are inconsistent with modernity and with becoming educated, they are likely to have less regard for such traditional activities, a situation that can lead to the total extinction of the traditional activities, while the children may fail to acquire life skills needed for their future. According to Abarry (1989: 214), "schools ought to be made to play a more important role in at least the circulation and ultimate preservation of African play and oral literature in general." Nsamenang has warned that African schools should not promote "an educational process by which children increasingly gain unfamiliar knowledge and skills... but sink disturbingly into alienation and ignorance of their cultural circumstances" (Nsamenang, 2008, cited in Marfo & Biersteker, 2010: 73).

5.3.3 Pupils' knowledge of indigenous play and music activities

The findings of the study had revealed that the expert children knew more of the modern play game songs than the traditional ones. When attempts were made to find out from them on the play songs that were mainly from their own areas other than those which were in English or from some other languages outside the confines of Western Province, only very few managed to remember some of the locally known play songs. Some of the locally cited play songs by the expert music teachers were not familiar to the children. The implication of these findings when analysed reveal that the teaching of the local known play songs were on the decline. The fact that most of the children could remember modern play songs and yet fail to recall the local Silozi

play songs also implied that even the children did not play these games or had less knowledge of the play songs at their homes.

In her study among the Kenyan pre- schools, Andang'o (2008) observed similar findings and noted that the teaching of indigenous songs was a 'dying practice' in the schools where her study was conducted. The claim put forward by the teachers in Kenya was that the multicultural mix of children in the school rendered indigenous music unsuitable in school. Although these views were not expressed by my informants in the study, they were deduced from the way the children could mention play songs that were in English. This means that there is a need to encourage the local teachers to have a deliberate approach of incorporating the teaching of the local play songs in their school programmes. This could be done by inviting some local expert people to help⁵³. This would ensure the survival of the local play songs that were found to be on the decline.

5.3.4 Negotiating the middle ground⁵⁴

Some of the play and music activities performed by the children during the study revealed that some of these were adapted to suit the modern children. The games that were noted to have been adapted as earlier stated in chapter four included *situtu sa tutuluka*⁵⁵ which had its counterpart in a play game song known as Landrover. In his study among children in the urban areas of Zambia, Mtonga (2012) considers that Landrover might have been introduced as a game because of the strength that this modern form of transport showed. I learnt that the way Landrover was played was very similar to the former in the sense that in both games, a player was expected to make a breakthrough at any weak spot where the other players held their hand to make a barrier. In the other game called *mbambamba ngulube*⁵⁶, the children had adapted and modified this game to include modern things as objects on offer to a trapped player expected to make a choice on which group to join. For instance, a trapped player would be presented with a television and a

⁵³ I was informed by the deputy head teacher at Namalangu Basic School that they had greatly benefited from the participation of local experts in most of their school cultural activities. Personal discussions-10/10/2012.

⁵⁴ The phrase has been adapted from Serpell (2006). Transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, Germany- Titled: Negotiating the middle ground between the ostensible and shared horizons: A dynamic approach to cross cultural communication about human development. However, it has been slightly adapted here to mean making sense out of something.

⁵⁵ This play game is played by forming a ring while players clasp their hands. One player gets into the ring and attempts to get out of it at some weak spots in the hand formed chain.

⁵⁶ This play game has been described in chapter four of this study. See plate 6.

radio as alternatives. In my earlier discussion with one of the expert *silimba* players noted in chapter four, he made a significant point when he said:

“Everything has got its own time. Today we cannot compel our children to do things the way we did them in the past. These are modern times. We only need to help our children to maintain an acceptable balance .”⁵⁷

This observation deserves some critical consideration in the wake of the changes that children in society are exposed to. Children at school interact with others from within and outside the province. Through the interactions that they make, the children learn lots of things from their friends. In this respect, it is not possible for children to remain static. This may explain why some of the play games I observed were in the other ethnic languages originating from outside Western Province. When the children were asked to explain who had taught them the skills they possessed in performing the play and music activities, many of them mentioned their friends as the sources where they learnt the skills from. On the other hand, the same children had some knowledge of play game and activities learnt from school, as well as their own indigenous play game activities that they had been exposed to for a long time. In such scenarios, children had to negotiate their own middle ground⁵⁸ and get what best suited them. Thus modifying certain play games as noted in the study was the only way of maintaining a middle ground where children could get meaning in what they were doing. By embracing new things, children were showing their willingness to accept and incorporate new things and ideas. However, there is also a need for the preservation of the local play and music activities. Much as other ‘foreign’ play and music activities can be introduced for learning and entertainment, such activities can easily eclipse the local ones resulting in the loss or decline of the local ones. Before children are introduced to play and music activities from other provinces or ethnic groups, they should be grounded in their own to ensure continuity survival of such play and music activities. In Botswana, similar observations have been noted by Simako (2009).

⁵⁷ Interview with SP aged 65years (29/01/2013)- Senanga.

⁵⁸ The use of this term has been adapted from Serpell, R. (2001). Negotiating the middle ground between the ostensible and shared horizons: A dynamic approach to cross-cultural communication about human behaviour. In J. Straub; D. Weidmann; C. Kolbl; & B. Zielke (Eds.). Pursuit Of meaning. Advances in cultural & cross-cultural psychology. Pp. 393-433. As used here, the concept has been slightly adapted to mean the need to draw individual and responsive decisions when faced with competing situations.

Theme: Four 5.4.0 Social processes and benefits underpinning indigenous play and music activities

A number of social benefits associated with children's participation in indigenous play and musical activities were established through the presentation of the study findings in the previous chapter. The discussion and analysis that follow focuses on perceived benefits that are likely to be gained by children as a result of participating in indigenous play and music activities, and how the acquisition of such skills could help children to be prepared for adult life.

5.4.1 Promotion of socialization and cooperation

a. Stone passing/catching play and music activities

An analysis of the social benefits that children gained from participation in indigenous play and music revealed that play and music activities could promote virtues of social accountability and cooperation. Stone passing/catching games provided friendly environments for creating interpersonal relationships. A child player surrendered willingly to allow the other players to take over when such a child made a mistake. There were no confrontations noted among children in the way the stone passing play games were conducted⁵⁹. Those who were learning how to play the games showed respect to their mentors while the mentors developed a sense of responsibility as they apprenticed the young learners. Thus the play games afforded the children a social platform of creating relationships of mutual understanding and responsibility.

Pellis and Pellis (2009) have further observed that as children adjust their behaviour responses with others, their repertoire of social, emotional and cognitive abilities are enhanced. In the process of creating interpersonal relationships during play and related music activities, children learnt to socialize. Nsamenang (2006:296) has rightly pointed out that socialization was not about leading children into individual achievement or to exist outside the traditional socio-cultural organisation, it was about developing a sense of responsibility towards the community as well as social competence within the family and social system.

