

African Traditional Dances; Repertoire of African Migration Histories, Common Identities and Resistance Against Colonial Artificial Borders

Nyarko Danie Ofori., Ayettey Benjamin Obido

Institution of Affiliation Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana

DOI : <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.807096>

Received: 18 June 2024; Revised: 29 June 2024; Accepted: 01 July 2024; Published: 06 August 2024

ABSTRACT

African traditional dances of sub-Saharan Africa present important and unadulterated historical information that connect the histories of migration of certain African ethnic groups. The historical materials and facts of African traditional dances present the migration histories of certain African ethnic groups and defies colonial separation through artificial borders. African traditional dances and the costumes used in such dances continually connect ethnic groups which are found in different African countries together as people of a common stock. The researchers used desk information on dances performed in western and southern African countries that transcends the borders of one country in this scholarly work. African traditional dances especially from West and Southern Africa such as Agahu or Gahu and Agbadza are performed by the Ewe Ethnic group or nation found in Benin, Ghana, Togo and certain parts of Nigeria, the Sunu dance is performed by the Wolof in Senegal, Guinea, Gambia including parts of Mali and Mauritania, the Lamban traditional dance of the Mandinka people is also performed in seven countries in West Africa including Mali, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso. West African traditional dances still have important impacts on the indigenous dances of African Americans found in the Americas through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. The Ndlamu dance found in Southern Africa is performed by the Nguni people including; Ndebele (Xhosa) of Zimbabwe, Swazi of Eswatini as well as the Zulu in South Africa and other Nguni tribes in Mozambique and Malawi. The performance of the Ndlamu dances by these different ethnic groups in the mentioned southern African countries also attest to the fact that all these ethnic groups are Nguni ethnic kinsmen of a common race or stock but are found in different countries due to migration or through colonial artificial borders. The researchers recommended that traditional African dances must be encouraged and tapped into as it can help to build and promote peace amongst African countries as certain ethnic groups within sub regions such as West and Southern Africa originated from a common stock and have the same or similar cultures.

Keywords; Artificial border, colonialism, ethnicity, identity, migration

INTRODUCTION

Dance in Africa present one important aspects of the life of the African South of the Sahara and their art, education, entertainment and their general act of living in their various societies (Opoku, 1965). The non-literal life of the African traditional society before the arrival of the European colonizers makes African traditional dance with its accompanying music to be the repository of African history demonstrating the mobility trajectories of Sub-Saharan Africans especially those in West and Southern Africa and their identities and how the people of West and Southern African were able to use dance and its accompanying music to preserve their authentic historical materials, identities as well as their defiance against artificial colonial legacies bestowed on them by their European colonizers especially the British and the French (Enekwe, 1991). Dance present a unique identity to Africans South of the Sahara such as Ghanaians (Ayettey, 2022), Nigerians, Togolese, South Africans, Zimbabweans and etcetera. Though West and Southern African dances and their accompanying music are used for, ritualistic, festive and entertaining purposes in contemporary times, these dances and their accompanying

music contain authentic historical materials and information about West and Southern Africans which provide a lot of insights on the migratory histories of major West and Southern African tribes and their nations and how these various tribes and nation states are connected through certain West and Southern African traditional dances and how some of these dances and their accompanying music connect the African continent to the external world without distorting the authentic nature of such histories through the distortions of colonial anthropologist and ethnographers who misrepresented African traditional dances with its accompanying music as well as the rituals which were involved in the performance of such traditional Dances from West Africa (Kuwor, 2013). African traditional dances provide the chronology of the sequence of life for members of their societies hence becoming the embodiment and a living proof of all the life stages hence connecting the migratory histories connecting their identities and defying all colonial legacies (Eze, 2006).

West and Southern Africans way of life were affected by the European colonizers in so many ways that impacted on the lives of the people. For instance, in the early part of the British and French colonial administration, policies such as the policy of Assimilation by the French and the indirect rule by the British both altered the ways of life of the indigenous West Africans. The worst of these two European colonial policies was the policy of assimilation by the French which was basically to change the West African French culture to be the same culture of cosmopolitan France. Colonial policies introduced by the European colonizers are products and some of the outcomes of the decisions taken on the 26th of February, 1885 during the Berlin conference (Ajala 1969). For all the policies and decisions taking on Sub-Sahara Africa at the Berlin conference to partition Africa on the lines of the dominant European powers at that time, West African dances still survived its authentic nature embedded with its rich history before the arrival of the Europeans, connecting the identities of major tribes and ethnicities in West Africa even in the midst of colonial artificial borders separating some of these ethnic groups demonstrating the oneness of such people and linking their migratory trajectories as people of a common stock.

