Integration of Traditional Games of the African Indigenous Communities in Contemporary Sports Management Programs as a Sports Tourism Strategy

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Definitions and Introduction

The word renaissance has been used variously by a number of authors to denote a form of re-birth or re-awakening. The arrival of the European settlers, missionaries and administrators or colonialists in Africa in the late 19th century led to imposition of western culture among Africans. New languages, foods, ways of clothing or simply stated, a whole package of European culture was imposed onto the Africans including games and sports. This hegemony of the western culture led to the unfortunate decline and marginalization of African cultural elements. Fortunately with time, Africans have realized the great dangers and tragedy related to loss of their cultural elements. They are therefore making deliberate efforts towards bringing back their cultural elements which have been receding due to neglect within the last one century. In other words, contrary to the colonialists negative attitude towards Africans’ traditional ways of life, and the consequent imposition of their own culture onto Africans, African have however realized the folly of abandoning their culture and have gradually incorporated various areas such as oral literature, music and dance, African traditional arts and crafts, religious practices and beliefs and so on into their contemporary lifestyles. This is thus the concept of African renaissance. One of the cultural elements that had receded and has gradually been brought back is the African traditional games. As variously described by a number of authors (Cheska 1982; Nteere 1982; Kenyatta 1992; Van de Merwe and Bressan 1995; Pufaa 1999; Van der Merwe 1999; Ituh 1999; Kithuka 2010; Wanderi 1999; 2006; 2011 & 2012), Africans had their own games which were very instrumental to their survival. These games which were also incorporated into some dances were a part and parcel of everybody’s life in the community. These are activities that were engaged in by indigenous people and hence whose history dates back to the time before the arrival of the European colonialists. Ever since the colonial incursion, these activities however, have significantly been relegated, receded and almost lost (Nteere 1982). The hegemony of the western
culture almost wiped out these activities. Fortunately, because they were intricately interwoven within the cultural fabric of the traditional communities, they have successfully resisted extinction despite all forces of suppression. Hence, like other traditional practices, the traditional games could also not suffer an instant demise. Since these games were a part of the African cultural heritage (together with all other indigenous Africans’ cultural elements); these games are gradually being brought back today in the concept of African renaissance. With continued inclusion of more African traditional games into people’s lives in Africa today, this has led to a greater understanding and acceptance of “Africanism” in sports by Africans themselves; a concept that had been lost in pursuit of western lifestyles.

The revival of African traditional games within the African continent has not come as an accident or as a coincidence. Rather, this has taken a concerted effort from a number of authors and researchers who have deliberately spent a lot of their time and resources in researching or documenting on these games to enhance the promotion and revival of these games. The successful revival of African traditional games and subsequent integration of the same into the contemporary sports arena creates an ambience of Africanism in the sports programs on the continent. This becomes a significant distinguishing feature of sports management in African as expounded upon in this paper.

As a way of introduction, there are several terms that need to be operationally defined. One of these terms is “traditional games” which until very recently has been synonymously used with the term “indigenous games” without any queries. These are games of African origin which were performed in Africa before the arrival of the European colonialists. However, some anthropologists today are refuting to the idea of describing cultural elements such as games as indigenous and hence, the use of the term “indigenous games”. According to this new school of thought, cultural elements such as music and dance, games and sports and so on can only be traditional but not indigenous. The contenders of this new anthropological perception have advanced an argument that, people, animals and plants which are biological beings can be indigenous but a people’s culture or any element of their culture can only be traditional but not indigenous (Orawo 2003). According to Orawo (2003), the use of the term “indigenous African games” is erroneous. This author qualifies his position by drawing extensive quotations from the Readers’ Digest Word Power Dictionary (2002) and indicates that, “… the word indigenous could only be used when the items (it refers to) have a biological or natural origins (such as plants and animals) as opposed to the traditional or cultural, (which) by implication (refers to), artificial or man-made things” (Orawo 2003, page 2). This is the perception adopted in this paper where we therefore talk about “traditional games of indigenous African communities”.