⁵⁹ This was common for all the four schools where this study was conducted. Children who made mistakes did not need to be told that they had made some mistake.

b. Aquatic play games

We saw in chapter four that these play and music activities included ‘*ku tapa silozi*’⁶⁰ (swimming), ‘*butongwe*’ (hand touching) and ‘*muipato*’ (seek and hide) while play songs included ‘*Mezi, mezi mulenaka*’ (water, my master), and ‘*Kwena ya mo*’ (the crocodile). We noted that these play and music games were predominantly performed in water as recreational activities. Apart from social accountability and cooperation that these activities were likely to enhance in participants, they had the potential of developing courage and perseverance among the children as they learnt how to swim. These findings are in harmony with Mtonga (2012) in his observation that courageous and daring children would develop physical strength, a greater awareness of self and others, and develop social skills and intelligence.

c. Hand clapping play/songs

Earlier in chapter four, we noted that a hand clapping play song like ‘*mbambamba ngulube*’ required players to make informed choices. The first words of ‘*mbambamba*’ are only meaningless syllables and do not mean anything but are only tailored to the clapping of hands. ‘*Ngulube*’ is the name for pig, which, in the song is advised to take care of its ‘children’ or piglets (*bana ba bendi*). When the play song is analysed, a number of themes seem to be embedded in it. Firstly, the song is an admonition to the pig to take care of ‘children.’ The play required the participants to engage in a tug of war in which the leader was held tightly by a chain of hands behind him. He was required to defend the group while the group also rallied behind him as they struggled to win their opponents to their side. The lesson that children get is that leaders are expected to defend the people whom they serve. Secondly, at the commencement of the play game, children were expected to choose two strong candidates to be the leaders for the two groups⁶¹. Children learnt something about their civic responsibilities. Leaders were chosen and not imposed on the participants. Thirdly, children learnt to work as a team. The strength of the group was measured by how united they were in holding on to the other. Children learnt to defend their group. Thus, through this play song, children learnt more of what it meant to live and work as a group. Leaders needed the support of the other children. Lastly, this play song

⁶⁰ Lozi people especially those living in the Barotse plain tend to think they are masters in swimming because of the abundance of rivers, hence their reference to a skill in swimming as *ku tapa silozi* (lit. to swim like a Lozi cf.p.45).

⁶¹ I observed that participants looked for some physical qualities of being strong for those who were chosen as group leaders.

taught the children to make informed decisions in life. Wrong choices led to failure. Cooperation and team work are the hallmarks of this play song. In the school curriculum, this could be included in social studies or CTS to teach social and civic responsibilities.

The clapping play songs presented in chapter four reveal the social cohesion that they promote among the children. These songs were all noted to originate among the Mbunda speaking ethnic group. Children played the play songs without any prejudices. This underscores an important observation in that despite the various ethnic groups found in the two districts, all shared their rich cultural heritage and enjoyed participating in each ethnic group's activities without segregation. Play songs acted as links between different cultural groups and helped to join them together.

d. Work songs

Most of the work songs that I came across in the study were those that were done by girls or women. I learnt that these songs performed dual roles. Firstly, they were performed for motivational purposes to make the work lighter and enjoyable. My informants stated that the task of pounding maize appeared very small when they engaged in singing while they worked since singing brought pleasure and satisfaction to them while they performed the task. An analysis of this practice reveals that songs were usually incorporated in work to provide entertainment to the workers as well as to promote virtues of hard work. Pounding to the rhythm of the song '*Na ba sitela bo John*' cited in chapter four, young girls were taught that it was a necessity for them to work for their husbands and children as well. In situations where most households have no means to afford money to pay for grinding at a local hammer mill, pounding maize remained the only option.

The second function that work songs performed was to voice out certain concerns regarding the social injustices that existed. In the song cited above, the protest was directed to the lazy man John who could not do anything but only to sit and wait for food from the wife. An interesting aspect to note in this song is seen in the way young girls were expected to make their formal complaints. They were expected to complain in a respectful way without creating serious tensions with their spouses. This approach is also revealed in the other calming song cited in chapter four entitled '*Wena mwanana u lila ahulu bona ndataho hana mutanga*,' (lit. child, you

cry too much; look, your father has no slave). Although the song was sung to calm the child, in actual fact the mother was mocking the husband for his poverty in failing to provide for the family. Sometimes this would be an indirect way of protesting against the husband's lack of actual participation in work as noted from the other song of '*Na ba sitela bo John*' (lit. "I am pounding [working] for John").⁶² Studies on gender distribution of work in many African societies between boys and girls have shown that girls do more work than boys (Dasen, 1988a, cited in Segall et al, 1990: 119). This may therefore explain why work songs appear to be mostly done by girls or women because of the gender imbalance.

Findings of how work in traditional societies enhanced production have been noted by Impey and Nussbaum (1996), in South Africa when they observed that taxing and boring work was often transformed into more pleasurable ones through song and synchronised rhythmical movements through songs. Participation in work songs also helped the young girls to anticipate what adult life would be like as well as teaching children to work hard and learn to live as part of the community (Mtonga, 2012,). The rhythm and lyrics of the songs noted during my study provided the springboard for more enjoyment to the children interviewed. Although an avenue through which messages could be communicated, music also provided aesthetic links that made work to be appreciated and liked by children.

e. Story songs

The social affordances underpinning the story songs inculcated the values and other norms of society. In the story song about the monster and the little boy cited earlier in chapter four, the social teaching was one of courage and tactfulness. Teachings about wisdom and intelligence in coping with challenging situations in life were emphasized through animal characters. Ng'andu and Herbst (2004) have noted that songs provided a mnemonic device for the community to learn the elements of a culture. Songs in oral literature were important for helping children to solve problems and correct social injustices, and promoted the art of speaking (Mapoma, 1980). The content of the songs and proverbs directed at children were designed to help them make reflections to promote socially responsible intelligence (Serpell, 2011) as a developmental outcome. As noted earlier in the previous chapter, the genres that helped to transmit the values

⁶² Interestingly, this was a very popular song cited to me by girls. Boys did not give any known work songs.

and norms of society were on the decline. In this study, the findings revealed that stories were on the decline because of the availability of new and more compelling sources of recreation and entertainment channeled through the television. These findings are consistent with Abarry (1989) who observed some decline of stories and story songs among the Ghanaian children, (cf. Mtonga, 2012). Even in the remote places like Shangombo where I went for the study, story decline was attributed mostly to the effects of media technology on cultural processes⁶³.

f. Pretend play songs

Pretend play games (*mandwani*) were noted to be play activities in which children learnt about their expected roles as adults later on in life. Children had the opportunity of learning what happened in real life through the make-believe play games. This type of children's play game is known by different names in Zambia. For instance, it is known as *amansansa* among the Bemba speaking people (Kingsley, 1977), and *vidimbo* among the Chewa people of Eastern province (Mtonga, 2012). In this study, I learnt from my informants that these activities were mainly done through the initiative of the children themselves. Most parents did not provide items that children needed to use during the time they went to play. Parental indulgence of these activities was merely done because it was seen as children's pastime activity. Unlike Mtonga (2012) whose view was that most parents encouraged their children to engage in various artistic creative activities, we noted in chapter four of this study that many of the children interviewed used their initiative to get the required food items for use during pretend play because parents considered this as a waste of resources and not important⁶⁴. This was because many adults did not consider playing as being very important. In recent years, many parents have been cited as showing more happiness when their children moved from a nursery school where they felt the children were not learning but merely given too much play. This view is consistent with Serpell (1993:65), who, in his study of the Chewa people, noted that most adults' attitude toward children's play was that it "was essentially childish, and therefore unworthy of adult attention."

