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Abstract

Music is an integral part of life in any given society and as such has the ability and the power of molding the character of human beings. Its relevance in curbing social vices in the society cannot be overemphasized since being corrupt is more of behavioral pattern of life of individuals in the society. The issue of corruption is multifaceted and as such requires multidisciplinary approach in its suppression, control and eradication. Therefore, this paper examines the meaning, forms, causes and effects of corruption in the society and the reformative role of music in curbing corruption in the society. Recommendations are made on the role of music in curbing corrupt practices in the society.

Keywords: Music, Corruption, Nigerian Society.

Introduction

Music is an integral part of life in any given society. It plays significant roles in the daily activities of people in the society. It occupies a vital place in the life of Africans in general and Nigerians in particular. It is the bedrock of culture and education. Great Philosophers at various epochs in human history have defined music in several ways. For instance, Aristotle believed that music has the power and the ability of molding human character; Aristoxenus also posited that music is emotional and it fulfills a functioning role for which hearing and the intellect of the listener are essential; Confucius believed that music and Government are capable of reflecting one another and that only superior man who can understand music is equipped to govern. He stresses further that music reveals character through the six emotions it can portray: sorrow, satisfaction, joy, anger, piety and love. Plato viewed music as a department of ethics which has to do with character of a man and the music he represents.

Musical practices occur in every human society at one time or the other as evident in the daily activities in the society. Music as an integral part of life was used in such day-to-day activities as a means of disseminating information of societal interest and arousing emotion; for important occasional events like initiation, rituals and coronation. In many ways, traditional African music is rich in historical and philosophical issues, bringing about communal binding, social vices, warning erring members of the society, praising people to whom honour is due, recalling of the achievements of the leaders as well as reinforcing legitimacy of present ones (Omojola, 1994). From the foregoing therefore, the reformatory role of music in the society cannot be over emphasized.

The Concept of Corruption

Corruption has become a household name in every sector of the country.

Perhaps this is the reason why the concept of corruption have been defined and examined in various ways. According to Nzeribe (2017) corruption means to break away, depart from morality, ethics and virtues. It is therefore normal and acceptable to define a corrupt entity or individual as one that lacks morale, principle, value, goodness, decency, probity, accountability, honesty and integrity. It then follows that a corrupt minded person, is that person that deviates from societal norms and values, those unwritten codes, ethics, conventions, traditions, habits that make a decent and civilized society. Furthermore, Section 1, paragraph 3 of the National Policy on Education (4th Edition) 2004, stated clearly that the five main goals of Nigeria, which have been endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education, are the building of :

- (a.) a free and democratic society;
- (b.) a just and egalitarian society;
- (c.) a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- (d.) a great and dynamic society;
- (e.) a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens.

As good as these goals are, one cannot say specifically yet that Nigeria is a free and democratic society or a just and egalitarian society, as there are still corrupt practices at various sectors in the country thereby making it more difficult for the citizens to believe in the goals stated in the National Policy. Such corrupt practices include all forms of electoral malpractices like snatching of ballot boxes, manipulation of results, vote-buying, declaration and swearing-in of candidates who did not win election; embezzlement and fraud, e.t.c. It is unfortunate that our leaders who are expected to be the makers and the keepers of the laws of the land are seen as breakers of the same most of the time. The electorates themselves are not exempted in the breaking of the laws of the land. The pages of the Nigerian News Papers are filled with

countless number of corrupt practices of people on daily basis.

Most times, it is very difficult for the followers to follow leaders wholeheartedly when such leaders are not living by what they profess to be. However, followers themselves are also to be blamed for imbibing the corrupt lifestyle of their leaders since two wrongs can never make a right. If the leaders are not showing good examples for the followers to emulate, the followers themselves must ensure that they uphold equity, fairness and selfless service whenever they also have the opportunity of leading people in the society. Though this may be very difficult to achieve in a country where corruption has become a household name, however, a lifestyle of integrity and transparency will go a long way in transforming the society.

Solomon (2005) corroborates that when members of a society conform to the norms and values of that society in pursuing the cultural goals (success, wealth and power) through institutionalized means (educational qualifications, talents, hard work, ambition, drive and determination); the society develops rapidly for the benefits of all. These undoubtedly will lead to progress, peace and sustenance of the social order in the society, but when there is lawlessness, people in that society will acquire wealth through corruption, murder, embezzlement and many other vices inimical to human society.