The researcher is undertaking this study with the following objectives as stated below;

To use some major dances in Africa which are found in more than one country to connect their migratory histories and identities.

Also, to demonstrate how in spite of colonial artificial separations of African tribal nations, their dances still connect to other tribal kinsmen found in other divides of colonial boundaries and even beyond.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dance as a form of African art has received so much attention from scholars from different array of disciplines including history, anthropology, sociology, choreography and even music (Tonkin (1979), (Drewal and Drewal 1983), (Evans-Pritchard, 1928) and Picton (1990)). The attention given to African dance especially dances from sub-Sahara are due to the fact that traditional African dances have been innovative, resilient, embodies the true reflection of African history and development trajectories in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras. Dances from sub-Sahara Africa present one means of the authentic African identity south of the Sahara giving identities to respective nationals such as Ghanaians (Ayettey, 2022; Oikelome). In this respect African dance is seen as the true embodiment of the African culture, social development and identity. African dance has attracted a whole lot of scholars from Africa, Europe and elsewhere. In the editorial of a special issue of Africa Today, Daniel Reed (2001) notes how African cultural expressions, notably in the domain of music and dance, have proven both resilient and open to creative adaptation and innovation. Most publications on dance have expressed the relevance and role(s) of music in the traditional African societies of Africa but there is scanty information on how African traditional dances are connected to the identities of African ethnic groups that transcend international borders within the current nation states especially in sub-Sahara Africa. There is so much history on the African continent connecting the origins of certain ethnic groups and how they are found in different countries as a result of migration and the creation of colonial artificial borders but their practices of the same or similar traditions and cultures such as dance has not mostly been used to connect their singular or similar identities in the scholarly or academic circles. African traditional dances have received so much attention from both international and African scholars in diverse ways but that of dance connecting African migrations, colonial artificial borders and local resistance or defiance is under researched.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers used historical and anthropological desk information on the dances performed within the Western and Southern African sub-regions. The historical information used here include colonial divisions of the African continent through the Berlin conference of the 19th century and how the various divided ethnic groups found in West and Southern Africa maintained their dances and accompanying costumes though are now found in different artificially created nation states. Also, certain information on pre and colonial migration of ethnic groups within sub-Saharan Africa was also consulted. The researcher also relied on information about dances which are performed by the same or ethnic groups from a common stock which are found in two or more Western and Southern African countries.

Major Sub-Saharan African Dances as Repertoire of History, Identities and Defiance of Colonial Artificial Borders

There are so many dances in West Africa which cuts across two or more countries but for the purpose of this study, the researcher will only concentrate on Agahu or Gahu and Agbadza found along the Nigerian-Ghana corridor where Ewe ethnicity or the Ewe nation is found and Lamban and Sunu dances found in Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Burkina, the La Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone where Mande Speakers are found including certain portions of Northern Ghana.

Dances from the West African Sub-Region

The Agahu or Gahu Dance

Agahu or Gahu as a dance is found to be practiced in the Eastern part of the West African Sub-Region in countries such as Nigeria, Benin, Togo and in the Southern part of the Volta Region of Ghana. The dance is known as Agahu or Gahu depending on the country in which it is found. For instance, it is called Agahu by the Ewe ethnic group in countries such as Togo and Benin while in Ghana the Ewe people call the dance Gahu. This dance throws more lights on the migratory trajectories of the Ewe people as there are historical accounts of the Ewes coming from Egypt through Sudan having lived around Khartoum to their present homes in the West African sub-region in countries including Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Ghana. In written history, it is also evidently written that the Ewe people in Ghana escaped from the tyrannical rule of King Agokorli from Notsie currently located in the republic of Togo (Amenumey, 1997; Greene, 2002; Kuwor, 2017). The continual performance of the Agahu or Gahu dance thereby helps to create, reconstruct and curate the migration history of the Ewe people of Ghana and their close tribesmen or ethnic kinsmen found in Togo, Benin and other parts of Nigeria. The mode of dressing, the postures, gestures, dancing moves, costumes, instruments used in performing the Agahu or Gahu dance are the same or very similar where ever the Ewe traditional dancers are found performing in their current native lands in the West Africa sub-region. The Ewe ethnic group still maintain some of their dialects in their accompanying music in terms of context, meaning and understanding in the Gahu or Agahu ensemble.