The songs that children sang, for instance, the banishment song such as 'you will play alone' (*u ka bapala ni sitoho sa hao*) as noted in chapter four, were mainly aimed at helping the wayward

⁶³ Some children informed me that they watched some movies from the houses of some members of staff at the local school (interviews with children in Sioma-06/11/2012).

⁶⁴ See the views of children in my interviews with them at Sitoti Mission in chapter four of this dissertation.

children to make reflections and reform to be in harmony with others. While children would be displeased by the misdemeanor of a fellow play mate, they were willing to reconcile with such a child when s/he showed remorse over an unacceptable pattern of behaviour. Compliance to the norms and expectations of others were learnt through banishment episodes. On the other hand, children imitated and performed songs and dances that adults in real village life did. The views and observations of Brown (cited in Ntsihlele, 1982:61) that “children’s games and songs are a force of socialization and enculturation which initiates the individual into the ways of the group” are consistent with the views that I gathered on pretend play during this study. Children’s participation in pretend play and music activities as noted in my study occurred spontaneously outside parental encouragement and supervision. Although most of the children interviewed said they no longer participated in pretend play because they were old, they stated that they had greatly benefited from the pretend play games by being able to do many household chores. Intent participation explained by Rogoff (2003) provides greater opportunities for children to emulate adults and other community roles that they observe. Pretend play and music activities were therefore not only a form of entertainment for the children but were necessary avenues of learning important skills needed for adult life.

g. Chasing play games/ songs

Peba ni kaze (Rat and Cat)

The research findings in the previous chapter revealed that this was one of the popular play game songs. In analysing its social benefits, the play song provided a form of entertainment to children as they interacted by giving each other turns. Every child in this game was expected to play the role of cat or mouse. This in turn created friendship as children worked together through turn taking. It afforded the learners an opportunity to play cooperatively and helped shy children to overcome their shyness. Through taking turns, all the children learnt to participate in the play game, and this instilled a sense of self-confidence and self-esteem especially among the shy children. These are attributes required in school going children.

h. Riddles/ Puzzles

In this study, riddles (*manyumbo*) and puzzles (*tukwaci*) were studied because of their close links to other forms of children’s play and music activities. In my discussions with the informants,

they revealed to me that where major evening activities like storytelling and singing occurred, they were in most cases followed by riddles (*manyumbo*) or puzzles (*tukwaci*). Secondly, both folk stories (*matangu*) and riddles/puzzles taught the Lozi child the norms and values that were cherished by society, and were expected to be mastered by the growing child. Thus a topic that tackles the cultural processes of society in form of music may be inclined to include other forms of oral literature that includes riddles/ puzzles (*manyumbo/tukwaci*) respectively.

Earlier in my presentation of the intellectual benefits of the play and music activities, riddles were cited as being potentially useful in promoting language development in children or learners. On the social dimension, riddles/puzzles taught social values and norms of society. Topics presented in riddles/puzzles were also drawn from the social aspects of society's everyday life activities, as well as from the natural environment. In the riddle cited in chapter four of the study findings, the metaphor of a woman was given when the riddle, identify the tallest and beautiful woman (*Musali yo mutelele ka lipaswana*). The answer given pointed to the river. The supportive role of a woman was likened to a long river that had many tributaries, just like a woman was expected to have children under her protection and support. Society depended on the unwavering social role that a woman played. Although they required children to think critically, puzzles (*tukwaci*) also inculcated moral lessons. In the puzzle involving three things that included a cat, a mouse, and a groundnut, in need of being ferried across the river in a small dugout canoe that could only carry one item at a time, the social teaching that children got was that diplomacy was necessary in ensuring that harmony existed between things/ individuals who had some differences. Ferrying the three items required social wisdom and intelligence to avoid one thing becoming prey to another. In real life, leaving such individuals to live together all by themselves would inevitably lead to anarchy. Children learnt conflict resolution management as a necessary skill in life through this puzzle. The benefits associated with riddles and puzzles as means through which children were encultured and socialised have also been documented by Impey and Nussbaum (1996) in South Africa who observed that, children were encultured and socialised through proverbs, idioms, and riddles as learning avenues.

i. Catching play games

In his work, Mtonga (2012) has noted that, most children's games such as catching...play-dances...involve bodily- kinesthetic intelligence. In this type of play game, we noted that it

involved one player calling others while others attempted to escape from being caught. Socially, when the play game is analysed, we note that it helps children to develop social skills and intelligence necessary to face difficult situations in real life. But further than that, the play game provides an entertainment means through which the children interact and come to know each other well. Those who are good at running are easily identified. Their skills in escaping from being caught are admired, and many children attempt to imitate their prowess. The play game also provides an opportunity for the shy children to mix freely and to socialize with their friends, and this assists them to develop self-esteem and self confidence. This is very essential for the development of socio- emotional intelligence among children.

General play songs

We noted in chapter four that these play songs were mainly associated with the changes in the seasons when certain changes were observed. The onset of the rains especially marked the performances of most of these play songs. Two of the play songs studied were those related to the onset of the rain (*pula*), and the tortoises' laying of eggs (*kulu*). In these play songs; children learnt the calendar and the associated seasons. The social affordances that we noted in chapter four included the development of right attitudes to work and other activities associated with the seasons, as well as knowledge in environmental education.

Play songs like 'let the rain fall' (*pula i nele*) was also a song of appreciation for the many benefits that came along with the rain season.

j. Songs and dances

Praise songs

In chapter four, we saw that songs and dances were in most cases performed at the same time, and that songs were in types. The study only looked at two types, namely: praise and mockery songs. The praise songs were mostly centred on the traditional Lozi ceremony of kuomboka. When the praise songs are analysed, they reveal the direct ways in which the Lozi children are taught to admire their tradition and culture. By creating scenes of beauty in the mind of the singers, strong bonds of attachment to the cultural processes are created. The children get enculturated and develop interest in the annual cultural event. What are the results of such early

attachments to one's culture? The children easily identify themselves with their cultural processes and begin to own these processes. They also become active participants in the cultural activities and thereby promote the existence, survival, and perpetuation of the values and norms of the culture itself. Secondly, cultural activities such as the kuomboka function as integrative processes and help to unify the different ethnic groups among the Lozis⁶⁵.

Mockery songs and dances

Mockery songs were noted as those songs that were directed at certain misdemeanors in the community and needed redress. We learnt from some informants in chapter four that direct confrontations were avoided by all means, and hence acceptable channels of voicing out such concerns were sought

The findings stated above are consistent with Merriam (1964), who, observed that songs of social control played an important role in giving warning to erring members of the society on what was considered to be proper behaviour, and thereby functioned to enforce conformity to social norms. In Zambia, other scholars who have done studies among the Mambwe people of Northern Province, and the Chewa and Tumbuka ethnic groups of Eastern Province have documented similar findings on the role of songs on children's development (Simonsen & Smorholm 2012; cf. Mtonga, 2012; Serpell, 1993).

