The Sounds of Our World: Navigating Live Music and Artist Growth in Harare

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Abstract

Increasingly connected to urban development and vitality in modern discourses of urban sociology, live music is a social and cultural phenomenon with great potential for improving people's, including artists, well-being. Still, the systems and networks which shape live music are specific to their local social, cultural and institutional contexts, leading to a range of perceptions. Focusing on the urban context of Harare, Zimbabwe, this study adopts a live music ecology framework to examine diverse perspectives from key actors in the live music ecosystem. Semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and informal discussions offer a unique look at the networks and structures that shape the perceptions on upcoming artist development within Harare's live music scene. The study's key findings highlight the significance of live performances as tools for artistic expression and audience engagement, contributing to artists' creative identity formation and recognition. While at the same time address the need for further research to clarify the social, cultural, political and economical dynamics within live music. Additionally, the research unveils the role of gatekeeping, audience, and the distribution of social and cultural capital in shaping artist development opportunities. By exploring live music through local perceptions, the research goes beyond explaining music as a depiction of urban life to music as part of urban life. Recognizing the challenges and potential interventions identified in the study, stakeholders like the policymakers and practitioners in the music industry can work towards creating a more inclusive and sustainable live music ecosystem in Harare.

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1. Introduction

It is easy to take music for granted, because it is everywhere. "But like water, music is not a renewable resource. It is dependent on land use, resource allocation and community engagement policies to flourish and be impactful" (Shapiro, 2019).

Throughout the unpredictable pathways of the human existence there have been few constants, besides our basic necessities for survival, that have remained almost effortlessly ingrained in the everyday existence of our societies. For more than thirty-five thousand years, humans have nurtured and depended upon music. It has accompanied humanity longer than democracy, language and reasoning. Nonetheless, the meaning and significance of music consistently undergoes transformations along with the specific spatial and temporal contexts in which it exists. Zimbabwe, a country renowned for its rich musical heritage and a relatively modest population, has recently embarked on an unprecedented transformation with the launch of the National Music Strategy of Zimbabwe (2022). This government-led initiative underscores the pivotal role of music in this moment, within this nation's cultural fabric.

Within the context of the capital, Harare, this study sets out to explore the dynamic landscape of the live music sector, aiming to unravel the varying perceptions on the existing networks and structures that shape the development of upcoming artists. By exploring the perceptions of different stakeholders, the research synthesizes divergent viewpoints and identifies underlying themes, shedding light on the conditions that influence the growth and sustainability of upcoming artists and live music in Harare.

To gain a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in live music systems, contemporary academia and policy-works have increasingly embraced the concept of live music ecology. Applying this live music ecology framework, this paper develops the perspective advanced by other important music sociologists, such as in the prominent text by Brennan & Webster (2011). The music ecosystem perspective states that in order for the live music sector to be sustained, there is a need for new talent to develop, and for this to be possible there exists a need for music venues which engage and interact with both amateur and professional musicians (Brennan & Webster, 2011). This analytical framework illuminates how the social and material circumstances of a specific place shape the systems and networks

that comprise its live music scene, making the behavioral dynamics of different actors complex and not always directly market-led (such as when free concerts are hosted) (Frith et al, 2016).

The central research question driving this study thus emerges respectively:

What are the perceptions on the conditions that shape artist development in Harare according to local live music industry players?

With subquestions:

> *What are the perceived barriers and facilitators to artist development in Harare's live music industry according to perspectives of industry stakeholders?*

> *How do live music industry stakeholders envision the future of artist development in Harare, and what strategies do they propose to enhance the local ecosystem?*

This research therefore aims to identify and situate different perspectives on the conditions guiding the development of emerging artists in Harare.

Investigating diverse perspectives held by key actors in the music industry, including artists, live music venue representative, music promoter, representative from National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, UNESCO representative and representatives from two non-profit music focused organizations, the study documents and analyzes existing perceptions on the complex relationship between artist development and live music development. Through an examination of the perceived conditions and challenges for the development of talent, the research seeks to explore areas for further research to potentially improve ground-level interventions and evidence-based policies that nurture a thriving live music ecosystem. As such, the study is aimed to be an explorative one, intending to open pathways for further research on the matter instead of fully conceptualizing the lived experiences of the live music scenes in Harare.

2. Background

2.1. Background of music in Zimbabwe

An ode of the powerless, a voice of inspiration and strength. Popular music in African countries has held an important historical role in documenting the hardships and sociopolitical conditions of societies and individuals throughout the years of colonialism, fights for independence and ethnic cleansing (Nyairo & Ogude, 2005). As access to formal spaces of representation were closed to the Zimbabwean people, music was crowned as the main tool of communication for the common person. Although formal media existed, the language was strictly English, and thus was structured to cater for the white people (Kwaramba, 1997). From the pre-colonial to the postcolonial eras in Zimbabwe, music has been a crucial part of everyday life as well as sociopolitical activism (Mano, 2007).

Chimurenga music

Chimurenga music, also known as rebel music, was an important asset in bringing Zimbabweans together and documented people's hardships during the first and second wars of liberation against colonial rule (Mano, 2007). "According to oral tradition the tag Chimurenga was coined after a great Shona traditional warrior and legendary hero, Sororenzou Murenga who was renowned for his fighting prowess" (Kwaramba, 1997:5).

When Thomas Mapfumo was emerging as a musician in Zimbabwe through his own Chimurenga music style, the genre had already become a symbol of the fight against injustice (Dwamena, 2018). Thus, despite the continues repression and censure, he continued to carry the fight against the colonial regime, while advocating for freedom and expressing the unbearable reality of poverty (Thomas-Mapfumo.com). Oliver Mtukudzi felt a similar responsibility of voicing the struggles of their people and to offer guidance to the Zimbabwean society at large (Sibanda, 2004). He took the role of a sahwira, "a person - an outsider - who has a special role with another family to observe and try to help or mediate in times of crisis," for the people around him and did so through music (Sibanda, 2004). In his music, Mtukudzi used sub-texts and symbols, and avoided direct mention of those he criticized, largely due to security concerns. This in turn, "forces listeners to not only decipher meaning for themselves, but also to contextualise the subtext; that is to familiarise themselves with the particular situation about which he sings, in this case the politics of Zimbabwe" (Sibanda, 2004).

<u>Urban Grooves</u>

Before the introduction of the *75 percent local content* policy, Disc Jockeys in Zimbabwe were not particularly in favor of playing local music on air. As a response, in 2016, the government enforced a regulatory national policy, which was introduced in mid 2013, that requires 75 percent of music played on air to be local (UNESCO, 2016). The policy successfully increased the number of recognized Zimbabwean singers and producers, most of which were young artists embracing new musical genres (Tivenga, 2018). Around this time Urban Grooves became popular as an umbrella term for the music created by upcoming artists all over Zimbabwe, crafting a fusion of local and international practices, and using local languages – Shona and Ndebele (Tivenga, 2018). As the term Urban Grooves was composed of numerous musical styles it created difficulties in pinpointing defining attributes of the genre. Thus, the light of Urban Grooves was outshined by the emerging popularity of Zim-Dancehall (Shoniwa, 2015).

<u>Zim-Dancehall</u>

Zim-Dancehall music emerged in many urban areas of Zimbabwe around the time when Western countries sought to increase pressure against the continued rule of President Mugabe by imposing sanctions upon the already struggling country (Norman, 2015). The resulting atmosphere of insecurity shaped the identity formations of the new generation, which was characterized by high youth unemployment and simultaneously saw the spread of a new musical genre for Zimbabwe – Zim-Dancehall. The style of Dancehall music is a subgenre of the Jamaican genre of reggae music, characterized with local fusions and an urban youth identity (Dube, 2016). Zim-Dancehall music lays its focus on the creative possibilities of the individual, for whom strength and hope is a requirement in order to rise above the everyday struggles and ills. The focus on the individual, using poetry to convey the messages, is what differs its textual context from Chimurenga music (Dube, 2016).