Female Agahu traditional dancers in their costumes from Togo



Female Agahu traditional dancers in their costumes from Nigeria. The source of these two pictures is the internet

In terms of the two pictures on the Agahu or Gahu female dancers from Nigeria and Benin, one could realize that the costumes are different but the dance is not different as the hand movements and gesture are the same in terms of the performance. Also, the dance performance is staged by women. The difference in the costumes is only because the Nigerian dancers in the picture now find themselves in the most populous country in Africa and might have been influenced by other cultures in terms of dressing but not their traditional dance. It could easily be noticed from the two pictures that, the Gahu or Agahu dancer makes gentle move with their hands and put-up smiling faces when are in procession. This signifies that, the Agahu or Gahu dance as performed by the same ethnic group which happen to be present in different countries through migration and colonial artificial borders maintains some of their aesthetic traditional and original movements. The maintenance of the aesthetic traditional movements of the Agahu or Gahu dance help to make a historical connection to the Ewe ethnic group in the countries mentioned through migration and artificial colonial borders by France and Britain.

The Agbadza dance

Agbadza is also a very important dance found in Benin, Ghana and Togo amongst the Ewes tribal kinsmen in terms of their language, culture and symbolic gestures. Agbadza dance is a popular social dance which is performed at important social gatherings such as marriage, naming, funeral and other important ceremonies amongst the Ewe ethnicity and nation found in Benin, Ghana, part of Nigeria and Togo. The dance helps to trace and relate all the Ewes found within the West African sub-region as a people of a common stock but are separated into different modern and colonial nations based on the Berlin conference decision and migration but still maintain their common identity and race through music and dance. The common identity maintained by the Ewes through Agbadza also helps to reconstruct the history of the Ewes, after the dispersion of the Ewe ethnic group from after entering the western Sudan from Egypt through Sudan and finally Nigeria. From Nigeria, the Ewe people first settled in Dahomey, from Dahomey some left for Togo and in Togo, due to the wickedness of King Agokoli, some of the Ewes escaped Notsie to the current Volta Region of Ghana (Greene, 2002; Kuwor, 2017). Beside the earlier narrated history, the continual performance of the Agbadza dance in Ghana also defies the division of Togoland between the French and the British into French Togoland and British Togoland after the first world war culminating into the plebiscite of 1956, where portions of the current eastern borderland of Ghana with Togo voted and joined Ghana for Independence in 1957.

The performance of the Agbadza dance by Ewe ethnic kinsmen in Benin, Ghana, part of Nigeria and Togo display the common identity of members of the Ewe ethnic group or Ethnic nation through the preservation of their histories against their migratory journey and colonial artificial borders separating these kinsmen. The instruments, music and costumes used in the performance of the Agbadza dance clearly depict the failure of colonial artificial borders to disunite and tear apart the common histories, identity and the primordial Ewe nation that existed before the Berlin conference that set-in motion the partitioning of Africa into artificial nation - states of the current status.



Agbadza traditional dancers from Benin in their traditional dancing costumes



Agbadza traditional dancers in their traditional costumes from Ghana



Agbadza traditional dancers in their traditional costumes from Togo. These picture of Agbadza dancers were taken from the internet.

In these pictures showing the dancers from Benin, Ghana and Togo, there is clear demonstration that, the costumes used in the performance of the Agbadza dance in the three West African nation-states are similar if not the same. The mode of wrapping the clothes around the dancers are the same while beads also play a critical role. In looking at the pictures, the dance movements do not depict any difference since it is the same dance but the dancers are from different West African countries. The musical instruments used in the Agbadza ensemble of the West African countries which perform this dance are also similar or the same. These Agbadza performing West African countries are all also located to the Eastern part of the West African Sub-region denoting the common root or point of dispersal of the Ewe ethnic group that performs the Agbadza dance. From the pictures, in spite of the three countries being apart as a result of colonial artificial borders and migration through the

escape from tyrannical rule, the three pictures show the similarity of the dance ensemble of the various Ewe Ethnic groups found within the West African sub-region. In these pictures, one could see that the dance performed by the Ewe ethnic group in Ghana, Togo and Benin all portray the Agbadza dance to display the work of the upper torso of the dancer as well as feet work. Though these three countries were colonized by the French and the British, the colonial influence from these two European nations could not change the resemblance of the Agbadza dance of Ghana to her two Francophone neighbours in spite of the French colonial policy of Assimilation.