Theme Five: 5.5.0 Traditional musical instruments

The discussions that follow are structured around the second research objective that aimed to analyse the extent to which playing traditional instruments (*silimba* and drums) can instill a sense of cooperation among learners. Playing the traditional musical instruments like *silimba* (xylophone) and drums added a lot of aesthetics to the whole activities of singing and dancing.⁶⁶ The presence of these instruments at major village functions was proof of performing a function in an indigenous way. *Silimba* and drums then were embodiments of the preservation of the

⁶⁵ It is a very common sight during kuomboka ceremony to find many cultural activities performed by many ethnic groups from all parts of western province.

⁶⁶ My personal observation during the recordings that I did at Lukanda confirms this point. Intense participation occurred when the dancers and expert players got submerged and unified in the activity. During this frenzied time of intense aesthetic experiences, the xylophone acted as a soloist while the dancers responded to the popular songs being played. This was then the time that the expertise of a *silimba* player was ascertained by the dancers and listeners alike.

cultural processes. Participants felt satisfied when these instruments were present and played skillfully. During the interviews with the expert players, I learnt that players enjoyed the activity when they got someone to give a back-up. The skills of a master *silimba* player were made more manifest when he had an assistant player who provided the accompaniment. This then justifies the construction of *silimba* having more planks than those previously done. The harmony and cooperation made by the players excites the dancers whose dancing also becomes a source of inspiration for the expert players to be deeply submerged in the activity and exhibit their expertise. The role of the drummers was similar to that of the *silimba* players. The master drum also exhibited his skills when the accompaniments provided by two players were in harmony with his.

How then was unity and cooperation achieved through participation of these instruments in the cultural activities? My personal interaction with the children in the schools where performances were staged for recordings revealed that children became more interested in the activities where a combination of both *silimba* and drums occurred.⁶⁷ During my interviews with the expert players, it became evident that *silimba* and drumming activities were important for the sustenance of all the village activities. Big community functions like initiation ceremonies, healing sessions conducted by witch finders, and wedding celebrations all became meaningful when the traditional instruments were present according to my informants. These instruments were significant in providing accompaniment to such activities.

We noted that among the Lozi people, playing these musical instruments at the royal establishments helped to convey important messages to the people in authority especially the king. Thus, other than functioning as entertainment accompaniments for major cultural functions, these instruments were closely associated with the royal establishments.

In his studies in Uganda, Kubik (1982) observed that xylophone and drum playing were also associated with the royal establishment. Playing drums according to Kubik announced important activities within the royal establishment. Similar findings have been cited by Brown (1984) among the Lozi people as we noted in chapter two of this study. Playing of musical instruments

⁶⁷ Children observed at Lukanda appeared to have been more engaged in the activity than those at Sioma. We had to stop the activity at Lukanda as the sun was setting but the performers and observer were not showing signs of wanting the activity to come to an end. The following day the whole school playing ground was fully packed with expectant children. (The recordings were done for three days 15/10/2012-17/10/2012 in the afternoons).

at the royal establishments has also been documented by Mapoma (1980) among the Bemba. In this respect therefore, our analysis of the unique role that traditional musical instruments perform in preserving cultural heritage cannot be overemphasized. In this study, we noted that the songs that children performed were mostly focused on the cultural activities of the kuomboka ceremony. Children in this respect learnt to identify themselves with their culture, and learnt more about their culture through active participation in the dances and songs.

Theme: Six 5.6.0 Perceived outcomes of participating in indigenous play and music activities

This section is an integrative discussion of the third study objective which aims at identifying some salient outcomes noted from the present study to justify why the inclusion of indigenous music and game activities in the school curriculum is necessary.

We noted from the findings presented in chapter four of this study that play and music activities were potentially beneficial in enhancing the intellectual and social processes in learners. Children's engagement and participation in such activities especially at the elementary stages of formal education could greatly afford the learners an opportunity of internalizing many concepts in language development, vocabulary, and numeracy. Below is a summary of the associated benefits that children are likely to be afforded when they participate in indigenous play and music activities as noted from this study.

- Indigenous play and music activities such as *Nakutambekela*, *muyato* and *mulabalaba* have been singled out as affording learners opportunities to acquire numeracy skills.
- Songs help improve learners' listening and memory skills, as well as enhancing language development.
- Children develop socio- emotional intelligence through the songs and dances by way of intent participation.
- Participation in play and music activities helps shy children to overcome their self-perceived inabilities. This can lead to self-esteem.
- Play and music activities help children to make connections between what they do at home and what they are taught at school.

- Play and music activities have the benefits of encouraging attendance at all school functions and help reduce truancy.
- Children easily identify their talents and develop them early in life.
- Playing musical instruments encourages understanding and cooperation between players and dancers.
- Cultural songs and dances help children to develop diplomacy in handling conflicts, and promote conflict resolution skills, while criticisms of social injustices inculcate right attitudes essential for living in harmony with others.
- Play and music activities encourage both boys and girls to play together, and help them to interact easily.
- Play and music activities equip participants with the necessary life skills, and help to integrate them into the society through an enculturation process.

In Zambia, it has been demonstrated that when older children and younger ones interact through play and music activities, older children act as mentors who are capable of motivating and stimulating younger children's learning (Child-to-child Trust, 2004). This kind of interaction has the benefit of impressing the younger children's intellectual skills in numeracy, memorization, and spelling. Children's participation in play and music activities helps them to internalize the values and norms of society and this develops a sense of social responsibility and social intelligence (Mtonga, 2012). The findings from my study have demonstrated how children's intent activities demonstrated through play, songs, and dances help them to become integrated members of society.

5.7 Extrapolation of study outcomes and their implication on education

The outcomes of this study have been consistent with the numerous studies noted elsewhere in Africa and beyond ((Abarry, 1989; Nyota and Mapara, 2008; Andrea, 2009), that have held the view that children's participation in play and music activities have many intellectual and social benefits, as well as aesthetic, and recreational values that would greatly facilitate the learning process of the children if rightfully employed and utilized in the school. Intellectual processes, according to Addo (1997:16), "constitute consciously held knowledge, skills, and ways of

thinking [or] cultural knowledge structures.” Indigenous play and music activities like *muyato* and *mulabalaba* had the potential to influence a child’s skills in numeracy. Encouraging and promoting play and music activities especially among children in the elementary levels of schooling could therefore be one possible way of providing a strong grounded foundation for developing some concepts in mathematics while story songs, riddles, and puzzles were likely to promote language acquisition in children. Culture-sensitive activities have been singled out as enhancing motivation among learners and provide continuity of learning through the things that children know and are familiar with (Akuno, 2005).

Socially, music and play activities were likely to help instill the values that society valued and treasured. Through children’s intent participation in the cultural activities such as dances and songs, children were socialized in the ways of their cultures and identified themselves with their own cultures. For instance, participants from pretend play acknowledged that they gained skills that they applied in real life. Modern education system should strive to tailor what is taught in school to real life issues. Unfortunately, the tendency in many African countries has been that of listening and bending to the donor dictates at the expense of what can best help their formal education systems (Croft, 2002).