Another concept that requires giving its operational definition here is the “formalization of traditional games”. This is a process suggested in the on-going research on traditional games in Africa and their promotion. This process involves researching and recording of these activities, giving them a common format, followed by their introduction for contemporary use in schools, as well as at other social places where modern games are performed today. It is anticipated that, through their formalization, traditional games of Africa shall eventually grow to a point of attracting national, continental and even international recognition as has been the case with traditional games from other parts of the world and as exemplified at a later section in this chapter. This is an effort aimed at promotion of traditional African culture through sports.
As indicated above, traditional games and sports enthusiasts have so far spent a lot of their time and resources on research that has led to substantial documentation on these games. For instance, Nteere (1982) outlined a few traditional games and sports from the Kenyan indigenous communities. Nteere, as a pioneer scholar in this area, made a very passionate appeal for more time and resources be devoted on traditional games and sports of African indigenous communities before these games totally disappear as they have gradually been receding over the years, and are becoming rare and others have even become extinct. Many other researchers from different parts of the African continent have re-echoed Nteere’s words either by a sheer coincidence or otherwise. For instance, in 1999, recommendations of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sports (MINEPS III) held in Punta del Este (Uruguay) was a big boost to the promotion of traditional games of the world. The MINEPS III conference participants recommended the promotion and preservation of traditional games in all countries of the world. This conference, held under the sponsorship of UNESCO, urged member states to resuscitate traditional games and sports within their regions and participate in the World Festival of Traditional Sports. As per the recommendations of that meeting, an Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sports (CIGEPS) was mandated to seek global support and come up with a worldwide list of indigenous games and sports. CIGEPS was also required to...

“... invite the Director General of UNESCO, with cooperation of existing and future regional and national bodies and networks, as well as specialists on the subject, to draw up a world traditional games policy, leading eventually to an international charter on traditional games and sports, to be followed by mid-term and long-term plans of action” (ICHPER-SD Journal, Vol. XXXVI, No. 3, Spring 2000, p. 17).

Unfortunately this intergovernmental committee has apparently failed to accomplish the aforementioned role in the promotion of traditional games and sports as mandated by MINEPS III. This continued omission and procrastination in accomplishing this vital task as outlined above has gradually led to a slow demise of these games. Certainly, once these games are lost, this will inevitably create a void that they will never be filled up again. Thus, all synergies must now and urgently be put together towards preservation and promotion of traditional games of the world. In this regard, special attention must be directed to the developing countries whose lack of resources renders their traditional games extremely vulnerable to the hegemonic effect of games and sports from the financially more endowed regions of the world.

Finally, it is important to mention that the resuscitation of traditional games as an element of the African cultural heritage may create an avenue for these games to be a means of tourism attraction. For example, the Traditional Highland Games of Scotland have been properly developed in Scotland, Canada and Australia as a notable means of income generation through tourism. The same can be achieved in Africa as expounded upon in this paper.

\textbf{Relationship between Peoples' Culture and Their Games}

The concept of “culture” relates to the predispositions that determine behavior of a person or a group of people (Luschen, in Loy et al. 1981). According to Luschen, anthropologists however, when talking about “culture” go a step further and hold a broader view of culture to include and not limited to, results
of human behavior. By applying this definition, scholars are thus able to show the relationship between a people’s culture and their games where games are even accompanied by specific tools or equipment for execution (Luschen, in Loy et al 1981).

Within the indigenous African traditional culture, games were collectively pro-life and were functionally inclined towards communal survival through subtle enhancement of skills acquisition for all (Loy et al. 1981; Kenyatta 1992; Wanderi 2011). In other words, at the indigenous African communities, games for children and youth on the one hand enhanced the acquisition and practice of skills required for the gradual growth to adult life. On the other hand, for young adult men, games enhanced the very much needed warfare and work related skills for the defense of the community and provision of food for all respectively. Additionally, games were also a vital means of recreation for all. In other words, games and community lifestyles were intricately interwoven. For instance, the Kikuyu of Kenya used a racing exercise for boys and a walk for girls (matuumo) to identify the male leader of an age group (Kenyatta 1992; Wanderi 2001). Boys who were to undergo circumcision, as a group, covered a long distance on foot and raced towards the sacred fig (mùgumo) tree. Upon reaching the tree, each boy threw a wooden spear over it. Similarly, their female counterparts or the girls competed in a walk while boys raced. The overall winners in the walk among the girls and in the race among the boys became the age group leaders. Members of the Ibo community of Nigeria are documented to have used wrestling games to determine the village hero of an age-group (Achebe 1977). In his novel, “Things Fall Apart”, Chinua Achebe narrates the wrestling contest between two village heroes, namely, Okwonkwo and Amalinze “the cat”. In so doing, he depicts the high esteem in which wrestling was regarded in the indigenous African Ibo community where strength was upheld in high regard. Chinua explicitly justifies the wrestling competitions among Ibo men to as a demonstration of strength and a qualification test for leadership. Warriors among the Kikuyu indigenous community vigorously participated in the kibaata and ngurù dances as forums for display of their body fitness. According to Kenyatta (1992) warriors within the Kikuyu community were well trained both physically and psychologically and were expected to remain in shape all the time in order to confidently face any adverse eventualities. With a view to attaining the required fitness, “... (these warriors) did their physical exercises which kept them fit for defense or attack ... Different age-groups competed ... in dexterity in throwing spears and fencing as well as high and long jumps” (Kenyatta 1992, p.208).