The Sunu dance

The Sunu dance is one of the most important dances in the West African sub-Region. The Sunu dance is performed by pockets of Wolof and their Mandinke ethnic kinsmen found in West African countries such as Mali, Gambia, Guinea and Senegal. This traditional African dance maintains its movement with accompanying music hence explaining and giving sense of the closeness of the Wolof tribe and its related interconnectivity of their historical trajectories in West Africa as a defiance against arbitrary and imaginary borders drawn by the French and British colonizers to separate them. In the same vein, the performance of the Sunu dance is an indication that, the Mandinke and Wolof are from a common stock or were once neighbours within the same geographical enclave but are now found in Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Mali due to the inherent mobile nature of West Africans (Adepoju, 1998) or through the creation of colonial artificial borders.



Sunu traditional dancers from Senegal in their dancing costumes. The source of this picture is the internet



Sunu traditional dancers from Gambia in their dancing costumes. This picture was taken from the internet.

In looking at the pictures of the Sunu dancers from both the Gambia and the Senegal, one could see that the drum ensemble in their hands are the same or similar meaning the dance and its ensemble comes from a common source connecting their pre-modal existence as a group with a common culture. Also, the dancers in their

costumes display the freedom in participation of the dance. This could be noticed from the colours of the costumes of the two groups from two different countries in the West African sub-region. This inference could be made from the two pictures as the dancers in the two pictures are all not uniformly dressed but at least two performers of the dance from both the Gambia and Senegal ensemble members have different colours and pattern or mode for the costumes used in the performance of the dance. From the pictures, one can also infer that, in spite of the British and French influence on Gambia and Senegal, the Wolof and Mandinka people have demonstrated their shared culture in the face of colonialism and its artificial borders separating these two countries.

The Lamban dance

The Lamban dance is performed in almost all the West African states where the Mande and Mandinka ethnic groups or ethnic nations are found with little or no variations in the performance of this traditional dance. The Lamban traditional dance of West Africa is performed in Guinea, Mali, Senegal, the La Cote d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Northern Liberia and Northern Ghana where there are pockets of Mande ethnic kinsmen. Lamban dancers in the West Africa sub region have maintained this traditional dance almost across half of the entire West African sub region. For several centuries, Mande and Mandinka Lamban dancers in the West Africa sub-region have defied the creation of artificial colonial borders and the implementation of the French colonial policy of Assimilation to keep their dance in its traditional state. The continual performance of the Lamban dance by the Mandinka and Mande ethnic groups indicate that, the two ethnic groups were once kinsmen or were from a common stock but are currently located in different countries due to colonial artificial borders and migration.



Lamban traditional dancers amongst the Mandinka of Mali in their traditional costumes. This picture was retrieved from the internet.



Lamban traditional dancers amongst the Mande ethnic group of Senegal. The source of this picture is the internet.

The instruments, costumes, music, movements as well as the rhythms used in the performance of the Lamban traditional dance help in tracing the migratory and mobility histories in West Africa. The continual performance of the Lamban traditional dance is also a defiance and resistance to colonial artificial legacies having been almost the same in the primordial, colonial, post-colonial as well as in contemporary time of globalization. The two

pictures depicting the performance of the Lamban dancers are from two countries namely Mali and Senegal. In spite of these two countries been separated through colonial artificial borders, both dance groups display high energy intensity and foot works in performing the Lamban dance. The similarity in the performance, the costumes and energy intensity show that the Lamban dance has defied and resisted colonial artificial borders to maintain its true nature in the two countries. The resistance of the dance in the two countries to maintain its authentic root and mode of performance, shows that the Mande and Mandinka people have a shared identity and root but are now separated through the orchestrations of their European colonizer (France) or migration.