In terms of curriculum and pedagogy, the findings of the study have revealed that learning was done mostly through observations and imitations. Integrating indigenous methods where master story tellers did not directly give explanations to their stories but allowed the listeners to make deductions from the stories and draw appropriate lessons could be one example of discouraging teachers from spoon-feeding their learners. Instead, this indigenous method enhances independent thinking on the part of the listeners and is likely to help the learners apply what they have deduced from the learning process in a meaningful way. Additionally, activities that are presented to learners should be appealing for the learners to develop interest in what they are taught. Too often, there is a mundane way of teaching that does not spark interest in learners. This, in most cases results in boring teaching sessions that are dominated by the teacher while learners are seen as passive receptors (Harber & Stephens, 2009). Learners in this approach of teaching are viewed as empty vessels that have to be filled with something. Freire (1970), has argued against this form of teaching and has instead theorized for a dialogue centred approach in which both the teacher and the learner move together to draw meaning to a given problem.

Serpell (2008) has rightly observed that a productive discourse in search of enhanced understanding depends on an egalitarian set of premises in which the outcomes to a discussion are achieved by dialogue and not by imposition.

Play and music activities as outlined from the findings from this study, could afford children with the necessary skills at the elementary levels that could be used as building blocks for future success. With regard to the value of play in non Western nations, N’guessan, (1989), cited in Segall et al, (1990:121), observes that, “...in many non-Western societies, the value of play in formal schooling is contested because parents consider school a place to work and not to play.” This attitude may also be true of Zambia. Most parents would opt to take their children to the pre-schools where it is perceived that children learn and not play. Parental attitudes and government’s cited lack of attention and support seem to contribute to the lack of a robust educational programme that emphasizes music and games at the elementary level of formal schooling. Although MOE has accepted to provide professional service to early childhood education (Educating Our Future,1996), realizing the policy objectives and aims in early childhood education where music and games activities should form a corner stone seem to be farfetched as was noted during the study where school teachers complained of lack of government support. Elsewhere in Africa, studies have shown that “connecting the local knowledge of children to their learning situations in schools narrows the gap between classroom learning activities and social and cultural practices and values and enhances children’s participation and creativity in the classroom” (Jirata & Benti, 2013:213).In this study, it has been demonstrated that participation in indigenous and cultural activities was likely to provide children with an opportunity of wanting to be in school. On the other hand, talented many children have been denied the opportunity of exploring and realizing their full potentials. In short, in Zambia, the observation has been such that children’s abilities are not in most cases emphasized resulting in children gifted in certain disciplines feeling neglected.

In the area of dance and performance, some local musical instruments such as the Lozi traditional *silimba* (xylophone) has been identified by some Zambian education experts as one that could be used in the schools (The Post, 2010). In the recent past, calls to have a localized curriculum that would be responsive to the needs of individual learners have intensified prompting the Ministry of Education to institute a pilot study aimed at the attainment of such a

curriculum (Times of Zambia, 2013). It is hoped that the intention to introduce play and pre-learning activities to elementary school children will provide the necessary competences to them. Elsewhere in Africa, studies have shown that when instructional methods that build on local approaches to teaching children are used, significant results are yielded (Mwaura & Marfo, 2011). The indigenous music activities documented and analysed in this study are likely to provide many windows of opportunities for children's intellectual and social development when adopted in the main school curriculum.

In terms of existence, we noted that most play and music activities were perceived to be on the decline. Lack of government support for music activities contributed to the absence of musical instruments vital for supporting song and dance activities. Local manufactures of musical instruments such as the Lozi *silimba* on the other hand may not see any need of continuing in their trade if there is no market readily available. Therefore sustainability of cultural activities deserves government's attention as a chief stakeholder.

Having stated the above views, there is then a strong justification that indigenous play and music activities be accorded more focus especially in the lower levels of the Zambian education curriculum because of the perceived intellectual and social affordances underpinning them as noted in the study outcomes.

5.8 Summary

The study outcomes as noted from this chapter are consistent with those of other recent African studies (Addo, 1997; Nyota & Mapara, 2008; Mtonga, 2012), suggesting some generalisability across the region. Findings from this study have revealed that, unlike Western assertions that mainly emphasised music participation as a catalyst for academic and scholastic achievements only (Rauscher, 2003), indigenous children's music activities, learnt through observation and imitation of adult activities (intent participation) in non-Western and collectivist societies as theorised by Rogoff (2003) were essentially beneficial for fostering socio-emotional developmental processes in children as well. Music is conceptualised in African cultures as performative and this includes dance and play.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY

This study focused on the role of indigenous music and games in the promotion of cognitive development in Zambian children. The study only explored children's play, songs and dances in Senanga and Shangombo districts as one example of children's music activities in Zambia. Findings from the study have revealed that indigenous music activities demonstrated through play songs have many associated intellectual and social underpinnings that could afford some educational benefits to children who participate in them. The study has found that play activities such as *muyato* and *mulabalaba* could inculcate numeracy skills through intelligent calculations when playing them. Further, the study has found that indigenous play and music activities required participants to follow prescribed rules. Play songs like *Nakutambekela* required players to coordinate with others without breaking the rules of the game. Following the rules could help children to gain competences in problem solving skills. Playing these games was likely to equip children with mathematical competences, and incorporating these activities at the elementary levels of formal education could benefit children especially those from low socio-economic groups. The study has also found that indigenous play and music activities have other related intellectual benefits. Participation in folk stories and songs, riddles and puzzles could help to stimulate thinking processes of children leading to the development of listening and linguistic competences as well as memory enhancement. Aquatic game songs were capable of providing children with knowledge in environmental education. The study has also found that play and music activities could provide social affordances to children. Children were provided with a forum to acquire life skills prized and valued by society in preparation for their future roles through aquatic games; work songs; and pretend play games. For instance, children were likely to become skilled paddlers and swimmers and appreciated the value of water through aquatic games; valued the virtues of hard work through work songs; and prepared for future roles through pretend play. Chasing and catching games provided a spring board of preparing children to develop courage and helped children to overcome personal inhibitions such as fear and cowardice. Child-to-Child interpersonal relationships were cemented and nurtured through these activities.

The study has found that play and music activities had perceived educational benefits that included increased school attendance among children, enhancing self confidence and courage to participate in the learning processes in class. Participation in indigenous play and music activities could help to bridge the gap between the school and the home environments. Songs and dances could help learners to be socialized in the cultural ways of the Lozi people. Mockery and praise songs and dances taught about diplomacy and value of interpersonal relationships, and respect for others and those in authority. These songs and dances also warned and gave advice to children not to develop undesirable social behaviours. Playing of musical instruments had the benefit of helping children to value the need for mutual dependence in bringing about harmony in social relationships. On the other hand, participation in cultural songs could also help children to develop and promote the traditional ways of pentatonic singing, and call and response patterns. Participation and performance of these musical activities therefore could help to unify society and brought about mutual cooperation and discouraged individualism

In terms of the school curriculum, the study found that the school curriculum lacked the inclusion of most indigenous play and music activities. The inclusion of the indigenous pedagogical approaches in the school curriculum would greatly enhance quality delivery of education. The study found that the way children gained mastery in constructing and playing the xylophone (*silimba*) involved a systematic way of apprenticing a novice into mastery of a skill by an expert without creating serious gaps in the learning and teaching process.

The study has also revealed that participation in play and musical activities in the Zambian context was meant to socialize and help children assume social responsibility leading to the acquisition of social cognition. Unlike in the Western perspective where participation in musical activities primarily focused on individual achievements in academic subjects, the role of music in the Zambian context, performed mainly through play activities, was to bring about the development of social cognition for children to become fully functional members of society. Through intent participation and guided participation, children were likely to acquire the skills relevant for integration in community activities.