2.2. Political Context

The Zimbabwean African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) has dominated the countries politics since independence in 1980 (freedomhouse.org). The current president

Emmerson Mnangagwa took power in 2017, following a military intervention which successfully removed the infamous Robert Mugabe, who had been in power since 1987, from his position (freedomhouse.org). Mnangagwa, however, chose to follow the footsteps of his predecessor, with repression, corruption and little rights for citizens, workers and landowners remaining highly present (freedomhouse.org). Thus, political uncertainty still remains high, with high tensions between the ZANU-PF, the opposition and civil rights activists (Human Rights Watch, 2022). To that end, the music scene in Harare is not exempt from challenges created by the political tensions within the country. One way how the political context translates into the everyday experiences of artists in Zimbabwe is having to be very cautious in the narratives described in the lyrics of their songs, as censorship is present, but freedom of speech is not (Tivenga, 2023). Winky D, also known as Wallace Chirumiko, a popular Zim-Dancehall artist released his 12th album, titled Eureka Eureka, in the beginning of 2023. The immediate aftermath of the release was the formation of two strongly opposing opinions – one that embraced and supported the "politically charged and thought-provoking songs" in the new album, and another that "felt disturbed and uncomfortable with socially and politically conscious songs" of Winky D (New Zimbabwe, 2023). The album also prompted a reaction from a lobbying group associated with the ZANU-PF party (Human Rights Watch, 2023). In a news conference, held by the Economic Empowerment Group, the group voiced their discontent with the album and claimed that Winky D's music should be forbidden to be played on all local radio's and the artist should be banned from doing any live performances in Zimbabwe (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Not long after, on March 4th, as Winky D was performing at a show in Chitungwiza, members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) ordered the artist to end his performance, which lead to violent disruptions at the venue (Mbare Times, 2023). Similarly, another popular Zim-Dancehall artist, Baba Harare, who is actively engaged in political activism, was unable to obtain clearance from the ZRP for his scheduled performance on March 5th (Nehanda Radio, 2023). What is more, as a response to the ban on Winky D, Baba Harare withdrew his nomination from Star Fm awards, which is part of the Zimpapers state run media oligopoly (Nehanda Radio, 2023). This decision has been widely supported by both critics and fans (Nehanda Radio, 2023). All the above-mentioned aspects lead to a conclusion that musicians in Zimbabwe are forced to be extremely cautious of the content of their song lyrics, due to the politization of music, limited freedom of speech and insecurity. If they choose to follow the footsteps of their Chimurenga predecessors and take part in music activism, the threat is clearly present.

2.3. Urban Context in Harare

In order to understand the urban context in Harare, it is necessary to look back at the newly independence era of the 1980s to the early 2000s. The Prime Minister's Directive of 1984 was launched by the president at the time Robert Mugabe and was aimed at establishing economic growth points with a focus on decentralization (Nyarota, 2018). People began moving to the country's capital Harare at a rapid pace which led to an increase in informal settlements and homelessness (Muchadenyika, 2020). The development of settlements was characterized by policies that "emphasized order, aesthetics and segregation based on income status, unlike the colonial laws that segregated along racial lines" (Matamanda, 2021:810). Despite the differences in categories guiding the post-colonial segregation, many if not most of the colonial legislations guiding human settlement planning remained unchanged. These respectively revolved around the western ideology of order aesthetics and city zoning, such as the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act of 1976 (RTCPA) (Matamanda, 2021). One of Mugabe's most infamous reforms, the land reform program that was launched in the early 2000s, redistributed the land, within and around Harare, which was previously owned by the countries' whites to new owners, who often did not have much experience or interest in farming or agriculture. These new owners were war veterans and political elites (Bourne, 2011; Meredith, 2002). A large part of the redistributed land, which previously was used for agriculture and farming, now became home to informal settlements for the urban poor. The aftermath was in direct contradiction to the city planning standards before the 2000s, which had placed infrastructure as a prerequisite to human settlement formation (Matamanda, 2021). Today these settlements have become the high-density suburbs of Harare characterized by informality, which is part of the everyday life of the city, from public transport to land management (Matamanda, 2021).

The economic structural adjustment program (ESAP) launched in the early 1990s brought about another set of hardships for Zimbabwe. Set to reduce government spending on public goods and services, through the rationalization of economic liberalization, ESAP resulted in 44 percent of the countries labor force being unemployed in 1993 (Bourne, 2011). This in turn increased the already informal economy (Matamanda, 2021). The new decade in Zimbabwe began with the economic crisis from 2000 to 2009 and thus – a continuous increase of the informal economy. At this point even those working in the formal sector had to take up informal jobs in order to make ends meet (Jones, 2010). It is then possible to conclude that the two most pressing issues affecting the urban population in present day Harare are – unemployment and

shortage of low-income urban housing (Muchadenyika, 2020). In addition to the above-mentioned aspects of the urban context in Harare, the provision of basic services of water, sanitation and electricity defines the every-day urban experience of people living in and around the city (Muchadenyika & Williams, 2016).

Lack of efficient public transport, electricity and a population characterized by high unemployment directly effects the music consumption patterns in Zimbabwe. Today, the number of Zimbabweans consuming music primarily though streaming is at 34 percent, of which YouTube is the most popular platform (Kamara & Mpfunya, 2021). 23 percent of people listen to music primarily through WhatsApp (Kamara & Mpfunya, 2021). Furthermore, the online music consumption patterns affect the revenue that musicians are able to make from streaming. For example, in 2020, 68 percent of musicians, questioned for the Situational Analysis of the Zimbabwean Music Sector by Kamara and Mpfunya (2021), stated having made zero revenue from streaming in 2019. In the same study it was also found that the Zimbabwean music sector generates most of its revenue from live performances.

2.4. Music Strategy

On the 1st of June 2022 the *National Music Strategy of Zimbabwe, 2022-2027* was launched at The Venue in Avondale, Harare. At the ceremony, The Minister of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Honorable Dr Kirsty Coventry stated that the strategy "will add value to artists and the world would be able to recognize our artists' talent" (National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, 2022). The main goals outlined during the launch by both Dr Coventry and, The Director of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NACZ), Mr. Nicholas Moyo, were to provide a sustainable music industry in Zimbabwe, transition the industry from informal to formal, ensure that actors of the music industry become part of the middle-income group, support the protection of intellectual property music related rights, and strengthen the profitability of the digital music environment (The National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, 2022). The launch was a result of a two-year project *Strategy for the sustainable development of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) in Zimbabwe*, which was executed by the NACZ with the support of the European Union/UNESCO Expert Facility on the Governance of Culture in Developing Countries. The four priority pillars of the strategy are: Music markets and business development; Intellectual property and related rights; Funding, financing, and investment in Music; and Education, capacity building and training. While the other pillars are: Music

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Infrastructure; Cultural statistics and research; Media, Information and Communication Technologies; Cultural Diplomacy and Global Business; Cultural Governance; and Safeguarding Cultural Heritage, Identity and Celebrating Diversity. All of which are a response to the challenges, such as piracy, that music industry players are facing in Zimbabwe (UNESCO, 2022). As stated by Charity Manuhwa, Deputy Director for Arts and Culture Development, "The ministry is pleased with the NACZ for crafting the strategy at an opportune time when the government, particularly the ministry and its implementing agencies, is placing the CCIs at the center of Zimbabwe's economic trajectory" (National Arts Council, 2022).

3. Existing Research/Previous studies

Much of what is said and written about live music scenes in academic literature is focused on the experiences and structures of Western countries. The phenomena of researching music in relation to urban development as well as economic development is receiving a growing amount of attention and more and more governments are beginning to recognize the significant impact that the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) bring to the overall GDP growth of a country as well as its overall development. This has led to the rise of music strategies, live music consensuses, and other official and non-official documentations exploring the value and structures of live music and music in general. A report that has received an enormous amount of attention is "The Mastering of a Music City" published by the International Federation of the Phonographic industry and Music Canada and focusing solely on the commercial music sector. In this report, a Music City, in simple terms, is defined as "a place with a vibrant music economy" (Terrill, et al. 2015). The aim of the report is to serve as a roadmap to mastering a Music City, claiming that "it applies to communities of all sizes, no matter how far along the path they are to realizing their full potential as a Music City" (Terrill, et al. 2015). Although the report claims to serve as a 'one roadmap fits all', it acknowledges that the success of each city is not a comparable measure. However, a unifying goal is for children to be able to tell their parents they wish to work in the music industry without having the response be, 'you need to get a real job' (Terrill, et al. 2015:10). It is no surprise that parents want to protect their children from the music industry, as the industry often tends to draw out depression, anxiety and other mental health issues amongst its artists. Often referred to as a singular entity of shared goals and concerns, Gross and Musgrave (2017) point out how the romanticized version of the music world is not reflective of its reality being "a tension-ridden music environment, full of

competing interests and industries". As with many other industries, the suppliers of the raw material (artists) are more likely to be subjects of exploitation than active members of the broader discourse (Gross & Musgrave, 2017). In a research paper by Bellis et al (2012), titled *Dying to be Famous*, it was found that successful pop and rock musicians have a shortened life expectancy. Many of the factors that were found to cause death among musicians were related to mental health issues (Bellis et al, 2012).

In their article "Spatial Value of Live Muisc" van der Hoeven and E. Hitters (2020) mention that the positive impacts of culture on cities is overshadowed when there is an overall focus on commercial gain. Cultural venues and especially independent and small cultural venues become difficult to sustain (van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2020), and as discussed by Whiting (2021), 'music scenes need cultural spaces around which to congregate'. Niche spaces of cultural production are considered as the most important tool for creating a sustainable music environment, where subgenres can emerge, and where upcoming artists are able to grow their sound, audience and network (Whiting, 2021; Markusen et al., 2006). Gibson (2005) looks at the role of recording studios as spaces of creativity in a city and points out how recording studios vary in their function depending on the context. Where in more affluent countries recording studios have often been spaces of high-tech equipment, in Jamaica, for example, they have performed a different function – experimentation, socialization and recruitment. The spatial affordance, meaning the functions the specific space allows, have a direct effect on the music scene it operates in. The experimental and social aspect of Jamaican studios, allowed for the development of dub reggae scenes which were driven through experimentation and collaboration by producers like Lee 'Scratch' Perry and King Tubby (Gibson, 2005).