According to a number of authorities on sports anthropology, namely, Nixon and Jewett (1974), Adams (1991), Wanderi (2001 & 2011) amongst many others, games are fundamental cultural elements amongst all contemporary and past human communities of the world, they (games) are one of the oldest arts in the history of mankind. In other words, the origin and significance of games as a cultural element in the human communities date back to time immemorial and are as old as the human history itself. Additionally, a consensus exists amongst these authors to the fact that, man’s survival throughout the evolutionary history has immensely been facilitated by his physical fitness that has always been enhanced through physical exercise and games. Thus, the ancient human communities enjoyed an inevitable physical fitness for their
survival (Nixon and Jewett 1974; Adams, 1991; Wanderi 2001 & 2011; Kithuka 2010). Unfortunately, the advent of the modern technology and all the comfort that comes along with it, has led to the introduction of machines to replace the human labour. This has thus freed the communities from all their previously energy consuming activities. Courtesy of the plentiful food now available of various kinds including junks, as well as the energy conservation through the adoption of modern technology, these have led to the inevitable challenges of hypokinetic conditions with the usual package of debilitating infirmities that come with sedentary lifestyles; and these have become a characteristic feature of the human society in the 21st Century. As a solution, physical activity and games are increasingly being encouraged variously within the communities; at the schools, colleges, work place and the residential areas. Consequently, physical activities or games are getting back to their earlier social significance as the bona fide means to good health and wellbeing for human survival (Wanderi 2012).

Additionally, besides being a means to good health and physical well being, the human society all over the world today views games as a means to material gains. Various references on sports sociology clearly point out at sports as a means of income generation (Jarvie 2005). Today more than ever before, full scale commercialism has become the order of the day within the sports institution, while mass media and political systems have become fully integrated into sports (Jarvie 2005). Coakley (1994) justifies this phenomenon citing the functionalist theory which indicates that, sports satisfy the needs of the social systems and the institutions within them such as the political institution, mass media, educational institution, family, financial institution among others. Coakley goes further and says that, functionalists justify the continued existence of sports in the society due to its immense contribution "... to the personal growth and the preservation of the social order at all levels of social organisation" (Coakley 1994, p. 29). In deed, in line with the above analyses, functionalists say that, sports as a vital socio-cultural institution provides with models for setting goals and achieving those goals within the society through many ways, such as contributing to good health and fitness in the society and hence enhancing socio-economic growth. A conclusion drawn along this line of discussion contends that, nothing can ever suppress sports from the society because it is highly instrumental and intricately interwoven into peoples' ways of life.

Promotion of Traditional Games of Africa as a Tourism Attraction

Poverty eradication is cited as one of the key targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as the Kenya Vision 2030 (http://www.nesc.go.ke/News&Events/KenyaVision2030Intro.htm). If this target is to be realized, universities and various organizations must work strategically in partnerships and “act outside the box”. They must creatively identify every option that can be exploited to generate employment, provide income and contribute towards improved socio-economic development. In line with this aspiration, the African Sport Management Association (A.S.M.A.) may very ably present the African universities with a potent means to socio-economic development through promotion and commercialization of traditional games of Africa by borrowing a leaf from Traditional Highland Games of Scotland. Africa may adopt the methods and strategies followed in the execution of the Traditional Highlands Games of Scotland which have become a significant spectacle that attracts tourism in almost a similar way as the Olympic Games (Kenntner 1999). A number of activities are packaged in the