The study has found that most of the indigenous play and music activities, and the traditional xylophone (*silimba*) were perceived to be on the decline. The perceived decline was attributed to negative attitudes from young inexperienced teachers; perceived lack of support from

government and local school managers to indigenous musical and cultural activities leading to teacher frustrations, and the effects of Western media on children such as the television. What children saw on the television was likely to be put into practice. This observation is in harmony with Bandura and colleagues (cited in Grusec & Davidov, 2010:689), when they noted that “children cannot be kept from learning what they have seen.”

The study findings have confirmed the views posited in Gardner’s (1983) theory of multiple intelligence that music is one form of intelligence.

6.2 CONCLUSION

The study has found that indigenous play and music activities have many educational benefits underpinning them which could be very useful for promoting intellectual and social development among children. Incorporating these activities in the school curriculum and allowing children to perform them could greatly promote children’s development of numeracy and linguistic competences, increase school attendance, and promote self esteem among children at a young age. Localizing the school curriculum through the inclusion of indigenous play and music activities would help inculcate the Zambian values of social responsibility and help integrate children to function appropriately in their communities. Through this study, it has been demonstrated that indigenous play and music activities are important for children’s cognitive and social development. Findings from this study therefore have strong implications for justifying the inclusion of indigenous music activities in the school curriculum because they function to maintain social connections between school and community.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the associated educational benefits established through this study, I recommend the following as measures that could be put in place:

- Incorporation of local and indigenous play and music activities noted in the study that have numeracy and literacy potentials into the main stream education system especially in pre-schools, and lower grades of 1 to three. Play games such as *muyato* and *mulabalaba* could be encouraged as an activity in the elementary grades. *Mulabalaba*

played on the board should be encouraged and played alongside Western games such as draughts.

- Indigenous games like *tindi*⁶⁸ noted in the study should also be promoted as a sport among children as it has the potential to help children in making approximate measurements when throwing the sharpened wood javelin as well as enhancing mathematical concepts of circular objects.
- Preservation of children's indigenous play and music activities on computerized CDs.
- Encourage the use of traditional musical instruments such as xylophone (*silimba*) and drums for cultural activities in schools as a way of promoting them among children.
- Encourage talent identification of expert children in music and play activities in schools for possible support from government to help them explore their fullest potential.
- Sponsor teacher workshops with local parents for possible ways of using indigenous activities and pedagogies in lesson deliveries to promote and strengthen the establishment of a localized curriculum.

6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Further research to identify local musical and play activities within the local and other provinces that can be used in teaching based on their educational benefits.
- More research on the indigenous play and music activities to other districts in the province to ascertain and establish the perceived decline of some play and music activities.

⁶⁸ See the explanation of this indigenous game in appendix J of this dissertation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Interview guide for pupil

Demographic section. (To be completed by the interviewer)

Name.....(with consent of participant)

Gender: Boy/ Girl Age..... Grade.....

1. What are some of the indigenous/ traditional game songs/ dances that you play here?
2. Tell me more about how the game songs/ dances that you mentioned are performed?
3. What, in your view, constitutes a good performer of the game songs/ dances that you cited?
4. What intellectual values/ lessons do you get from performing these game songs/ dances/ musical instrument (silimba)?
5. How are the intellectual/ cognitive values attained when you perform the game songs/dances you cited?
6. How can one apply the intellectual skills gained from performing the game songs/dances for his/her life?
7. How did you acquire the performing skills of the game songs/ dances/ silimba playing?
8. What associated social benefits do you get in performing these game songs/dances?
9. What are the educational values of playing these indigenous game songs/dances?
10. What time of the day are the game songs/dances you cited performed? What gender groups play the game songs/dances?

APPENDIX B: Interview guide for the expert musical player (*silimba*).

Demographic Section. (To be completed by the interviewer)

Name.....(with the consent of the participant)

Gender: Male/Female

Age.....

1. I have been reliably informed that you are a master player of silimba. How did you acquire this unique skill?
2. How does a Lozi child learn how to play the silimba to become a master player like you?
3. How many planks does an indigenous Silozi silimba have? What intellectual lessons do you think a Lozi child can learn from the process of constructing and playing of silimba?
4. How does a novice like me acquire your excellent skills? How can I be of service to others especially children through the knowledge of playing silimba?
5. What is your assessment of a child who has acquired the expertise that you possess?
6. Do Lozi children play the silimba during their play times? How can one make a distinction between the silimba constructed by a child and an adult?
7. What, in your view, constitutes a good performance? Why should it be that way?
8. How do you know that someone does not know how to play silimba? What is involved in that?
9. What exactly can be taught to children in songs and dances? Are songs and dances of any value to children?
10. What are the social benefits of playing silimba? What cultural values are attached to the playing of silimba that children can acquire?

APPENDIX C: Interview guide for the expert music teacher

Demographic Section. (To be completed by the interviewer).

Name.....(with consent of participant)

Gender: Male/Female Age.....

1. Do the Lozi people have indigenous/traditional game songs/plays/dances for children for intellectual development? Mention such game songs/plays to me.
2. What are the specific intellectual underpinnings to the game songs/plays/dances that you have cited? Briefly explain them to me.
3. How are the intellectual processes to the game songs/plays/dances you have cited mobilised when the children perform the activities? Kindly explain to me.
4. Do you think indigenous game songs/dances are important in early child learning programmes? Why do you think so?
5. How does music, in this case game songs and dances, help young children explore their social and cultural identities?
6. What are the social processes involved in the game songs/dances that you have listed?
7. What has been your assessment of expert pupils in game songs and dances in relation to their academic performance in class?
8. What game/story songs do your teachers' guides have? Do these guides have indigenous materials for children?
9. Are there any educational values that the indigenous game songs/dances can offer to the Lozi children that would merit the inclusion of such game songs in the school curriculum? Mention them.
10. Which of the cited indigenous play game songs would you recommend for inclusion in the local school curriculum, and to which specific grades?

Appendix D: Letter of Consent for the teacher

The University of Zambia

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology

Date -----

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Master of Arts in Child and Adolescent Psychology Student from the above named institution conducting a research on my dissertation on the role of indigenous music in the promotion of cognitive development in Zambian children. You have been selected to participate in this study. Please show your willingness to participate by signing on the provided slip.

I must hasten to inform you that the name(s) of the participants in this study who will be observed and video recorded will remain anonymous if they so wish. Their participation is voluntary; they will be allowed to withdraw during the study without providing reasons for doing so.

Yours faithfully,

Mukela Mashebe Reuben.

I -----, have read and understood the contents of this letter. I therefore give permission to the researcher to conduct an interview with me.

Name ----- Signature -----

Appendix E: Letter of Consent for the Parent

The University of Zambia

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology

Date -----

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Master of Arts in Child and Adolescent Psychology Student from the above named institution conducting a research on my dissertation on the role of indigenous music in the promotion of cognitive development in Zambian children. Your child has been selected to participate in this study. Please show your willingness to allow your child to participate in the study by signing the provided slip.