Finnegan (2007) has developed a concept of musical pathways which captures the ways in which music is embedded in the urban landscape. For these musical pathways to exist, once again, spaces and places for music-making are essential. Although these pathways may not be visible to everyone, the importance of them lies within each specific music scene (van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2019). Music thus creates an urban landscape of its own, where some locations "may serve as clusters for music production of particular types/genres" as well as "contribute to spatial identity at local, regional, or indeed national scale", thus creating special meanings for space and place for both creators and consumers of music. William Whyte, in his work The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces (1980), stresses the importance of triangulation. Where an "external stimulus provides a linkage between people and prompts strangers to talk

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to each other as though they were not". Therein, live music venue's act as social catalysts, becoming spaces of socialization and creating a sense of belonging for people who might feel excluded from the 'mainstream' urban landscape (Whiting, 2021).

Whiting (2021) lays out how Pierre Bourdieu's notion of disinterest can be applied to cultural venues, as "it provides precisely the means to obtain that which it appears to discredit – economic awards" (568). When the intrinsic value (which is use value) of cultural venues consists of cultural, symbolic and social capital of the space it is then transformed into instrumental value (which is exchange value) which allows it to be traded for economic capital. Thus, highlighting the importance of Bourdieu's notions of social, cultural, symbolic capital as well as disinterest (Whiting, 2021). The notion of instrumentalism has been criticized "the way in which the attribution of value to the outcome of aesthetic encounters has become part of the technocratic machinery of cultural policy-making" (Belfiore, 2015: 97). Unfortunately, an increase in cultural spaces within a certain neighborhood can easily blur the lines between urban regeneration and gentrification. As stated in the UK Live Music Consensus (2020), "one of the side effects of regeneration is that it can cause difficulties for venues without the commercial or political resources to adapt quickly to the associated gentrification that occurs" (Behr, et al. 2020: 5). One policy measure that has received international attention is the "Agent of Change" principle, which suggests for the newcomer to be responsible for noise management. Thus, if a new residential building is being developed near a music venue, it is the developers' responsibility to mitigate the effects of noise for the new residents. Albeit a good solution as it creates engagement between developers and cultural spaces, the policy has its implications for initiatives to increase the number of venues or scale up existing ones, as in this case it is them that become the agents of change (van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2019; Ross, 2017; Terrill et al., 2015).

As pointed out by Whyte (1980), "the context that makes these approaches work in the places where they work" is crucial and thus only by researching context specific scenes and approaches is how we can best understand the roadmap for becoming a Music City.

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4. Theoretical/conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of the thesis follows an ecological approach, which, has been applied to the study of live music, and has been coined as the live music ecology approach (Behr et al. 2016a) For the purpose of the study the definition of 'live music ecology' framed by Behr et al. (2016a) will be used as the conceptual framework. The context behind Behr et al. (2016a) definition is the study of pop and rock music scenes in Britain, which the authors have researched for nearly two of the last decades. At the center of their definition lies the belief that a specific space and time creates specific environments, structures and networks that are distinctive to the specific place and thus the structures and networks correspond only to that specific place. Similarly, to that of the natural world, where certain networks of species co-create a unique structure of life, which is bonded to its specific space, the music world is one that is strictly attached to the space in which it exists (Behr et al, 2016a). The concept 'live music ecologies' has seen a rapid increase in its use both in academic research and political debates (van der Hoeven et al. 2020). Previously referred to as creative industry 'quarters' or 'clusters', the ecology term has even unfolded within music policy documents (Behr et al., 2016a). Furthermore, the study aims to contribute to the viewpoint within live music ecology, developed by Brennan and Webster (2011), which states that, "if the live music sector is to be sustained, new talent must develop, and for this to happen venues are needed for new 'amateur' artists as well as for established professionals" (p. 17).

Drawing on the lessons by cultural sociologists, such as, Durkheim, Becker, Bourdieu and Finnegan, who have long before defined the importance of the dynamics between place and different social actors, 'live music ecology' expands the debate by recognizing the importance of the physical and material features of music making (Behr et al., 2016a). Another theory that holds many similarities to the 'live music ecology' is the actor network theory, which similarly to the cultural sociology framework, sees the music environment as "more significantly symbolic than material", which therefore does not fully capture the essence of this study where physical space and materiality is seen as an important aspect (Behr et al., 2016a: 6).

The concept of 'value' is important for recognizing and conceptualizing the various properties of 'live music ecosystems (van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2020). First and foremost, it is necessary to speak of intrinsic value as it has been identified in modern academia as the focal mission of music and its artists (Behr et al. 2016b; van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2020; Whiting, 2021;

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Bakhshi, 2012). This core mission, however, is often undermined by the commercial sector which often puts instrumental value at the forefront of its function (Behr et al., 2016b). However, as Whiting (2021) and Behr et al. (2016b) state, the debate is not about choosing one or the other and is more directed towards understanding how the positive effects of the 'use' of a core good (intrinsic value) are translated into instrumental value (e.g. creative growth, mental wellbeing, societal narrative, economic growth and urban regeneration).

Furthermore, four additional concepts of value that are important in order to speak of the 'live music ecology' are social value, cultural value, economic value, as well as spatial value (van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2020). Social value is concerned with social capital, the relationship between society and live music organizations as well as identity and belonging; cultural value refers to cultural capital, creativity and experimentation in music as well as artist development; economic value is connected to overall financial benefits of live music within a scope of a place, such as increased tourism; spatial value is concerned with the relationship between urban space and live music (van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2020). As mentioned, social and cultural capital as well as an additional concept of symbolic capital are further concepts that are necessary in order to address the different values generated by live music. Thus, Bourdieu's three forms of capital will be used in order to better understand the intrinsic value of live music (Whiting, 2021). Bourdieu (1984) defined cultural capital as knowledge which is specific to a cultural field, such as being able to determine which artists will attract a large audience to a venue. This form of cultural capital can be then instrumentalized into economic capital (Whiting, 2021). Social capital, which was defined by Bourdieu (1997) is explained by Whiting (2021) as the social network that is required in order to book the said artists. Furthermore, "social and cultural capital go some way towards imbuing each venue space with a certain amount of symbolic capital, which relates to ideas of reputation and status" (Whiting, 2021:565). Lastly, the notion of affordance, introduced by Gibson (1970) can also be useful for referring to the diverse range of values and prospects that music creates for individuals and communities in a given social and cultural environment. Musical affordance is referred to as the capacity of a musical experience to have functional significance in a particular space for an individual or groups of people (Cano, 2006).

5. Methods and Data

At the forefront of the research carried out as part of this study were semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Interviews were held with pre-identified key actors in the live music industry in Harare. The key actors identified were grouped into five sections – music artists; music venues; music promoters; non-profit music initiatives; governmental/international stakeholders. The selection of the varying categories of interview participants is inspired by Behr, et al. (2020), who identified that exploring a selection of a variety of narratives is important in understanding and mapping a live music ecosystem.

The participants within each section were determined using convenience sampling. During the sampling process a limitation of the study was identified, respectively, accessing a range of artists and venues for interviews was found to be extremely difficult. Thus, the representation in relation to the variety of venues and artists is quite low. Three artists, two male and one female and two venues in different location within Harare, were interviewed. Reaching participants in the remaining three sections was found to be less difficult, however still challenging. One music promoter was interviewed, who was identified as a reliable and knowledgeable source due to his many years of experience and the variety of artists he has worked with. Within the section governmental/international stakeholders two interviews were held, one with a member of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe and one with a member from UNESCO in Zimbabwe. Lastly, representatives from two non-profit music initiatives were interviewed, a development-oriented music academy aimed at empowering the youth through music, and a youth-led community-based organization fostering creative spaces for young people. To protect the identity of the participants, code names are given to be used in the findings section (see table 1). The five groups identified were carefully selected based on an extensive literature review on live music research, such as, The Value of Small Live Music Venues: Alternative Forms of Capital and Niche Spaces of Cultural Production by Whiting (2021); Making Live Music Count: The UK Live Music Census by Behr, et al. (2020). What is more, the methodology used in Social Life of Small Urban Spaces by Whyte (1980) provided great inspiration for the design of the methodology for this research.

