

What do Kenyan artists get for their skill? Reforming compensation under copyright

Abstract:

This article responds to the question asked by Isidore Okpewho in 1992: ‘What do they (artists) get for their sweat?’ The article argues that Okpewho’s question has not been adequately addressed by all research participants or in the literature. The argument commences by summarizing the debate between those who hold ‘compensation’ and ‘no-compensation’ positions, as well as the justifications for each position. It then proceeds to a discussion of research methodologies and the impact these have on artists, the commodification of art, legislative and regulatory safeguards and the ethical issues surrounding fieldwork. It concludes by proposing policy and legal reforms that can be employed to financially benefit artists.