Forms of Corruption

Corruption cuts across every aspect of human endeavours. It includes any act that has to do with the following corrupt practices in the society like embezzlement, extortion, nepotism, fraud, diversion of resources, bribery, to mention but a few. Aluko (2009) also stresses further that corruption can be seen in many forms or dimensions and these include political corruption, bureaucratic corruption, electoral corruption, bribery, fraud, embezzlement, extortion, favoritism, and nepotism.

However, in the context of this paper, forms of corruption are discussed and classified under the following sub-headings:

(a.) Corruption in academics: All forms of examination malpractices either by students or academic and non-academic staff. Collection of illegal fees from the students on handouts, textbooks, project supervision (writing and binding); involvement in plagiarism, sexual harassment of the students, payment of authorized fees by proxy, fraud and embezzlement of money meant for execution of projects, collection of money for publication of research/journals without doing so and without refunding the money, e.t.c.

(b.) Corruption in the Power Sector: Collection of illegal money from defaulters by officials of Power Sector as a threat to disconnecting the power supply if they refused to bribe them, hike in the price of Prepaid Meters, non-remittance of the money to the purse of the government and refusal to release the meters paid for by the users, e.t.c

(c.) Corruption in Politics: All forms of electoral malpractices which include rigging of election results, swearing-in of candidates who did not have majority votes, false declaration of winners, e.t.c. All forms of embezzlement of public funds, tribalism, favoritism, fraud, e.t.c.

(d.) Corruption in Health Sector: Hoarding and stealing of drugs meant for the patients, stealing of hospital equipment, embezzlement of money allocated for the staff welfare and development, procurement of sub-standard equipment for use in the hospital, e.t.c

(e.) Due-Process Camouflage: Awarding of projects at exuberant prices without considering the competence of the contractors because of the required percentage that will go to the accounts of those who award the contracts of such projects at federal, State and local government levels. The effect of this corrupt practice is evident in abandoned

projects located in various parts of the country and commissioning of sub-standard projects.

Causes of Corruption

The causes of corruption are multifaceted and this is one of the reasons why various scholars have highlighted the causes in various ways since being corrupt is more of a behavioral pattern than accidental occurrence. For instance, Fayomi, 2003 identified the causes of corruption in the society as neglect of our noble cultural heritage, abuse of religion, get-rich-quick syndrome, the doctrine of the spoils of office, and propensity for indolence and sensuality. Apart from the causes mentioned above, other causes of corruption in the Nigerian society include:

(a.) **Marginalisation:** Several individuals are involved in all forms of corrupt practices because they felt that they are being marginalized. So, any little opportunity they have to come into position of authority is a good avenue for them to collect their own share of the national cake meant for all to share. They will acquire as much as they can since they don't know when such opportunities will come their way again.

(b.) **Poverty Mentality:** Poverty mentality as a life style is also one of the major reasons why people are involved in corrupt practices in the society. Since such people have never lived in a society where wealth flows naturally into the hands of individuals, they tend to see being in control of the nation's wealth/resources as an avenue to acquire all that they have been deprived of since a long time ago.

(c.) **Lack of Integrity and Self-control:** Most of the personalities who are involved in various corrupt practices in the society are doing so because they lack integrity and as such cannot control their cravings for money. To them, they are less concerned about the consequences that may follow this pattern of behaviour when they are caught. After all, several people caught in such practices in time past escaped being

charged to court and even the only few people charged to court gained their freedom and returned home to feast on the money they embezzled.

Effects of Corruption in the Society

Prevalence of corruption in the society can lead to the following when not curbed on time:

- It can tarnish the good image of any country, especially, when such a nation or country is tagged "the corrupt nation or corrupt society" among other nations in the world. Every citizen of such country will be regarded as corrupt individuals among the committee of nations and as such can prevent individuals from being trusted with the resources of such nations.
- Persistent corrupt practices have the ability of retarding the growth and development of the economy of such nation. No nation will want to transact business with people who lack financial integrity.
- It can also lead to insecurity of the nation's resources. It can lead to high rate of unemployment, lawlessness, protests, and robbery activities, among other things.

Fagun (1992) notes that corruption seems to have eaten deep into the moral fibre of our society. It has washed away our moral life, stunted our spiritual growth and is now spelling doom for our national development like a cancer of the heart. Oputa(1974) had earlier observed that in present day Nigeria (as at then), "there is more stealing than ever before, more armed robberies, more arson and destruction of public and private property, more white-collar crimes like forgery and altering crimes of violence are now on the increase and their upward trend is ominously disturbing". In recent times, Fayomi (2003) lamented that corruption constitutes the greatest waste of human and national resources in any society. He stressed further that the costs can be enormous and that it is

widely believed that corruption had definitely led to irrational or inefficient allocation of scarce resources in our society.