Kenya Vision 2030 is a national development blue print through which the Government of Kenya (GoK) envisions the transformation of the country into a middle level economy by the year 2030 through 3 key pillars or targets, namely, political, social and economic growth.
traditional Highland games of Scotland which attract attention from all over the world as a great tourism endeavor. The same can be replicated elsewhere including on the African continent as advocated in 1999 by the sports anthropologist, Professor Georg Kenntner, at the Institute of Sports and Sports Science, University of Karlsruhe (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology), Germany. Kenntner (1999) gave a detailed exposition of the traditional games from various parts of the world including the Munich games as well as the Traditional Highland Games of Scotland under the title, ‘‘Sports and Culture’’, and showed their immense contribution as tourist attractions (Kenntner 1999); a phenomenon which can be replicated in Africa.

The history of the Traditional Highland Games of Scotland dates back to 2000 BC (MacDonald, 1932, in Kenntner 1999) yet they provide with an example of some of the best developed traditional games in the world that have today become a great tourist attraction. These games became formalized by the nineteenth century when they were evidently found to have diffused with the immigrants to a number of different parts of the world. The first Highland Games in the USA are traced in New York way back in 1836. In 1866, the Caledonian Club of San Francisco held its first Games. Today, there are over 200 annual Highland Games of Scotland gatherings across the world including New Zealand and Australia (Hutchinson, 1989, in Kenntner 1999; http://www.scotland.org/culture/sport/highland-games/ 2012). These very enormously proliferated games include heavy events such as putting the stone, throwing a weight, tossing a caber, as well as numerous musical activities such as dancing and piping, among others. One example of these, namely, throwing a weight over a bar is presented here as an illustration. A heavy weight of about twenty five kilograms is thrown over a bar as shown in the figure below. To enhance the grip, a ring or a chain is attached to this object so that it could easily be thrown over bar which resembles that of a high jump raised between two posts. Each contestant is given three attempts in case of an unsuccessful first and second throws. In order to execute the activity, the contestant takes a stance under the bar, holding the weight, then swings it over his head to fly it over the bar. Normally, it is a very difficult task to clear the three meters high bar in this game. As in any other challenging competitions, this one too seems simple when performed by an expert. However, given a chance to try, most people find difficulties throwing the weight over their heads leave alone over the three meters high bar. Moreover, a poorly executed throw can easily lead to serious injuries to either the thrower himself or to the spectators.

*Throwing a weight over a bar (Source: Kenntner 1999)*

Kenntner (1999) cited a case of a champion in the 1972-1974 Scottish Games by the name Charlie
Allan who very graphically compared this event to a case of a grown up man throwing a seven year old child over a double decker bus (Kenntner, 1999). Since 1947, when the Scottish Games Association was inaugurated, the Highland Games concept has grown steadily has also spread to other parts of the world and especially in Canada and Australia. Today, the Scottish Highland Games Association is the governing body of Traditional Games in Scotland. This association represents over 60 Highland games in Scotland with several associate members overseas (http://www.shga.co.uk).

**Institutionalized Traditional Games: The African Perspective**

Traditional games have been variously described as acceptable and inevitable cultural elements that have been transmitted from one generation to the other (Ituh 1999; Wanderi 2011). Ituh summarizes the characteristics of traditional games and sports as follows.

“They possess all characteristics (and benefits) of modern games but with modifications. The rules of traditional games are simple and informal, the skills are less advanced; the specifications for facilities and equipment are not standardized; the number of players for each game may vary; and the system(s) of scoring and officiating are not rigid. However, the reasons for participating in traditional games are similar to those for modern games. They help participants to develop physical fitness; (and also) develop skills for daily activities” (Ituh, 1999, p. 59).

It is because of the aforementioned benefits and acceptable characteristics of traditional games of Africa that different countries have made specific efforts towards their promotion. For instance, in Nigeria, a traditional game referred to as *oyo game* has been developed to a modern, national game status (Ituh 1999) where new rules have been introduced to it and it has become fairly institutionalized. Likewise, Ethiopians have all along preserved a very popular traditional game referred to as *gana*. This is a fully institutionalized game that has been fully formalized. Ethiopia is one of the very few countries in Africa where Annual Traditional Games National Festivals are held. These have a huge potential for sport tourism if well marketed abroad.