An interview guide was drafted prior to the interviews with each group of interviewees having a separate interview guide. The methodology used by Behr, et al. (2020) provided a very broad and extensive guide into the various key focus areas for conducting interviews in studying live

music within a city. All five interview guides had common focus areas, such as, the participants view on the current state of the live music sector in Harare, their perceived social and cultural values of live music as well as their perceived role that live music plays for the sustainability of the music industry in general. What is more, questions related to the perception of the roles that different industry players have were asked to all interview participants. Questions related to policies, governing and economic value of live music were explored more in depth in interviews with governmental and international stakeholders as well as non-profit initiatives. Specific questions about the practices and strategies related to live music were delved into more extensively with artists, venues, promoters and non-profit initiatives. Direct observation was carried out during several live music performances where the main focus was on audience behavior and interaction with one another and the artists, accessibility of the place, and specific physical attributes of the place. This was further complimented by informal discussions with audience members, artists and the people in charge of the event. Initially the mapping of live music venues was expected to be part of the methodology, however, it deemed to be impossible to gather this information with the limited time and resources of the study. What is more, as the variety of places that host music events in Harare range from cafés to sports centers to informal recreational centers, it became difficult to create a classification of what is to be considered a live music venue. This in turn is an important and interesting aspect to explore in depth during future research.

The study acknowledges some other limitations. The small number of interviews and limited observation periods may not fully capture the experiences and perspectives of all industry players in Harare's live music scene. The scope of the research, as well as time and financial constraints, restricted the ability to achieve a broader representation of opinions and experiences. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the context of the specific interviews conducted during the two-month research period. Further research is encouraged to explore specific aspects identified in this study. Consequently, all findings of the study are on a hypothetical basis.

Finally, ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the research methodology. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were provided with clear explanations of the research objectives, procedures, and their rights as participants. Participants were given the freedom to withdraw from interviews and from their participation in the study at any point without any negative consequences.

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Participant	Category
Rex	Music promoter
Mr. John	National Arts Council member
Mr. Green	UNESCO Zimbabwe member
Fiona	Female artist
Ian	Male artist
Matthew	Male artist
Ezra	Music venue representative
James	Non-profit music initiative representative
Peter	Non-profit music initiative representative

Table 1, *code names of participants*

6. Findings/Results/Analysis

The following section is dedicated to discussing and analyzing the gathered data - several interviews, informal discussions and participant observation. The discussions and analysis of interview transcriptions is complimented by the proposal of various hypotheses for further research, all of which were developed by triangulating acquired data. It is important to note that his research does not claim to be a reflection of a complete reality of the music scene in Harare and instead presents a collection of perceptions of lived experiences of certain representatives of the live music ecosystem. Although it is impossible to claim that the reality captured through the research is true, it is internally valid for the individuals included in the study, bringing about understanding about how live music is perceived in Harare.

The live music ecology framework guides the analysis presented in the findings by drawing connections between the environment, structures and networks of the live music scene and artist development in Harare. The findings section is divided into six parts. First, (6.1) I identify the existing perceptions from different industry players on what is the main strategy for upcoming music artists to grow in their career. Then, (6.2) I present the findings that describe the perceptions on why and how the named strategy is important for upcoming artists. This is followed by (6.3) a section that describes the perceived opportunity structures for upcoming artists to utilize the named strategy. The fourth section (6.4) discusses perspectives on the value

of live music for the society in Harare are discussed. The findings then turn toward (6.5) a focus on exploring the identified key focus areas found necessary in order to support upcoming artists in employing the named strategy. The last section (6.6) is a discussion of possible support strategies that can be used in order to improve the ability for upcoming artists to use the main strategy as well as how music venues can further support artist development.

6.1. Establishing a career in music, which way to go?

Beginning a career in music in Harare. How does an individual transition from nothing to something within the structures of the music scenes in Harare? There is no one correct answer, that is for sure. What can be done though is to explore what different industry players see as 'the way to go' for aspiring artists in Harare.

Live performance was mentioned by every interview participant as the best strategy for developing ones' career as a musician in Harare: "the only way to be a successful artist is performing live and engaging with the audience," "live music is the way to go. Live music itself gives the musician an opportunity to showcase their talents," the former said by music promoter Rex, and latter – member of the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe Mr. John. Though, it was also found that one should not rush into things too quickly. One must be able to perform in front of a crowd and have enough songs to sing – either originals or covers, depending on the type of artist one aspires to be. It is not just getting up on stage but knowing what to do once you are on the stage. Rex explains what he takes into consideration when working with new artists,

> "For artists, it varies. It is important to understand what type of artist you are working with. In a studio, music is autotuned. Live music is good, it gives you interaction with your fans, but are you a performing artist? A performing artist has got an advantage, a huge advantage. All of the studio artists fizzle out with time."
>
> (Interview with Rex)

In this quote, he poses the question – are you a studio artist or a performing artist? By this he suggests that if the individual has only exercised music in a studio with the use of tools like autotune, it might be difficult to immediately step on stage and sing without finetuning the output. However, this is not to say that artists need to choose between being a studio artist or

live artist. The greatest advantage, of course, is with the artist that can do both – studio and live. What is important to take away from the above mentioned is that one should be comfortable and prepare well before taking the next step of performing live. Rex therefore suggests that if an artist only has one song to their name it might be a good idea to first prepare a few more songs before doing a live show. What is more, the quote suggests that performing artists have an advantage, while studio artists "fizzle out with time", this can be interpreted as an indication of a short life span for recorded music in Harare, which is a common trend amongst popular music nowadays. Thereby, hinting at a possibility that by engaging in live music, artists increase the life span of the music they put out, which if directly compared to notions of sustainability, indicates a positive course. Thus, a hypothesis can be put forward that the sustainability of the live music ecosystem in Harare is improved through the increase of live music shows, as the life span of music is thereby also increased.

6.2. What is the Main Value of Live Performances for an Artists' Development?

Having demonstrated that live music is often perceived as the 'way to go' for upcoming artists in Harare, it becomes important to explore the how and the why behind the suggested importance of live performances. Consequently, the following section explores the way in which the perceived structures and networks of the music ecosystem in Harare allow value to be formed for upcoming artists through performing live. It is important to understand what one ought to focus on in order to be able to access the benefits of live music.

Engagement

Live music creates space for an artist to be able to directly engage with their audience. The environment of 'discovering new music' in Harare is characterized by a lack of widespread access to electricity and the internet, thus discovery of artists via online streaming platforms and social media is challenging without access to substantial financial capital. Consequently, in order to 'get their music out there' it is necessary to engage in activities which allow artists to become a familiar face (and sound) in the wider community, such as, through lived music experiences.

First of all, direct engagement with an audience allows the artist to get immediate feedback on their music, as mentioned by Rex, "non-verbal feedback which artists receive through live performances is extremely important". When performing live in front of people, the artist is able to learn simply by seeing how the audience reacts or moves to certain songs or to specific parts of a song. Thus, by simply performing a couple of times in front of a few different people and taking notice to what captures people's attention, the artist is already able to get a sense of what aspect of their sound attracts the audience.

In order to acquire an understanding of the non-verbal feedback referred to by Rex, participant observation was carried out during several separate live music performances. On all occasions it was observed that engagement of the audience with the performance was very vivid and active. During specific songs or certain moments of songs, the audience stood up, many people rushed to the front of the stage and danced in an almost synchronized manner. By thinking of such observations as non-verbal communication, one can decipher specific moments of approval from the audience to the artist. Therefore, it can be suggested that such details can be very useful for upcoming artists to reflect on.

It is then possible to hypothesize that due to active interaction between the audience and the performance during moments of highlight of live performances, artists in Harare are able to gain useful insight into the tastes of their specific audiences. It can also be suggested that an artists' cultural capital is thus increased as they learn what songs or what moments in songs generate which response from an audience.

Second, through physical engagement with an audience, artists can gain recognition. This is especially important for upcoming artists who often start their carrier without an already established social network. Through live music shows, the artist is opened up to possibilities for both building a fan base and engaging with other creative individuals. Thereby increasing one's recognition and thus also social capital that can be transformed into symbolic capital, which can help pave the way for future performance opportunities and collaborations. "Once an artist is performing, they gain recognition. Once the artist gains recognition, there are other opportunities that come" (From an interview with Ezra, a representative for music venue *Theatre in the Park*). The quote suggests that access to opportunities is guided by recognition within the live music ecosystem in Harare, wherein recognition is gained once performing live. According to Bourdieu, social capital can be transformed into symbolic capital, under the

conditions that it is based on reciprocal recognition and cognition (Bourdieu 1980). Therefore, recognition can be seen as a characteristic of social capital as well as symbolic capital. Further, hypothesizing that social capital together with symbolic capital is an important feature for creating access to opportunities within the live music ecosystem in Harare. The importance of social capital will be further discussed on page 29.

