

# **The implementation of intellectual property rights to enhance music business in Zimbabwe: Challenges and prospects**

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## **Abstract**

In the Zimbabwe music industry, the issue of copyright law implementation has been problematic with intellectual property rights violations plaguing the society and resulting in musicians failing to fully benefit financially from their creations. This study is an attempt to find out how musicians are benefiting from their intellectual property that is being used by various businesses including broadcasters. We argue that the problem of piracy has become an Achilles tendon for many artists despite the presence of a copyright law enforcement regime in the country. This article examines the nature and consequences of the copyright law in the country, as well as the way in which ZIMURA is implementing it to advance the cause of popular musicians. The article illustrates how the challenges faced by ZIMURA serve to impoverish Zimbabwean musicians in unheralded ways that leave a good number of artists poor and famous. This qualitative study uses participant observation, document analysis and key informant interviews with purposively selected informants to elucidate the implementation of intellectual property rights in Zimbabwe's music industry. The analysis is informed by the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach as well as Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. The findings show that in Zimbabwe music is taken as free property by most users who either sell pirated copies or access them for personal use without paying anything. From the study, it is clear that musicians are not getting a fair share of their intellectual property in the form of royalties. It is also notable that music that is appreciated more gets paid more royalties than music which is not popular with broadcasters and audiences.

**Keywords:** Copyright law, Intellectual property rights, Music business, Zimbabwe music industry