

TITLE: KIZINO DANCE-MUSICKING: NEGOTIATING ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG
THE BAKIGA IMMIGRANTS IN RUBIRIZI DISTRICT, WESTERN UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Bakiga immigrants in Rubirizi District, Western Uganda, utilise kizino dance-musicking—the interdependent performance of music and dance—to negotiate their ethnic identity. While ethnomusicologists have presented music and dance as sites where identity negotiation is played out, there is inadequate scholarly information on how Bakiga immigrants in Rubirizi District use kizino dance-musicking as a site for negotiating their ethnic identity. This study examined the ethnic identity of the Bakiga, the nature and context of kizino dance-musicking and how kizino dance-musicking is used to negotiate Kikiga ethnic identity in Rubirizi District. Through an ethnographic research design and a qualitative approach, I collected data with a triangulation of methods, including interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions, and archival research, to address this scholarly gap.

The study revealed that the intrinsic value of kizino dance-musicking enables the Bakiga immigrants in Rubirizi to reassert and reawaken their ethnic consciousness in a multi-ethnic environment. Through the performance of various genres of kizino dance-musicking, the Bakiga immigrants articulate and negotiate their ethnic identity, enabling them to maintain boundaries between themselves and other ethnic groups in this multicultural setting. The study contributes to debates on theoretical insights regarding the interdependent and dialogic nature of music and dance, continuity and change, and the negotiation of identity. This study bridges the gap in existing knowledge on how Bakiga immigrants have utilised artistic forms, such as kizino dance-musicking, to negotiate their ethnic identities in a foreign land.