I must hasten to inform you that the name(s) of the participants in this study who will be observed and video recorded will remain anonymous if they so wish. Their participation is voluntary; they will be allowed to withdraw during the study without providing reasons for doing so.

Yours faithfully,

Mukela Mashebe Reuben.

I -----, have read and understood the contents of this letter. I therefore give permission to the researcher to conduct observe and video record ----- in the research project provided that this is done under the supervision of the class teacher.

Name ----- Signature -----

Appendix F: Letter of Consent for Expert Informant

The University of Zambia

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology

Date -----

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Master of Arts in Child and Adolescent Psychology Student from the above named institution conducting a research on my dissertation on the role of indigenous music in the promotion of cognitive development in Zambian children. You have been selected to participate in this study. Please show your willingness to participate by signing on the provided slip.

I must hasten to inform you that the name(s) of the participants in this study who will be observed and video recorded will remain anonymous if they so wish. Their participation is voluntary; they will be allowed to withdraw during the study without providing reasons for doing so.

Yours faithfully,

Mukela Mashebe Reuben.

I -----, have read and understood the contents of this letter. I therefore give permission to the researcher to conduct an interview with me.

Name ----- Signature -----

APPENDIX G

Table 2: List of common cited indigenous music and game activities mostly played.

The list that is presented here is a synthesis of the play and music activities from the four schools that participated in the study namely: Namalangu and Lukanda Basic Schools in Senanga district, and, Sitoti and Sioma Basic Schools in Shangombo district. It should be stated that the study took place before the presidential declaration of Sioma as a new district where the two schools now fall under.

<i>Play games accompanied by songs</i>	<i>Play games not accompanied by songs</i>
<i>Nakutambekela</i>	<i>Muyato</i>
<i>Bana ba sikolo kwa tae</i>	<i>Mulabalaba</i>
<i>Mezi, mezi, mulena'ka</i>	<i>Butongwe</i>
<i>Mbambamba-ngulube</i>	<i>Muipato</i>
<i>Peba ni kakaze</i>	<i>Tukwaci</i>
<i>Yasa keni sikolo</i>	<i>Manyumbo</i>
<i>Ma-Nasilele</i>	<i>Matangu</i>
<i>Ma-Monde</i>	<i>Tandabale</i>
<i>Wena mwanana u lila ahulu</i>	<i>Sidunyu</i>
<i>Sikangaluku</i>	<i>Kapuli-kapuli</i>
<i>Ndindo-ndindo</i>	<i>Mandwani</i>
<i>Pula, pula inele</i>	<i>Pisi</i>
<i>Kuhu ya kekela</i>	<i>Tau</i>
<i>Lwendo</i>	<i>Namundalangwe</i>
<i>Haneni ya kwa sikolo</i>	<i>Kankolwe</i>
<i>Na ba sitela bo John</i>	<i>Waida</i>
<i>Ha lu inzi kwa sikolo</i>	<i>Game</i>
<i>Munzi wa luna</i>	<i>Sojo</i>
<i>Situtu sa tutuluka</i>	<i>Nela</i>

<i>Shengelela-shengelela</i>	<i>Igo</i>
<i>Kwena ya mo haina meno</i>	<i>Sigi</i>
<i>Papali yende kubapala ka mazoho</i>	<i>Kamunome</i>

Other song games that the children performed that were performed include the following:

- *Pick pick na pick dolly*
- *Anna Suzaana*
- *Simbotwe simbotwe sica kwai*
- *Kilio-kilio*
- *Amina, amina kadala*
- *Siloke, silokee*
- *Hai tepete*
- *Bunga bwa mbale*
- *Sitongwani ki nako mani*

Some of those that were performed but were not considered as indigenous play activities included the following:

- Arms up America
- I chew delele
- Open, open the door
- Policeman
- Rope skipping
- Caught
- Touch
- Landrover
- If you are happy and you know it clap your hands
- Head and shoulders, knees and toes
- My friend

- I want to see my Jane
- Tomaida
- Around, around the village

These were not considered as indigenous games because of their Western inclinations to use English. I learnt that most of these play activities were also found in the teacher's guides.

APPENDIX H

CHILDREN'S PLAY AND MUSIC ACTIVITIES REPORTED TO BE ON THE DECLINE.

The following children's activities though recorded by other researchers such as Kakuwa (2005). And Mufalali (1974) were not mentioned or performed by the children I interviewed during the study:

a. Games.

- *Linyunyani ze sweu ni ze nsu*
- *Niku nolezi kang'olo*
- *Ku mangana*
- *Tindi*
- *Kamucunute*
- *Papali ya manende*
- *Mulabalaba wa '3' kapa (or) '12'.*
- *Liyakeli la matulela*
- *Pulu namukondo*
- *Sinali- sinali si talima kwa mulaho*
- *Kuiposheka*
- *Kafwililo*

b. Songs/ dances

Most of the songs and dances cited below were those that were listed by Mufalali (1974) as being common in Western Province.

- *Kanga Nalumbe ka linsi*
- *Ni komokile sanondo sa mwa libala*
- *Mulamu ni zubise kwai, to no te*
- *Simulima ndongo u shwile*
- *Muuna ku yuba Musali ku itulela*
- *Sana sulwe,we yaya*
- *Simusila lukesha*

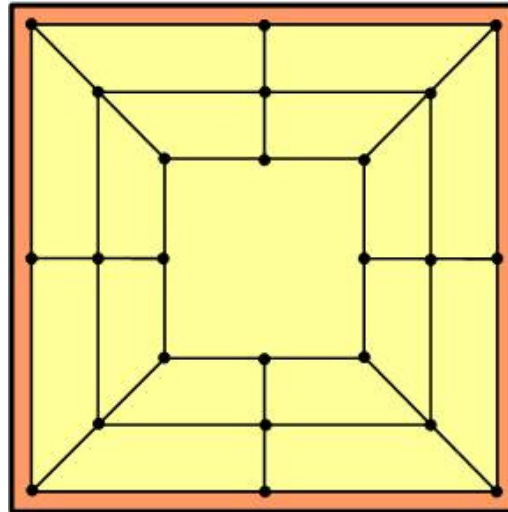
- *Milangu ya lila*
- *Hanelusali luna likokota*
- *Ane lusa lisa maombe*
- Etc

N/B For more information on the list of songs and dances, see Mufalali (1974).

APPENDIX I

MULABALABA (Twelve Men's Morris).

This type of *Mulabalaba* is a game that can be played by both boys and girls although boys play the game more than the girls. Among the Lozi, this type of mulabalaba is called '*mulabalaba wa 12*' (Mulabalaba played using 12 seeds/small stones). According to Ntsihlele (2003), *marabaraba* derives its name from the word '*leraba*,'⁶⁹ which denotes a snare or ambush, and '*raba raba*' to 'roam in a narrow circle or to fly around. The game is played by two players at a time and aims at ensuring that an opponent is blocked from making further moves along the designated horizontal, diagonal, or vertical lines or junction on the drawn board or ground as shown below (cf Imenda, 2012).