Lastly, physical engagement with the audience can also be an important aspect of artists' wellbeing. As stated by an upcoming artist in Harare, Ian,

> "it is very important for an artists' career to do live performances. When you perform on stage you directly get to see people enjoying your music and that is what keeps me going. That motivates me to keep pushing and working hard. I am very grateful. If it was possible, I would perform every day, I love to perform".
>
> (Interview with Ian)

This quote indicates that Roico asserts value on the engagement he is able to receive through live performances as it motivates him to continue working on his music. Thereby, besides the added value of social and cultural capital, as discussed earlier, live music also is suggested to create a sense of purpose and vitality for an artist in Harare.

Creativity

Performing live, no matter the size or context of the show is practice for an artist. In an interview with Fiona, an upcoming artist in Harare, she explains her perception on the relationship between creativity and performing live,

> "I think performing live brings out the real you. That's how you get to communicate to your fans, you get to communicate to the masses and see what people like about your music. To actually explore yourself and your potential. When you are in front of people and the vibe is connecting with you, sometimes you find yourself thinking: I didn't know I could do that! There's certain vocals that you pull up on stage that you could never do in a studio. Because there wasn't that connection."
>
> (Interview with Fiona)

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This quote indicates that her experience of live performances has shown that her creative self-exploration is fostered through the connection she feels between herself and the audience during the performance. She indicates the positive nature of the relationship between creativity and live performance, with the latter stimulating the former. This supports the hypothesis that performing live in front of an audience helps upcoming artists realize their creative abilities.

The idea that performing live strengthens creativity was confirmed by Mr. John, from the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, "live music is the way to go. Live music itself gives the musician an opportunity to showcase and explore their talents. There is no value in trying to imitate other musicians, you won't be original". Here Mr. John suggests a potential connection between live performance and originality. Aligning with Fiona, the quote addresses his observation that when an artist has the opportunity to perform in front of an audience, it allows them to explore their own talents and thus fosters originality in their creative work, supporting the above developed hypothesis.

6.3. Taking the Next Step: How Does One Reach the Stage?

In the previous sections, live music as tool for upcoming artists to enhance engagement, creativity and experience in Harare was discussed and analyzed. The following section is dedicated to forming an understanding on the perceived opportunity structures to utilize the tool and how these are sculpted by the present social and material conditions. This is done by exploring the perceptions on the conditions in Harare that shape the way upcoming artists are able to navigate within the live music ecosystem. The discussion is guided by two interrelated aspects – access to live music for artists and for the audience. Wherein the audience is seen as a significant contributor to the value generated by live music (engagement, non-verbal and verbal feedback, exposure), this study therefore finds it interesting to explore the structures that allow or disallow access to live music for the general population.

Access to Live Music: Artists

First of all, access to live music for upcoming artists is discussed by looking at several viewpoints on the attributes shaping the live music scene in Harare. The constructed attributes of the scene are then discussed in their relation to upcoming artists and their opportunities to access live music.

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The key stakeholders guiding the flow of live music in Harare were described as local gatekeepers of the industry. Therefore, interview participants were asked to present their perspectives on gatekeeping. A significant amount of gatekeeping was said to be carried out by governmental actors in Zimbabwe, who hold the informal power in the final decision making of who may or may not perform live. Albeit an important aspect, this applies less to upcoming artists and more to already established artists see example in section <u>Political Context</u> (page 7).

Furthermore, asides from governmental structures, two players were found to be mentioned most frequently amongst interview and discussion participants – venues and promoters. Thus, the findings of this particular research suggests that venues and music promoters are amongst the main gatekeepers of the live music scenes in Harare.

Music Venues

According to the findings gathered from interviews and informal discussions, there exists a perception that music venues often give the upper hand in hosting big artists as compared to upcoming ones. Although there is not enough data to clearly state whether this is true or false, knowing that several actors share the same perception gives a meaningful insight to the study. If the perception is such that music venues are unlikely to give space for upcoming artists, be it true or false, the perception alone has the power to influence further action. If upcoming artists perceive that it is unlikely for them to perform live at certain venues, it will decrease the likelihood of these artists to pursue such venues. This exact perception is held by upcoming artist Ian, "most places that host music want artists that are big and famous. They don't just take anyone. You have to be a known artist in order to book live shows." Fiona explains a similar view:

> "Some venues have certain people that they want, they are not open to new acts. Sometimes it is difficult if you are a new act and they have no idea what to expect from you. The venue fears the unknown. What the venue wants is money, so they are scared to take risks with new aritsts."
>
> (Interview with Fiona)

Consequently, it can be hypothesized that the symbolic capital attributed to music venues within a city affects the musical affordance of that city. If the symbolic capital of a venue is that it only hosts certain established artists, then in return the venue is deprived of the intrinsic value of experimentation and creativity of new artists. This process could then be translated into a decreased musical affordance of a city, which demonstrates how symbolic capital can separate the spatial affordance of that city from its musical affordance.

Music Promoters

Several stakeholders also emphasized the influence of music promoters. The quotes suggest a shared perception that promoters are the key stakeholders of the live music industry in Harare. Nonetheless, differences in perceptions on the topic arise when discussing the role of promoters. Interestingly, some contradicted each other on the topic of promoters'
 role in creating conducive conditions for upcoming artists. One promoter explained his work as guided by helping new artists:

> "As a promoter you are going to help, you are not looking at established artists. You look at young talent and think, "okay, this guy is good, what does he need? How can we help this particular person? They will need to get their name out there. If there is a show coming up, we ask if they can be the opening artist, so they gain experience."
>
> (Interview with Rex)

On the other hand, some interviews described the work of promoters as guided by economic needs and financial interest. Though there is agreement that upcoming artists are a focal part of the work of promotion, there are different viewpoints on specific functions.

> "Promoters will be looking for how big of a crowd can an artist attract, so I'm thinking they will prefer the bigger artists compared to young artists who are just getting started. It is the promoters who control the industry."
>
> (Interview with Peter from Music Crossroads Academy)

Therefore, music promoters are understood to play a crucial role in Harare but are not necessarily perceived as main drivers of inclusivity - this is a topic for further research, in aims to better understand the functions promoters carry out. For example, Mr. John from the

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National Arts Council suggests that encouragement and support from government is important to shaping the functions of promoters.

> "What we encourage our promoters to do, especially if they are bringing in high profile musicians outside of Zimbabwe, is to have at least three supporting acts that are local musicians. When we say local musicians, we are looking at issues as youth and gender. Sometimes it gets difficult because a promoter is basically a businessperson. What he sees is dollar sign. But we encourage them, we meet with the promoters each year to discuss these issues. They are the key stakeholders that hold the industry."
>
> (Interview with Mr. John)

Improving accessibility and involving upcoming artists in the industry requires cooperation between the many actors. In regard to the accessibility issues indicated, many actors in gatekeeping roles are seen as creating the specific local conditions of Harare's live music ecosystem, shaping gaps in access. The power to decide who makes it and who does not is derived from their ability to convert their existing social and cultural capital into economic capital (Whiting, 2021). Therefore, it is possible to hypothesize that unless artists are able to obtain social and cultural capital - which embodies a set of knowledge and networks of the local music world - the accessibility to the live music scenes will be influenced by the gatekeepers who hold such capital.

Social and Cultural Capital

The next step is to draw connections between the social and physical conditions of music making in Harare and the necessary set of knowledge and networks required to acquire by artists – which can also be referred to as the social and cultural capital that is necessary for artists to operate within the live music ecosystem in Harare.

> "People take music as a joke or as a hobby, they think it is an easygoing thing. When you decide to be an artist, you become a company yourself. You need to have business cards, posters, you need to do accountancy. You have to be very organized. It is a livelihood and you have to take it seriously, it is a job just like any other."
>
> (Interview with Fiona)

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In the quote above, Fiona addresses her viewpoint on being an artist in Harare, pointing out her perceived difference between people's general view where music is not viewed as a serious career pathway, and her reality where she views being an artist as having a personal business.

Music Business

First of all, as indicated in the quote above, knowledge about the managerial and business side of the live music industry was found to be viewed as essential to establishing a career in music. Furthermore, it was found that amongst the participants of the study there exists a perception that there is a serious lack in such knowledge among upcoming artists. It can be suggested that due to the role that social capital – recognition – plays in accessing opportunities, there exists the need for the sort of cultural capital which is constituted by knowledge within the local music business. If opportunity structures are guided by social capital, cultural capital becomes the necessary ingredient for artists without social capital to navigate the live music ecosystem.