South Africa comes in as a model in the formalization of traditional games. The government through the South African Sports Commission (SASC) in partnership with a number of universities has conspicuously promoted the traditional games to such an enviable level. The universities included in this grand initiative were the University of The North (now University of Limpopo – Turfloop Campus), the University of Venda, the University of North West (now the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University, the Vista University – Mamelodi (now the Mamelodi Campus of the University of Pretoria), the UNISA, the University of the North – Qwaqwa Campus (now Qwaqwa Campus of the University of the Free State), the University of Zululand, the University of Transkei (now Walter Sisulu University) and the University of Fort Hare. This effort involved, inter alia, collection of some 23 indigenous games from the different regions of South Africa. In 2001, a booklet on South African traditional games was published which carried 7 of the 23 games.
Formalization of Traditional Games: The Kenyan Case

Ever since the first call for action towards preservation and promotion of traditional games of Kenya by Nteere in 1982, a series of related activities have taken place in Kenya within a span of 30 years that have led to a significant resuscitation of traditional games. However, earlier on before Nteere wrote his 1982 thesis, traditional games had been incorporated into the teaching units at Kenyatta University's then Department of Physical Education. May be, this might have been the pioneer academic effort in this area, courtesy of Mr. J.J. Nyaggah; a long serving Head of that department and a traditional games enthusiast. Mr Nyaggah introduced traditional games courses of study at Kenyatta University in late 1970s and went on record to have given the criteria for assessing a viable game as follows;

i. It must be easy to learn and teach

ii. It must require readily available equipment/facilities or a very minimal of them.

iii. It must lead to inculcation of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills amongst the participants.
Undergraduate Students at Kenyatta University Practising the Bow and Arrow Traditional Game of the Indigenous Kenyan Communities

To date, numerous activities spearheaded by researchers at Kenyatta University, have been witnessed. The promotion of traditional games brings into the fore the following critical phenomena, namely, the role of traditional games to students and community as explained by Kithuka (2010) as follows.

i. Adds to the available variety of games and sports activities to be participated in

ii. Pushes/encourages students to research on traditional games for modification into new games i.e. a cultural appraisal.

iii. Enables the teacher to have a choice of what to teach i.e. adds to the choice available making it possible to teach many activities especially the ones requiring minimum or no equipment at all. This wide variety of games enables the entire community which is comprised of people of diverse preferences to have a number of games from which each member could readily choose. Obviously this will lead to a diversified recreational engagement in the community.

Among the most significant achievements was a 2005 sponsorship to the lead author of this paper by the Organization of Social Scientists of Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) for a research on traditional games of the people of coastal region of Kenya. Through this research project, over 30 indigenous games, dances and other physical activities of the coastal communities of Kenya were documented, some of which were introduced at both the undergraduate and post graduate programmes at Kenyatta University (Kenya). Related to this, a text book based on the aforementioned research was published in 2011 entitled, "The Traditional Games and Sports of the People of the Coastal Province of Kenya: A Cultural and Educational Appraisal". Additionally, a sponsorship was obtained in 2007 for documentation of the traditional games of the Maasai community from a German based organization, KAAD (Katholischer Akademischer Auslaender-Dienst) in a research project that aims at developing an audio-visual
documentation of Maasai traditional games for possible formalization. This has led to a research based
documentation of Maasai games in Kenya.

Another milestone development in the promotion of traditional games in Kenya was the founding of
the Kenya Federation of Traditional Games and Sports (KFTGS). The task of founding of KFTGS was
inspired by OSSREA’s sponsorship of the research project on traditional games of the coastal region
of Kenya. As an over-shoot of that research project, physical educators and persons knowledgeable on
traditional games were invited by the lead author of this paper to a series of meetings at the Department
of Physical and

A Maasai Youth Demonstrating the Traditional Arm Strengthening Drills for Better Spear Throws
While Elders and Children Watch On. (Documentation Courtesy of KAAD)