In the defiance and resistance of West African traditional dances to colonial artificial legacies, West Africans who were sent to the new world especially in South America including Brazil, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, Haiti, Dominica, Dominican Republic and other modern nation states with African stock through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade still maintain some of the legacies of African music and dance as part of their identities. The maintenance and continuous performance of certain elements of African music and dance from sub-Saharan Africa is also evidence that Africans found in central and South America in spite of the Trans-Atlantic forced migration still display African culture connecting them to their roots. West Africans who were uprooted to the new world still continued the practices, movements, tapping, gestures as well as the participatory nature and the costumes of the African traditional dances found in West Africa and practiced by ethnic groups or ethnic nations such as Ewe, Mande, Mandinka, Wolof amongst others. Traditional spiritual dances from West Africa have also influenced certain dances in the Caribbeans and Central America such as Shango, Obeah, and Voodoo (Badejo & Banerji, 2002).

Dances from Southern Africa

The Ndlamu dance of the Nguni people of Southern Africa is an important African traditional dance which provides the migratory histories and the colonial divisions of the Ndebele, Swazis and the Zulus of Zimbabwe, Swaziland, South Africa and Mozambique respectively. The Ndlamu dance is a warrior dance performed by the mentioned tribes in Southern Africa who have a common ethnic and tribal affinity (Nguni) with different dialects. In the primordial, colonial and post-independence era, Nguni people including Ndebele (Xhosa), Swazi and Zulus have consistently performed the Ndlamu warrior dance which have the same or similar performances displaying bravery at wars and its accompanying ensemble, gesture, movements and costumes which are an indication that these tribes found in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Eswatini and certain parts of Mozambique were common ethnic members who have been divided through colonial artificial borders by the British and Portuguese or who migrated in the pre-colonial and colonial era from a common origin to their present homes. The instruments used in the performance of the Ndlamu dance are the same or similar in all the four mentioned southern African countries which have the same ethnic identities of the Nguni or the Zulu people.

After the Mfecane wars in Southern Africa, the Nguni people who are close kinsmen to the Zulu, the Ndebele (Xhosa) and Swazi tribes have maintained their unique form of dance more than a century hence have also been able to withstand colonialism and its carnages on Southern African countries such as Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Mozambique and more, especially South Africa which experienced white minority rule (Apartheid) Ojo Orwa et al. 198).



Ndebele Ndlamu traditional dancers in their traditional costume in Zimbabwe. This picture was taken from the internet



Zulu Ndlamu dancers in KwaZulu Natal South Africa in their traditional costume. The source of the picture is the internet



A picture of Ndlamu dancers from Eswatini. This picture was taken from the internet.

In these three pictures of the Ndlamu dancers from Southern African countries of Zimbabwe, South Africa and Eswatini, the performers are all males with animal skins around their waste and are bare chested. The Ndlamu dance is basically for warriors and that is displayed in the three pictures by Nguni dancers known by different names in their current respective countries of Zimbabwe, South Africa and Eswatini. In all the three pictures, the performers of the dance demonstrate the preparedness and the zeal their ancestors placed in wars by defending themselves against outsiders.

In looking at the design of the costumes of the Ndlamu dancers from Zimbabwe, South Africa and Eswatini, one could notice that the patterns of their costume are similar or the same. The only difference comes in with colours but the mode of dressing from the head to the feet follow the same patterns or trend and the dance movements or gestures are also similar if not the same. The dance is also performed by males due to the fact that in the communities of the Nguni (Swazi, Ndebele or the Zulu) is the men who go to war. The mode of dressing and the costumes of the three tribes which trace their root to a common stock or kinsmen (Nguni) are the same or similar. The continual performance of the Ndlamu dance by some countries in Southern Africa depict how these tribes of a common ethnicity or ethnic nation were once a united people but divided due to migration or the creation of colonial artificial borders by their colonizers. The performance of the Ndlamu dance by ethnic stocks of Nguni in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Eswatini also demonstrate the great Bantu migrations into the Southern and South-Eastern regions of Africa (Schapera, 1937). Also, the continual performance of the Ndlamu dance of the Nguni people (Ndebele, Swazi and Zulu) demonstrate how the Nguni people decided to conquer other tribes to expand the Zulu Kingdom within Southern and South Eastern Africa after Shaka-Zulu succeeded his father as the Zulu king (Allen, 2014; Bryant, 1929 Mahoney, 2012). The conquest and expansionist policy of Shaka Zulu also meant more Nguni people were to migrate to new lands as warriors to conquer new lands within the Southern and South Eastern regions of Africa.