According to the interview data, such knowledge can be obtained by approaching older/more experienced artists from the local music scene, as well as through certain music oriented non-profit organizations,

> "There are a few organizations or just a group of people, certain communities that people can go and talk to. For example, the Jazz community, Women in Music, there's even the Zimbabwe Music Association. Or you can just go to the older generation, the gurus of the industry."
>
> (Interview with Fiona)

Another example, Music Crossroads Academy Zimbabwe offers young individuals free training in music business,

> "Nowadays, social media is playing a big part in determining access to live music. Young artists are not getting enough attention on social media which is needed to market their shows. So it is important for them to know the business side of music."
>
> (Interview with Peter from Music Crossroads Academy)

Thereby, an observation is made that in Harare, certain non-profit organizations take up the role of providing alternative ways for obtaining the necessary cultural capital for upcoming artists. An interesting viewpoint is suggested by Ezra from Theatre in the Park, "we have noticed that the artist plays a bigger role in the marketing. It is not enough for the venue to be pushing for the crowds. It's the artists that attract numbers". The quote suggests that it is the artist not the venue that attracts the audience. Further the findings suggest that the volume of social capital which is based on recognition (thus transformed into symbolic capital) held by established artists in their ability to effectively mobilize people for a live event is greater than that of specific music venues. This could create a situation where venues are incentivized to host established artists as it is those artists that will attract the largest crowds and thus provide economic value as well as recognition. Thus, amplifying the importance of social capital (and symbolic capital), which will be further discussed on page 29. Furthermore, if a venue is dependent on the artist for social capital to hold instrumental value, it will increase the incentive for the venue to host already established artists.

Thereby it can be suggested that due to conditions of the live music ecosystem, where music venues are more likely to offer their space to established artists, upcoming artists must rely on creative and innovative approaches to pursuing venues for live performances.

> "As in any other place, the expectation is to have the big artist that is world known. Because of course for whoever is trying to promote the event, they need to get a return of the value for their many. For young artists it is up to them to see what kind of methods they need to approach in terms of performing at the venue."
>
> (Interview with Mr. Green, UNESCO)

The quote suggests that upcoming artists are responsible for finding and creating unique strategies for approaching music venues if they wish to do live performances. Herein knowledge in music business comes in handy, as it can provide the artist with the necessary tools for being able to think in terms of such strategies. During later conversations with music artists in Harare, it was brought up that when an artist lacks the business or the managerial knowledge of the music industry, it creates vulnerability for the artist as other individuals with such knowledge can exploit their upper hand in expertise. It was suggested that third party managers who work with upcoming artists often lack transparency and can withhold

information about the true amount of money that a show pays. Having said that, it is important to mention that having a manager, however, is seen as helpful when doing live shows.

> "It is very important to have either a manager or someone representing you, to take off the load, doing the administrative/managerial side of work. Then the artist can focus on the show. Especially if you yourself are in a bad state and you get to a venue and you need to deal with every little detail, you think to yourself – I am not ready for this."
>
> (Interview with Fiona)

The quote suggests that having a manager is good because it gives space for the artist to focus on the performance, which is key. However, it can be further concluded that it is even better if an artist has a good understanding of the managerial aspect of music in order to avoid being exploited. One the flip side, the artist will know what to expect, what to avoid and what to ask for. Therefore, it can be suggested that music managers have an important, complex role in Harare; in this way, the findings indicate an interesting point for future analysis because the exact functions they play in supporting a positive live music ecosystem for upcoming artists in the city.

Social Network

In terms of social capital, the perceptions of the participants of the study suggest that social capital plays a vital role in creating performance opportunities as well as determining the success of such opportunities for artists in Harare. Being familiar with different actors within the industry and the ability to mobilize such social network for generating both intrinsic and instrumental value gives an upper hand, as many ideas and possibilities for live music form within existing social networks. As well as, having significant volumes of social capital to mobilize a crowd or an audience, which can be translated to symbolic capital. Therefore, suggesting that social capital is exactly that which differentiates the level of success in terms of reach and profit for live music in Harare, even when there exists the same amount of economic and cultural capital (Siisiainen, 2003). Furthermore, the findings suggest that social capital is often utilized in the form of collaboration within the music sector as well as with other cultural and creative industry sectors. Therefore, creating connections with individuals and organizations who are representatives of different sectors of the CCI's (music, film, fine

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art, theatre, etc.) was found to be viewed as beneficial for upcoming artists. in the quote below James refers to his understanding of social capital and the importance of collaboration.

> "I think with art it's all about social capital, having social capital. So, when artists are building up their characters, I think it's very important to collaborate. Collaborate with films, with theatres, art galleries, collaborate with every arts sector."
>
> (Interview with James)

The ability for an individual to effectively mobilize groups of people and together work for a greater good through combining the cultural capital of each individual, is what brings value for upcoming artists in terms of social capital. "The volume of social capital possessed by a given agent ... depends on the size of the network of connections that he can effectively mobilize" (Bourdieu 1986, 249). The quality produced by the entirety of the social network is thus the social capital, as opposed to simply a common value of the network (Bourdieu, 1980). In the quote below Fiona further discusses her view on the importance of getting familiar and establishing networks with people that specialize in music related services and produce. In doing so, the artist eases the struggle of knowing who to approach in specific situations.

> "From the people in charge of sound, venues, and lights. Knowing who to reach out to when you need certain things. It's much easier when you have built up connections. When you are starting out from nothing it is very difficult because you don't know where to begin from. Who do I go talk to? Who do I get this from?"
>
> (Interview with Fiona)

For many artists who are starting out, it is likely that they will not be in possession of significant financial capital immediately. Thus, acquiring social capital is a relevant alternative, as it allows for the accumulation of economic capital through the combination of complementary cultural capital. The situation when an individual (or group of individuals) holds cultural capital which can be combined with another individuals' cultural capital in order to create a joined outcome, for the purpose of the study will further be referred to as complementary cultural capital. In conclusion, social capital has the potential to support an individual in situations when personal economic capital is not achieved yet. This is not to say that artists should seek out networks and relationships with people with a single aim of generating economic capital. The hypothesis instead is that if two (or more) individuals who hold similar goals and

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complementary cultural capital join forces new opportunities and ideas are created through which economic capital can be generated.

Furthermore, in order to reach and acquire the industry specific social capital, upcoming artists require creative spaces in which they are able to meet and interact with likeminded people. This is further discussed in section 6.5. Creative Hubs on page 37.

Access to Live Music: Audience

Broadly speaking, there is great importance to big music events with known artists and this study does not by any means try to minimize the value that the popular music scene brings to the overall live music ecology. Instead, the paper attempts to explore the perceptions on talent development for upcoming artists within the live music scenes in Harare. Thereby the study explores accessibility to live music both in terms of the artist and the audience. If the general population is unable to attend live music shows, then the artist will have a lesser opportunity to showcase their talent through live performances. Consequently, this section explores the factors determining such access for the audience.

First of all, it is necessary to discuss financial factors determining access to live music. Expenses for concert tickets, the costs of travelling as well as the ability to purchase beverages or food at an affordable price during the show determine who will be able to attend the performance. Large shows in Harare were found to often be in areas where the middle or upper class reside, such as The Venue in Avondale or The Rainbow Towers in central Harare. If people from less wealthy neighborhoods wish to attend such shows, the distance can equal a 20 km drive to the venue (see Figure 1 on page 33). In the quote below, Peter, a representative of Music Crossroads Academy suggests that live music shows that take place in less wealthy areas often have tickets priced too high for the local population.

> "When you go North of Harare, the cost of living is quite expensive. So only a few people can afford the prices for live shows there, not our general population in Harare. When you are playing in the heart of Harare then the price should maybe be what the majority of people can afford. There are certain venues in Harare which are located in areas where you wouldn't expect prices to be so high, but still sell tickets for 10 US$.

You should have a great lineup to charge that much. This year we are going to have UB40 and they are charging 60$ for a general ticket."

(Interview with Peter from Music Crossroads Academy)

Due to general population being characterized with high unemployment, as discussed above in the section <u>Urban Context</u> (page 9), there is a general lack of disposable income. It can be hypothesized that the above-described conditions – lack of disposable income, lack of public transport and unaffordable concert tickets can create a situation where live music is thought of as a luxury for the wealthy. In the quote below Mr. John addresses the named aspects determining access to live music:

"The major factor is lack of disposable income. People are suffering. What is now happening is that we have clusters. We have very rich people. Super rich, those who can afford to attend any show. We clear some of the shows that I cannot even afford to attend. But there are people who can afford that. In terms of music consumption, there are two divisions – either you are rich or poor. To a certain extent, not a major problem though, is the transportation system. How do you go to events? If the show is not in the area you live in, you have to have a car."

(Interview with Mr. John)

Additionally, to a lack of public transport, the absence of streetlights in the city was mentioned as a hinder to ensuring access to live music shows. This is discussed further by Ezra in the quote below.

"Electricity, the city light is a problem. Because we don't run the park, we only run the venue which is located in the park. The whole park is administered by the local authority, the City Council, and sometimes the lights are off in moments when the show is running, and you need lights for people to feel safe."

(Interview with Ezra, Theatre in the Park)

The unavailability of streetlights and inadequate feeling of safety can be especially topical when considering the experiences of women. Having to walk through a park in the evening in complete darkness, can retain an individual, especially women, from attending a live music show.