Health Education. They deliberated on a constitution that led to the founding of the Kenya Federation
of Traditional Games and Sports (KFTGS). KFTGS is head quartered at Kenyatta University; in 2011, it
was affiliated to the Kenya National Sports Council (KNSC), the umbrella organization in charge of
sports in Kenya; and eventually, it became incorporated as a legal association in 2012. The formation of
the Kenya Federation of Traditional Games and Sports (KFTGS) is expected to turnaround the sports
arena in Kenya as per its objectives as follows:

i. To promote and popularize traditional games and sports of the indigenous Kenyan communities
   through participation, research and publications.

ii. To encourage development and maintenance of positive attitudes amongst Kenyans towards their
    traditional games for cultural perpetuation.

iii. To diversify available leisure and recreational activities for a better quality of life through
    participation in local traditional games.
iv. To provide equal opportunities for participation by all in traditional games and sports irrespective of gender, age, or social economic status.

v. To solicit funds from both internal and external donors for promotion of traditional games and sports of Kenya.

vi. To offer coordination in matters pertaining to the traditional games and sports of Kenya as an autonomous Federation.

vii. To develop traditional games and sports in Kenya and establish a set of formal rules for them and act as sole legislative authority on all established and disputed matters on these rules.

viii. To ensure the promotion of traditional games and sports of Kenya by encouraging formation of branches at provisional, institutional and clubs levels and work towards the perfection of this spirit.

ix. To establish co-operation with other recognized sports organizations within and outside Kenya that have interest in traditional games and sports.

x. To link up with enthusiasts in traditional games from other countries of Africa with a view to establishing similar chapters in their countries for the same objectives.

Another factor that contributed to the promotion of traditional games in Kenya was a sponsorship to the Lead author by the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM-UNESCO) that enabled him to visit purposively selected 7 Teachers' Training Colleges throughout the country in 2011 and inculcated the knowledge and skills on the receding traditional games amongst the trainees. This induction which was dubbed, "The 2011 First National Workshops on the Promotion of Traditional Games of Kenya", included a 3 to 4 hours session of theory and practice on traditional games and sports at the colleges visited. A significant point of strength in this project was that, the youths who participated in the workshops were teacher-trainees from all parts of the country. Therefore, upon completion of their training, and joining of the teaching force, they were be expected to introduce the concepts and skills acquired during the workshops at their schools and hence contribute towards perpetuation of traditional games of Kenya through time and space. Additionally, with the introduction of the Kenya Federation of Traditional Games and Sports (KFTGS), these trainees should with time, see the need to enroll as members and promote the vision, mission and objectives of KFTGS.

A further contribution to the growth and development of traditional games in Kenya has been occasioned by the outstanding academic involvement in traditional games by both undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as university professors especially at Kenyatta University. For instance, in addition to a steadily rising number of undergraduates who enrolled for the traditional games course of study since 2007 at Kenyatta University, two postgraduate students who are co-authors of this paper, have also opted to specialize in this area. As a result, prolific quality research-based documentation on traditional games of Kenya has so far been produced and numerous papers presented in different parts of the world including
Canada, China, Venezuela, Britain, South Africa, Uganda and Kenya. Thus, impressive publications in refereed journals and book chapters have also become evident.

**Traditional Games as a Tourist Attraction**

Granted the aforementioned background, it is therefore clear that there is adequate specialisation and content on the ground in Kenya to strive for entrepreneurial activities through traditional games forums. KFTGS, Kenya National Sports Council (KNSC) as well as the African Sport Management Association (A.S.M.A.) should work together to make this possibility a reality.

It should however be remembered that, there exists some potentially discouraging, negative attitude towards traditional games of Africa in general. This unfortunate scenario has a colonial origin as it emanated from Europeans colonialists' hegemony in Africa under the guise of missionaries, settlers and administrators. Upon their arrival, the western colonial masters introduced modern games and dismissed indigenous communities' sports and games as childish and worthless. Guttmann in 1993 termed this hegemonic attitude as a display of cultural imperialism which todate has apparently been adopted by Africans themselves. This is an unfortunate mind set that the indigenous communities in Africa need to change and champion their own course to promote their own games for their own socio-economic good. Borrowing a leaf from the Highlang Games of Scotland, Africans should join hands throughout the continent and strive to innovatively come up with entrepreneurial activities centred around their own traditional games. In order to achieve this, they should not be disoriented by any imperialistic destructors as highlighted in the following discourse.