Furthermore, the former president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as cited in Solomon, L.P (2005) while writing on the evil effect of corruption noted that “with corruption, there can be no sustainable development or political stability. He stresses further that by breeding and feeding on inefficiency, corruption invariably strangles the system of social organization. To him, corruption is literally anti-theses of development”.

In order to find solution to the menace of corruption in the Nigerian society, organizations and agencies of government like Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), were set up to checkmate corruption-related issues in Nigeria. It is however disheartening to note that corruption is still very high in Nigerian society today inspite of the establishment of the organizations and agencies mentioned earlier. It is a known fact that corruption may not be totally eradicated in any given society but it can be controlled, managed and reduced drastically. The reformatory role of music education in curbing corruption in the Nigerian society then becomes imperative since being corrupt is more of behavioral lifestyle than accidental occurrence.

Reformatory Role of Music in the Society

Aristotle pointed out in his *Politics* how music influenced the will of human beings through the principle of imitation. He observes that:

music directly imitates the passions or states of the soul (gentleness, anger, courage, temperance, and their opposites) and other qualities,

hence, when one listens to music that imitates a certain passion, he becomes imbued with the same passion, and if over a long time he habitually listens to the kind of music that arouses ignoble passions, his whole character will be shaped to an ignoble form” (Grout,1973, p.7).

In other words, music can influence the character of individuals positively or negatively, depending on choice of music and for how long one listens to such music. Any music that teaches good morals, patriotism, solidarity, peace, e.t.c, can be classified as the right kind of music which has the capacity of affecting the character of human beings positively. This kind of music is encouraged and it is the thrust of this paper.

People listen to music for several reasons at one time or the other. The choice of music one listens to may be as a result of a particular desire, occasion or occurrence. For instance, the Greeks (in their doctrine of ethos) believed that music affects individuals’ character and character could be affected in different ways by different kinds of music. According to this belief, if one desires to produce patriotism in an individual, the type of music to be played must be patriotic and stimulating music. Allan (1964), had earlier stated the functions that music performs in the society to include: emotional expression, aesthetic enjoyment, entertainment, communication, symbolic representation (as found in the text songs, cultural meaning of the sounds, and deep symbolism related to human experience), physical response (the use of music for dancing to accompany physical activities), *enforcement of conformity to social norms (the use of music in providing instruction and warnings)*, validation of social institutions and religious rituals (the use of music for religious services and State occasions), contribution to the continuity and stability of culture, and *contribution to*

the integration of society (music is often used to draw people together)”.

Writing on the role of music in the society, Adesokan (2002) notes that the functions of music include the perpetuation of the societal group and its solidarity to meet the needs and satisfaction of individuals, social responsibility, moral values and skills; as an instrument of unity in binding members of the society together, used in the community as a way of mobilizing people for communal labour, as a means of communicating to people during political transition on the radio, as an effective means of communication in the educational system, a tool for bringing positive change in the moral activities of children in schools and Colleges. The functions and the roles of music highlighted above attest to the importance of music in the daily activities of people in any given society. For instance, in traditional African society, especially among the Yoruba of South-western Nigeria, it was a common practice to educate the society on the norms and values with which such society stands by. This is done by inculcating in individuals, the sense of patriotism, honesty, discipline, diligence, loyalty and respect for the dignity of labour.

The African society not only frowns at laziness but also has zero tolerance for impeccable behaviors like stealing, cheating, embezzlement, corruption, to mention but a few. Most times, the propagation of this core value of the society are usually propagated and promoted through folk tales/folklores, poem and *Ki'ni ng'o f'ole se l'aye ti mo wa?*

Ki'ni ng'o f'ole se l'aye ti mo wa? – 2x
L'aye ti mo wa kaka ki n'ja'le,
Kaka ki n'ja'le ma kuku d'eru;
Ki'ni ng'o f'ole se l'aye ti mo wa?