Mulabalaba board

Usually, players use maize seeds or other tiny objects when making the movements along the horizontal, diagonal, or vertical junctions. These seeds are usually referred to as 'cows' (*likomu*), and players will alternate in placing their 'cows' one at a time with a view to blocking the other opponents along the designated horizontal, diagonal, and vertical junctions. The player will move one seed or 'cow' at a time in a straight line, which could be either moving forwards,

⁶⁹ While the Sothos call this game *morabaraba*, in Lozi, which is a dialect of the Sothos, they call it *mulabalaba* since the Lozis do not have 'r.' *Leraba* (*lilaba*) also means a trap among the Lozis.

backwards, or diagonally to an empty space that is available in order to create rows of three seeds.

According to my informant, once a 'cow' has been captured, it cannot be used in the play again. In order to make successful moves, the player has to form a line of three seeds or 'cows' in a row. When each player's 12 'cows' have been placed on the board, they may be moved from one unoccupied adjacent junction to another to create a row of three seeds or 'cows' which then allows the player to capture or 'shoot' one of his opponent's 'cows.' The game ends when one player cannot make any more moves after losing all but two of his 'cows' to his opponent.

According to Russouw (2002), morabaraba traces its origin from an ancient Egyptian game known as mancala. Its origins in Egypt dates back to as far back as 1440 BC (Masters, 1997). Masters further notes that the game was played in China around c.500 BC, and in England around AD 1300. According to Russouw (2002), the game was used in Ghana to teach kids how to count, add and subtract. This argument may then be reason enough to believe that the game has its origins in Africa. Further, if the game functioned as an educational means, then it may be used in today's' current educational system . The example of how this game has been adopted in South Africa (Nkopodi & Mosimege, 2009) may be an inspiration to Zambia too.

APPENDIX J

Tindi

This was a famous pastime activity. Played using a circular disc made from a big tuber of an indigenous plant usually found only in the flood plain, this game is played mainly by boys although girls sometimes can play it. Two teams usually form two opposite rows while facing each other. These players are expected to hold small sharpened sticks that are supposed to be thrown at the speeding *tindi* thrown by strong player from the first row. Usually the thrower will stand at one of the row and throw the *tindi* with a lot of force. The game requires a big surface area for the *tindi* to be stopped through the use of the sharpened sticks. The rationale behind throwing the sharpened sticks or ‘javelins’ is to stop the speeding *tindi*. If the ‘javelin’ thrown at the *tindi* penetrates and out at the other end, no points are given.

The game seems to have some cognitive affordances of measurement in that those who aim at stopping the fast moving *tindi* should be accurate in their attempts to stop the fast moving *tindi*. This process therefore appears to involve making accurate judgments when determining the speed of the fast moving *tindi*. Secondly, construction of the *tindi* in a circular form or shape may help learners to gain knowledge of shapes.

APPENDIX K

INTERVIEW CODES USED TO REPRESENT THE INFORMANTS IN THE STUDY

When quoting from the interviews from the main body, I have only assigned the serial numbers to each respondent. The following code explanation will help follow the sequence of interviews.

Namalangu Basic School.

- Code 01 – Mrs Nyuwa, Yvonne Wamunyima, 34 years old, 9 years in teaching; Code 02- Mr. Mwambwa Mushashu, 42 years old 17 years in teaching.
- Codes 03 – Barbara Kayatw (G), 11years old , grade 7 ; 04- In’utu Sambiana ,(G), 14 years, grade 6; 05- Monde Siyanga,(G), 13 years old, grade 7; Faith Inambao,(G), 12 years old, grade 5; 06- Wakumelo Mwauluka,(B), 13 years old, grade 6; 07- Kamutumwa Mutemwa,(B), 15 years old, grade 7; 08- Justine Mukonda, (B), 13 years old, grade 6; 09-Hilltone Simiyanda,12 years old, grade 7;10- Sikwibele Muyangwa,13years old, grade 5.

Lukanda Basic School.

- Code 11- Ms Fiona Mweetwa, 35 years old, 10 years in the teaching service; code 12- Mr. Siamowe Stewart, 30 years old, 3 years in the teaching service.
- Code 13- Maimbolwa Mwauluka, (G), 15 years old, grade 7;14- Munalula Masule (G), 12years old, Grade 5;15- Namasiku Musa,(G), 13 years old, grade 6;16- Inu’tu Lubasi, (G), 12 years old, grade 5; 17- Mulemba Chipango, (B), 14 years old, grade 6; 18- Manjolo Manjolo, (B), 13 years old, grade 5; 19- Wakumelo Mwauluka, (B), 15 years old, grade 7; 20- Mubita Mubita, (B),12, grade 4. The interviews took place from 08/10/2012 to 19/10/2012.

Sioma Basic School.

- The interviews at this school lasted from 05/11/2012 to 16/11/2012.The following were the code assignments to the respondents. Code 21-Mr. Sinyama Kaliki, 33 years old, 2 years teaching experience; 22- Mrs Ngenda Sililo Mukela, 36 years old, 15 years teaching experience. Code 23- Elizabeth Chimwasu,(G), 12 years old, grade 5; 24- Chinga Biemba, (G), 12 years old, grade 6; 25- Rita Sakanga, (G), 12 years old , grade 6; 26- Mooka Mutukwa, (G), 11 years old, grade 6; 27- Lubinda Sinute, (B), 11 years ,

grade5; 28- Manyando Matomola,(B), 12 years old; 29- Kozhi Costa (B), 14 years old, grade 5; 30- Mutukelwa Kawina,)B), 11years old, grade 5.

Sitoti Basic School.

- Code 31- Mr. Lubinda Muyambango, 37 years old, 14 years teaching experience; 32- Ms Josephine Lichila Mooto, 35 years old,4 years teaching experience; 33- Inonge Lubasi,(G),13 years old, grade 5; 34 Mutinta Benzu,(G),14 years old, grade 6; 35- Namenda Siwayongo, (G), 14 years old, grade 6;36- Joyce Mushiba Kalenga,(G), 14 years old, grade 5; 37- Waliuywa Lubinda, (B), 11 years old, grade 4; 38-Mulala Ngubu, (B), 12 years old, grade 4; 39- Mushokabanji Sililo, (B), 14 years old, grade 5; 40- Akakulubelwa Mulikelela, (B), 11,grade 4. The study lasted from 19/11/2012 to the 30/11/2012 when the schools closed.

Expert *silimba* (xylophone) players.

- Code 41- Mr. Mufuti Malimba of Kangongo village, Senanga. He was 29 years old at the time of the interview. He earned his living mostly by playing *silimba* at major community functions where he was well famous.
- Code 42- Mr. Patrick Kwaleyela of Muyaukelwa village in Senanga, aged 65 year old man. He was a subsistence farmer.
- Code 43- Mr. Charles Sichuma Walubita of Nakakulo village in Senanga, aged 42 year old . He earned his living by doing some personal business.
- Code 44 was assigned to a 61 year old man, Mr. Felix Tebuho of Lwiimba village who earned his livelihood by fishing.

All these expert players were married and had their families. They were warm and friendly. My interviews with the *silimba* players mainly took place in January and February, 2013.

APPENDIX L



Children performing *siyemboka* dance (a).



Children performing cat and mouse (*Peba ni kakaze*) game song (b).

APPENDIX M



Children performing *sinjangili* dance (a)



Children performing *sipelu* dance (b).

APPENDIX N



Children performing a dance (a).



Children playing *situtu sa tutuluka* game song (b).