CONCLUSIONS

The different African dance used in explaining the migratory histories of these mentioned African ethnic groups or ethnic nations have demonstrated that the various ethnic groups or nations mentioned are of a common stock but are now found in different countries through migration or colonial artificial divisions. In even their present homes or nation states divided or partitioned by decisions at the Berlin conference in the late 19th century, the various ethnic groups or ethnic nations still maintains their unique and common identity through dance for example the Ewe of Benin, Ghana and Togo in the case of Agbadza, the Ewe of Benin, Ghana, Togo and the Yoruba of Nigeria are also connected with a common identity through the Agahu or Gahu dance which also attest to a historical fact that the Ewe in their migration from Egypt through Sudan to West Africa settled in the present Nigeria before their final migration and dispersal to their present homes.

In the same vein, through the Sunu dance in West Africa, the identity and migratory connections of the Wolof people found in Senegal, Gambia and with some pockets of this ethnic nation in Guinea has also been established as coming from a common stock who were in the Wolof Kingdom though are in current times divided through colonial artificial borders. In spite of the divisions of the ancient Wolof Kingdom through artificial borders, tribal kinsmen of the Wolof ethnicity still connect with a common identity through dance. The interaction of the Mande and Mandinka people of the Great Mali empire has also not ceased with the partition of this great ancient Kingdom of West Africa, the descendants of the Mande and Mandinka ethnic group or nation still maintain their common identity in spite of colonial artificial divisions or migrations while still in Mali, Guinea, Senegal, the Gambia, Burkina Faso, the La Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone with some pockets of their ethnic group in Northern Ghana.

Several centuries of Nguni migrations into Southern Africa from East and Central Africa, coupled with colonialism and the Mfecane wars could not obliterate the identity of the Nguni (Zulu, Ndebele or Xhosa and Swazi) found in Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe but are still connected through the Ndlamu or Zulu dance. The continual performance of the Ndlamu dance is also a living testimony to the Bantu migration from Western Sudan to their current nation states in Southern and Southeastern Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommend that African historians, sociologists, ethnographers, musicologists and academics must pay attention to traditional African dances as it provides rich sources of common identity to certain ethnic groups scattered within certain regions of Africa such as West and Southern Africa. Also, the music and dance ensemble of traditional African societies serves as the repository of historical and oral information in writing African migration, colonial or escape histories in terms of ethnic groups in Western and Southern Africa.

Traditional African dances must be protected from the forces of globalization as these dances have been the repertoire of true African histories which have survived colonial policies such as assimilation, the creation of artificial borders and all the negativities visited on the African continent by the Berlin conference crafters.

African traditional dances must be promoted within the various sub regions of the continent so that peace and unity could be promoted amongst the various ethnicities of Africa to prevent hate speech, xenophobia and ethnic conflicts in terms of intra-African interactions as most ethnic groups within the continent have a common ancestry or comes from a common stock but are only separated through migration or artificial colonial divisions. In doing so, Africans especially in Sub-Saharan will then understand they were a united people before the advent of colonialism. By this, the cultural and social desk within the African Union could use traditional African dance as a source of recreation, entertainment and education for the reintegration of the various ethnic groups found in different countries through migration or colonial artificial border. Doing this will help to provide a bottom-up approach to African integration than the top-down approach adopted by African political elites concerning African integration at the multilateral level such as the African Union General Assembly, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement desk amongst others.

Also, African dance and ensemble festivals must be celebrated across the borders of sub-Saharan Africa to demonstrate to border citizens that irrespective of custom barriers and entry restrictions between African

countries, the similarity and resemblance of their traditional ensembles and dance indicate they can co-operate in the area of peace building and trade. Once this is done, ethnic groups which are found across the respective colonial artificial borders of African countries could be used as vessels of peacemaking and peacebuilding in times international disputes amongst African countries. Ethnic groups found across respective African borders which are ethnic nations like the Mande, Mandinka, Ewe, Nguni, Wolof amongst others found in different African countries due to migration or colonial artificial borders can be used not only as vessels of peace building in African diplomacy but agents of inter border trade on the African continent especially sub-Sahara Africa.

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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