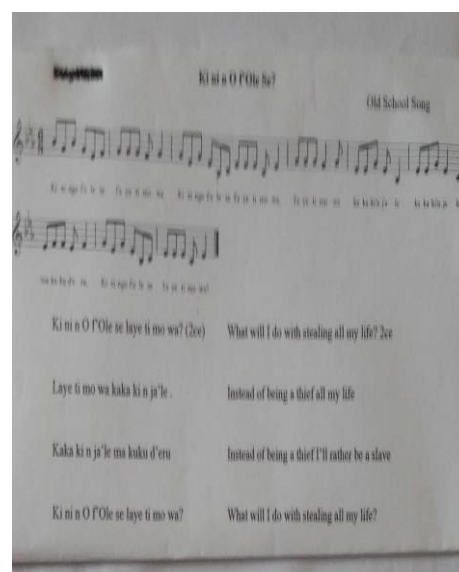
Eni to j'ale a de'le ejo – 2x
Adajo a wa f'ewon si l'ese,
F'ewon si l'ese bi onigbese;
Eni to j'ale a de'le ejo.

Aye e ma f'ole s'egbe ti mo ni – 2x
Egbe ti mo ni ewon ko sun won,

songs. Omojola (1992) had earlier observed that in this regard, music constitutes an important educational forum through which members of the traditional Nigerian societies learn to live together as well as cope with the ever-changing challenges of life.

The educational significance of musical performances in traditional Nigerian societies can therefore not be over emphasized, since “education is the vehicle by means of which the cultural heritage of a given society is transmitted to the younger generation (Fafunwa, 1983) and this helps to “produce an individual who is co-operative and conforming to the social order of the day” (Fafunwa, 1983).

One of such examples, a popular folksong usually taught to children and adolescents in traditional African society is cited here:



Ewon ko sun won f'omoluwabi;
Aye e ma f'ole s'egbe ti mo ni.

Oluwa ma f'ole s'egbe ti mo ni – 2x
Egbe ti mo ni kaka ko'o ja'le,
Kaka ko'o j'ale bo ba ku o to;
Aye e ma f'ole s'egbe ti mo ni.

B'eni to ja'le ba l'ola l'aye – 2x
Bo l'ola l'aye ko le r'orun wo,
Ko le r'orun wo b'olojo bade;
B'eni to ja'le ba l'ola l'aye. (Yoruba folksong)

This song frowns at all forms of stealing in the society regardless of seemingly reasons that may be produced to justify such bad attitude. For instance, the translation of the first stanza one of this song goes like this: What will I do with stealing? I will rather be a slave (suffer) instead of being a thief/armed robber; what will I do with stealing? The song teaches contentment, honesty, faithfulness and integrity.

Other songs in this category are also cited here:

Let's Just Build a Nation

*Let's just build a Nation, with just and fair play,
Let's just build a Nation, where corruption has no place,
We deserve the better way to live our lives,
Throw corruption away from our lives.*
(ICPC Jingle).

War against Corruption

*Let us break down the walls of corruption in Nigeria,
Let us break down the walls of apartheid,
When we do this, our Nation will progress,
Reformation will not stop.*
(Sunny Okosun).

The Nigerian National Anthem

*Arise o Compatriots, Nigeria's call obey.
To serve our father land with love and strength and faith
The labour of our heroes past shall never be in vain
To serve with heart and might, one nation bound in freedom,
Peace and unity.
O God of creation, direct our noble cause;
Guide our leaders right, help our youths the truth to know
In love and honesty to grow, and living just and true*

Great lofty heights attained, to build a nation where peace

And justice reign.

The Nigerian National Pledge

*I pledge to Nigeria my Country
To be faithful, loyal and honest
To serve Nigeria with all my strength
To defend her unity, and uphold her honour and glory,
So help me God.*

Conclusion and Recommendations

Having discussed corruption in its various forms with reference to its effects on the society, and the reformatory role of music in curbing corruption in the society, it is hoped that individuals in the society will have a change of attitude from bad behaviours to corruption –free behaviour in our society.

Adherence to the text of Nigerian National Anthem and National Pledge (especially the second stanza) is considered to be a good starting point. When good citizens of our noble country adhere sincerely, loyally and truthfully to the text and meaning of each line, corruption in its various forms will no longer have a place to stay in our society and of course, the country will progress.

Our leaders are enjoined to live up to expectation in whatever position of authority they are occupying. There is need for transparency and accountability in all the dealings of the government at all levels. The citizens of this noble Country need to develop the spirit of patriotism in order to salvage our Country from the bondage of perpetual corruption. The various broadcast/electronic media industries in the country are also enjoined to play more of Nigerian music on the radio and television stations across the country with music that teaches good morals and the spirit of loyalty, unity, hope, peace and love.

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