Ironically, several authors and agents have apparently justified ... imperialists' notion of cultural hegemony through sports, arguing that, the African indigenous games “... are ethnically specific and too local for political elites who see modern sports as an instrument to unify a multinational (global) state” (Guttmann 1993, p.134). However, Heinemann (1993) and Wanderi (2006) strongly caution against this argument saying that continued suppression of Africans' varied indigenous games may ultimately lead to a cultural vacuum and lack of identity. According to Klaus Heinemann (1993), since indigenous games may not be developed into Olympic status over night, efforts should be made to develop them as tourists' attractions which will help in perpetuating them and saving them from extinction (Wanderi 2009, p. 18)

**Challenges and Possible Solutions**

There are pertinent issues with regard to the revival of traditional games in Africa. One of them is the threat of their extinction. This is due to the fact that, no written records of traditional games was in existence for a long period of time and yet many have still not been written down for documentation as a means of preservation. Given that they are not performed anymore in many instances, they thus stand a greater danger of being marginalized into total oblivion with time. There is thus a concern on how to promote them in order to save them from total disappearance as discussed in this paper. The sooner the process of their systematic promotion takes off, the better it will be for procrastination will lead to a greater possibility of their demise.

The second limitation relates to the negative attitude towards traditional games both among the physical
education, sports and aligned professionals as well as among the policy makers (Wanderi 2006). Thus the few persons who venture into traditional games as their area of specialization are faced with stiff handles which they have to endure both at institutional and state levels. For instance, impediments in getting research clearance or even challenges in having research papers on traditional games accepted for personal academic appraisals have been reported. Likewise, in situations where government ministries are operating on scant budgets, any efforts towards perpetuating traditional games is likely to fail to receive financial support. Nevertheless, despite this grim background, finances must be solicited for research, documentation and organization of competitions, workshops and seminars in order to popularize traditional games. Ways of tackling the negative attitudes must be identified to ensure they gain the much needed popularity and support.

The need for immediate documentation of traditional games of Kenya and the challenges arising from procrastination in doing this cannot be better illustrated than in the following narrative about the Koreans’ teaching of the cone-spinning game that existed among a number of indigenous communities in Kenya and throughout Africa. This game is known by a number of local names such as, pia (Taita), mbira (Kamba), and mbirũ (Gikũyũ). Since this game had apparently receded and was not recorded, most of the persons under the age of 30 years from these communities do not know it. This unfortunate vacuum has served as an ideal ground for Koreans to “introduce” this game as being Korean hence bringing an apparent conflict which calls for urgent academic discourse. The Korean version is referred to as paeng-i-chi-gi (where the peg top and the whip are referred to as paeng-i and paeng-i-chae respectively). The tragedy in this will be that future Kenyan generations are likely to only get to know this game by its Korean name (paeng-i-chi-gi). They are likely to only get access to documented versions of this game from the internet and a few printed materials as presented by the Koreans. Thus, greater attention needs to be paid to this matter to clarify the apparent possible cultural misconception; failure to which future generations in Kenya will never get adequate information to let them know that Africans (and Kenyans) too had this game. The situation needs urgent attention in order to clarify the question as to whether a game like cone spinning in Kenya is of a Korean or an African origin. Its origin will be better understood once adequate attention is provided through scientific research.
Action Plan: The Kenyan Case

The following are some suggestions on the traditional games implementation strategy in Kenya serving as an example for the rest of Africa that are yet to commence.

a) National sports organizations which are registered under KNSC are encouraged to join in promoting traditional games in Kenya such as during the opening and closing ceremonies of their sports events as an in-built, systematic contribution to Kenya’s cultural heritage.

b) Every country in Africa should initiate a National Traditional Games Festival with the support of the government, Non-Governmental Organizations and other stakeholders. The newly registered Kenya Federation of Traditional Games and Sports (KFTGS) must take up the lead in this continental endeavor.

c) African countries ought to be encouraged to participate in the World Traditional Games Festivals which should also be vigorously marketed.

d) The existing institutionalized traditional games should be supported. Examples of these are the bull fighting in Kakamega County in Kenya (http://www.kenyasafari-direct.com/activity/bull-fighting-events-in-kakamega) and traditional games in Lamu which take place annually as a part of the famous Lamu Cultural Activities (http://www.magicalkenya.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=176&Itemid=193 2012; Wanderi 2011).
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