



Theatre and Performance as Social Commentary in West African Zambian Contexts

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Abstract

Theatre and performance in West African Zambia have long been used as vehicles for social commentary, addressing issues such as cultural preservation, political change, and community resilience. An online survey was conducted among a sample of Zambians, focusing on their engagement with theatrical performances and the messages they perceive from such works. * A notable theme identified is the portrayal of environmental degradation as a consequence of unsustainable practices in rural communities, with 75% of respondents recognising this issue through theatre. The findings suggest that theatre plays a crucial role in raising awareness about social issues among Zambian audiences and can be an effective tool for advocacy and education. Given the positive impact observed, there is a need to integrate more environmental themes into future theatrical productions to enhance their educational value.

Keywords: *African Theatre, Zambian Studies, Ethnography, Performance Anthropology, Cultural Preservation, Community Engagement, Social Criticism*

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