During the observation phase of the research, two live music performances at Theatre in the Park were attended on two separate occasions. Both shows were set to begin at 7pm. To access the venue, it was necessary to go through Harare Gardens, a large and popular park in the heart of the Central Business District (CBD) of Harare. On both occasions the park was completely dark, with no streetlights at sight. The only lights were those provided by the venue on site. Additionally, when leaving the show around 11pm, it was advised not to walk through the park and to have arranged a driver who can come to the venue inside the park.
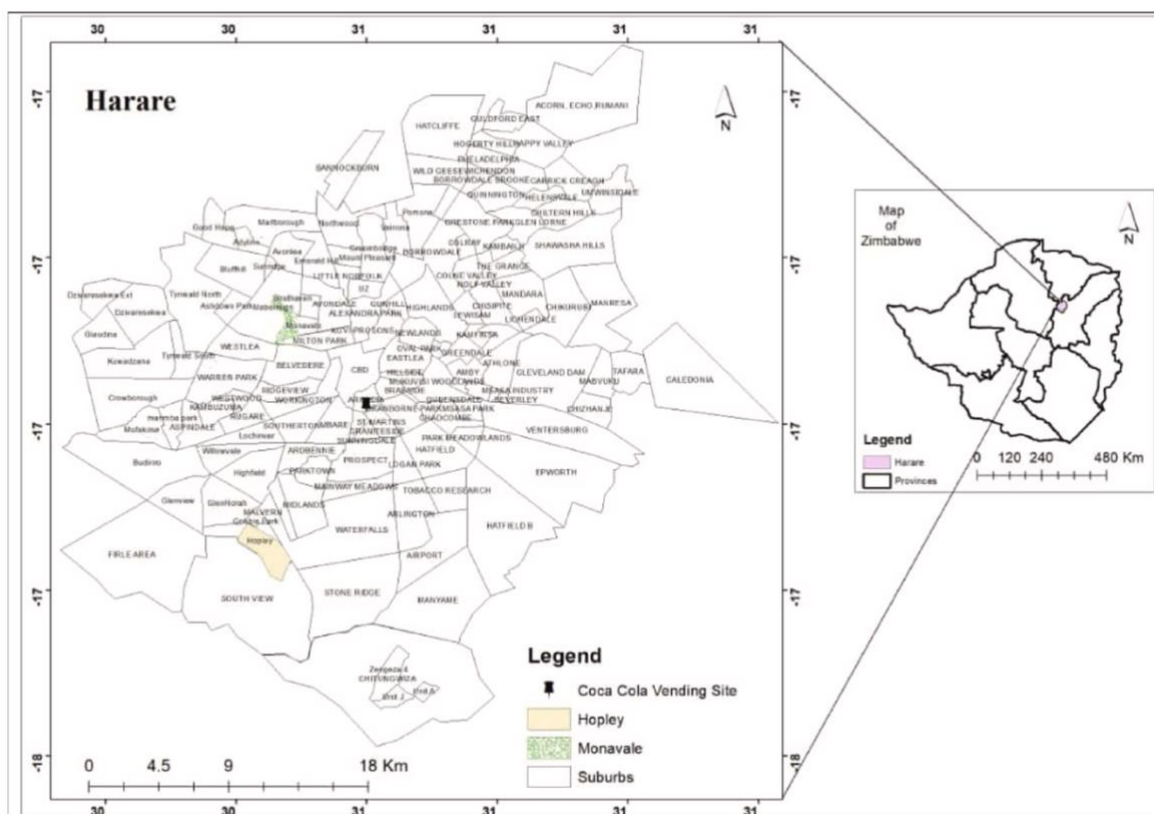

Figure 1. Detailed map of Harare. Source: Matamanda & Chinozvina (2020).

Consequently, it is possible to develop the following hypothesis - if the barrier that is created between the rich and the poor is reinforced by spatialized factors such as the sense of security, it produces inequalities in accessing live music for the audience.

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6.4. Role live music plays in society

The section above described the perceived accessibility to live music and hypothesized that there exists a lack of equal opportunities in having the means to enjoy music shows in the city for the general population. This gives cause for further research on the relationship between music and society in Harare. The following section, thus, explores aspects of the social conditions through which the meaning of music is constructed in Harare. Thereby also looking into the value that access to live music brings and thereby the importance of improving the named access.

<u>Social Interaction & Identity Formation</u>

Looking back at the previously described socio-political context as well as the historical meaning behind music styles like Chimurenga and Zim-Dancehall (see page 4), it becomes reasonable to suggest that the meaning of music in Harare is broader than that of entertainment alone. Social interaction and identity formation that take effect through music was found to be highlighted by every interviewee. When talking about identity formation it is possible to speak of individual identity and social identity. From the data collected it was found that the latter is perceived as more factual for the relationship between music and identity formation in Harare. It was found that music fosters a collective feeling of joy and a sense of pride. During informal discussions and interviews with individuals and groups of people of different ages and social backgrounds, when speaking about the local music scenes in Harare, people exhibited passion in their narrative and spoke of music as a symbol of pride and confidence. Thereby creating a sense of collective identity deriving from people's shared respect and devotion for the local music and artists. As explained by Mr. John (National Arts Council), "Yes, the world is a 'global village' but there are things we want to keep as our own, such as music. We want to showcase our culture and music is a major component of it". In the quote, Mr. John suggests that music is an important component of the Zimbabwean culture, highlighting the importance of keeping music as a symbol of the local narrative.

When people gather together to enjoy a shared lived experience, a phenomenon coined by Whyte (1990) as the Amphitheater effect, takes place, where people look at each other as much as what is happening on the stage. Live music events allow strangers and friends to gather in a

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specific place and share an experience as well as interact with people outside their close circle of friends,

> "We have had a recession, depressions, a pandemic, there has been a lot that has happened. So, when people actually meet in front of a stage and the live performance is going, we heal society. And in that moment live music is life basically. Everyone there at that moment becomes one united people. Being able to connect heals people."
>
> <div align="right">(Interview with Rex)</div>

In this quote, Rex provides a perspective where live music is seen as the 'healer' of a society, for its power to create a moment in time and space so energetic that it unites the people in it. Furthermore, social or collective identity formation has the ability to shape people's perception of a specific place in a specific time. In this case, if a city is increasingly associated with a lively music scene, where everyday life is complemented with live music shows that are accessible to the general population, it gives way for individuals and groups of people to discover new ways of imagining and narrating the city. The narratives that are able to form through live music are arguably guided by the opportunities to access live music shows. On the same note, van der Hoeven and Hitters (spatial value) suggest that, "It is vital to recognize the plurality of narratives associated with a place in relation to both music's role in urban branding and music heritage". Therefore, it is possible to hypothesize that, if within a city access to live music is guided by unequal opportunity structures, the plurality of narratives associated with the city as well as the music scenes are unlikely to be recognized.

Education & information

> "People in Zimbabwe love music, people love to dance. Society gets entertained, society gets educated. Music is an important tool for infotainment and edutainment exercises. There's nothing that happens in a community or in a society without music. As a way of life, be it contemporary or traditional, there is always music. Communities benefit from music, they receive information, they are educated, and they are entertained through music. Right now, the nation is facing a big problem with drug and substance abuse. Our musicians as influencer are now composing songs against those social ills and evils. Sometimes people don't want to read but they can learn from music."
>
> <div align="right">(Interview with Mr. John, National Arts Council)</div>

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In the quote above Mr. John suggests that music is an important source of information and education in Harare. Furthermore, it was found that music in Harare is often used as a medium through which knowledge and experiences can be shared and mentoring as well as counselling can take place, especially for the urban youth. What is more, music is even used as a tool for community development by non-profit organizations in less wealthy urban areas. For example, House of Arts Association works with several vulnerable communities to encourage grassroots urban regeneration as well as raise awareness around mental health issues through the use of art and creativity. Music was found to be a very useful tool for creating space for conversations on issues such as drug abuse, substance abuse and mental health. One specific event hosted by House of Arts Association was observed where two local singers together with a local DJ and representatives from the local council drove around Hatcliffe (a high-density suburb in Northern Harare) (see figure 1 on page 3). in an open truck while performing music as well as giving speeches to the local community addressing the current social issues. Interestingly, the event immediately caught the attention of nearly every bystander. People stopped, watched and listened. Especially children and young people seemed to be captivated by the live performance. The use of outdoor space and the 'natural urban environment' for the performance, arguably exhibits a special influence due to the relationship between music, self-identity and creativity (Hesmondhalgh, 2008), "its use in an outdoor context is capable of nurturing urban re-enchantment, regional identity, and possible regeneration of the inner city" (Oakes & Warnaby, 2011: 408)

Source: Annika Medin

This brings up a discussion which looks at the comparisons of live music versus digital in relation to the flow of information and education. Of course, the same messages can be conveyed through a song that is streamed on Spotify. However, it can be hypothesized that it will not have the same effect. First of all, a lack of access to electricity and the internet for the urban poor clearly argues against streaming, since this excludes a large part of the society. Second, it is possible to suggest that music experienced as a lived, collective experience has greater impact than music experienced through online streaming. Imagine listening to your favorite album in your headphones while going home from work, then imagine listening to that same album live, while looking at the artist and the background dancers, being surrounded by people who have all gathered for the same purpose, the scent of the venue, the speakers that are slightly too loud and the lights flashing in your face from phones of people taking pictures next to you, those strangers you suddenly speak to as if you were friends just because of the shared feeling of being in a place that has become more than just a space, the posters barely hanging on the walls. Which moment will you remember a month later or even a year later? Consequently, the capacity of live music versus recorded music in conveying memorable messages and experiences is an interesting topic for further research.

6.5. Ways to Go Forward: Creative Hubs

The last part of the study is concerned with exploring the identified perceptions on strategies for improving the opportunities for creative development among upcoming artists in Harare.

After comparing and connecting the gathered data on participants answers on strategies for increased artist development in Harare the conclusion can be drawn that there is a perceived need to create creative spaces which are live music venues that hold and distribute social and cultural capital within the live music network and that engage in activities supportive of artist development through live music. According to the data, there exists a lack of music venues that are engaged with artists, and that currently "most of the venues that are in Harare are very neutral in hosting whatever can be hosted" (Interview with Mr. Green). The perceived solution as described in the quote below, is for venues to take up a more dedicated role in artist development,

> "Not just a music venue, it has to be a hub. It has to be a total package, where you can record, you can understand the artists. Artists need spaces where they can create and connect. We need places where talent is understood. There is a stage, fine. But we need the things behind the stage, we need people who know how to talk to the artists. Artists go through a lot of stress and a lot of pressure."
>
> <div align="right">(Interview with Rex)</div>

In the quote above, Rex, describes that he views creative hubs as an important social and material establishment for the development of upcoming artists in Harare. In the quote he suggests that artists require spaces where representatives of those spaces hold a set of knowledge which allows them to create a support system for artists. Thereby, creating both a social and material environment reflective of the live music scene in Harare and supportive of upcoming artists. What is more, such creative hubs can thus both become distributors of social capital as well as generators of it. Wherein, the individuals associated with these creative hubs and the hubs in themselves form a new social capital that acquires a symbolic character, which is thereafter transformed into symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Meaning as the hubs and the artists associated with such hubs become recognized and gain symbolic value within the live music industry, the social capital of each individual as well as the creative hub increases. A possible hypothesis is that engagement in activities supportive of artist development through

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live music depends on music venue staff which hold the social and cultural capital required to navigate through the music scenes in Harare.

Advocacy for live music venues to build a more engaged and supportive relationship with upcoming artists is found in academic literature, arguing that such spaces are vital in supporting talent development and musical creativity of a city (van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2019). Further, Patten (2016) and Grodach (2011) argue that creative hubs are important for providing the value of social networks and capital as well as entrepreneurial skills that support the ability for upcoming artists to recognize opportunities - both created and available (creative hubs in question). (value small music venues) amplify the added value that such cultural spaces bring to the music scenes of a city – creating room for "…the kinds of informal social gatherings and engagement with niche musical cultural that scenes thrive on". Lastly, Frith et al (2009), discusses the importance of diversity of musical spaces within a city and argues it is exactly that which makes a music ecosystem healthy. Thereby, speaking of the variety of music genres and styles that exist within a single ecosystem, and which require relevant spaces that represent relevant social and cultural capital.

6.6. Interventions and Creative Hubs

This section explores suggested interventions that are perceived to be beneficial in order to create an environment which is supportive to the development of creative.

First of all, the data suggests that there is a need to create space for dialogue with the local authorities, both in terms of improving engagement between music related policies, such as the National Music Strategy of Zimbabwe, created on an institutional level and strategies employed on ground level.

> "My honest reality is that it has not been pushed to the level of the artists, where the ordinary people get to know about the music strategy. I have been in the industry for some time now, playing key roles for live shows. But I never have been to a point where I have been referred to the music strategy. Even the artists on the stage don't know about that strategy."
>
> (Interview with Ezra from Theatre in the Park)

In the quote above Ezra addresses his experience with the National Music Strategy of Zimbabwe. Despite his involvement in the local music industry, through his work with Theatre in the Park, he had not been informed of the strategy. Further, he suggests that his experience has shown that many artists in Harare are not familiar with the music strategy suggesting that on a policy level engagement between different actors within the music ecosystem is not yet achieved.

Further, another interesting topic to discuss during such dialogues are the perceived interventions useful for increasing the spatial value of, for example, public parks where cultural events are hosted by installing streetlights (such as Harare Gardens with Theatre in the Park). This could then increase the sense of security for people attending music performances and therefore improves access to live music.

Second, the data gathered offers an insight into local creative grassroots interventions which integrate live music with the physical and social urban landscape of the specific place while at the same time increasing recognition for the hub and its artists. One such strategy is organizing outdoor music performances in local communities coupled with collective social action at the same time and space. A suggested outcome is an increase in recognition for the artist, reimagined narratives of the specific place, and raised awareness on specific social issues, such as, littering. In the quote below Fiona offers a suggestion on how collective trash picking can be combined with a live music event.

> "There's so much litter around this place, how do we go about this? Okay, create a show and then before or after the show organize to go around the neighborhood and pick up the litter. Let's make recycle bins, let's do this and that, just within a community."
>
> (Interview with Fiona)

Another suggested strategy in relation to outdoor music is to organize live performances in urban public spaces, such as, parks that are rundown and in need for regeneration. In addition, invite local authorities to these events and thus create space for engagement and dialogue between the grassroots and institutional level. Thereby, letting people reimagine the space in a different light, while at the same time gaining recognition and publicity for those involved.

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Furthermore, creative hubs can carry out such initiatives in collaboration with non-governmental organizations that work for similar causes. This in turn can give support in collecting funds as well as allows for different stakeholders to engage and network – giving way for increased social capital for all parties involved and thus new opportunities to emerge.

Applying the live music ecology framework to understanding live music, means looking at how the material and social conditions of a place form specific systems and networks in the place of focus, which become rational or irrational due to the distinct conditions that are in place (Frith, 2016). Therefore, suggesting that behavior which is perceived as irrational in the matter of market economics, is possible to be rational in regard to live music (Frith, 2016). Consequently, even though music venues or artists might be reluctant to host live performances that will not bring financial returns, there is valuable rationality to do so due to the specific conditions the are in place in Harare (Frith, 2016). The same reasoning can be applied to ticket prices, wherein charging less than what certain people are willing to pay becomes reasonable when taking into account the specific environment of the live music ecosystem (Frith, 2016).

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study explored the perceptions surrounding live music and artist development in Harare, providing insights into the conditions that shape the live music scene and their potential impacts on the experiences of upcoming artists. While acknowledging the hypothetical nature of the findings due to the limited sample size, this research offers a nuanced understanding of the perceptions on the challenges and opportunities faced by upcoming artists within the city's live music ecosystem. The findings highlight the importance of researching the varied subjective perceptions of artist development pathways. Discussing the perspectives of several live music industry stakeholders, this study explored how live performance in Harare can function as a platform for creative expression, audience engagement, and personal growth for upcoming artists. Therein, the findings illuminate how this potential platform is affected by system factors such as the interplay between social and cultural capital and gatekeeping.

Additionally, the study findings shed light on the potential correlation between an audiences' ability to access live music and the possible opportunities for upcoming artists to perform live. The research suggests that the ability of the demand side (the audience) to access live music

experiences plays a crucial role in shaping the opportunities available to emerging artists. Furthermore, limited financial resources can restrict the ability of potential audience members to attend live music events, leading to social disparities in accessing and participating in the live music scene. These dynamics and their overall societal impact in Harare were examined in order to clarify several ways live music is perceived as valuable for the society. First, the findings highlight the perceived role of music in fostering social interaction and collective identity formation. This can serve as a catalyst for bringing people together, creating a sense of belonging. Moreover, the findings suggest that live music has the capacity to help reimagine and reconstruct place-focused narratives. Second, the study suggests that ensuring access to live music for the general public can be important for the recognition of the diverse music-based narratives within a specific place. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the educational and informational significance of music for the urban population.

Considering the insights gained, the study proposes potential interventions rooted in the live music ecology framework. Creative hubs are suggested as a means for generating transformative spaces that can nurture and support artist development, providing both access to live performances and cultural and social capital. Additionally, the findings suggest that fostering dialogue and collaboration between institutional authorities, music venues, and grassroots initiatives can pave the way for a more inclusive and sustainable live music ecosystem. In reflecting on this study, it is essential to acknowledge the need for further research with larger and more diverse sample groups. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach that combines insights from sociology, cultural studies, and development studies, future research can advance the existing understanding of the dynamics at play as well as people's concurrent perceptions, providing more detailed information for industry players and policy-makers.

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