

The Practices of Music Research in Ethiopia Successes and Challenges

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The purpose of this article is to thoroughly assess the practices of music research (successes and challenges) in Ethiopia and make relevant recommendation. The method employed for this study is descriptive. The main tools considered are questionnaires and document analysis.

Introduction

The emphasis given to study music is not indisputable where various authors have discussed its roles. Nketia (1982) argues that music in African traditional society is “a dimension of life and an avenue of expression and communication pervades many spheres of life”. According to Merriam (1964) “music is used as accompaniment to or part of almost every human activity, which can and does shape, strengthen and channel social, political, economic, linguistic, religious and other kinds of behavior”. Herskovits (1948) in Merriam (1964) states that the dimension of music cuts across all aspects of culture consisting of a) material culture and its sanctions, b) social institutions, c) mind and universe and d) aesthetic and language. Music is believed to yield crucial information in various aspects of culture including education, social and political spheres, in reconstructing culture history, entertainment etc.

Ethiopia has a vast range of cultural heritages. According to Elleni Tedla (1995), such cultural experiences and heritages are found and encoded in various forms - symbols, rituals, design, artifacts, music, dance, proverbs, riddles, poetry, architecture, technology, science and oral traditions. However, for various purposes documenting and analyzing, utilizing such cultural heritage is not easy. As Elleni Tedla (1995) stated that “though these appear simple on the surface, it is not until one attempts to unravel the encoded philosophy or messages within them that one is struck by their profundity”. To be specific, although the field of Ethiopian music is immense, it has not been thoroughly studied. Theme (1963) four decades ago stressed that many of the East-Horn areas including Ethiopia are postulated on the basis of scant data, a dearth of analytical articles. Powne (1968:121-122) underlined that the amount of work to be done in the field of Ethiopian music is immense where the surface of Ethiopian musicology has hardly been scratched. He also stressed that Ethiopian music is perhaps the only large area of African music that has not yet received the single - minded attention of great scholars compared with the music of the Arab countries, West Africa, South Africa, Central Africa, and East Africa. Similarly Ullenderff (1967: 169) in relation to this problem writes that Ethiopian music and hymnography still await examination and study, apart the availability of few preliminary treaties and some

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pieces of scattered and often inaccessible information where the entire field is a virgin soil.

Although a thorough description of research on Ethiopian music is scant, a review made by Tourney (2006) is helpful to understand the efforts made with regard to research practice on Ethiopian music. Tourney's (2006) discussion begins from the early studies made by Villoteau (1809) and Mondon-Vidaillet (1892-99, 1922) and goes to the recent studies made under UNESCO and Norwegian Funds-in-Trust project (2004-2009). According to the same author, Villoteau's description of the music of the Church (1809) and Mondon-Vidaillet's musicographic depiction (1892-99, 1922) could be taken as one of the earliest music documents. Felix Rosen work which was made in 1905, taken as the first historical sound recording collection on wax cylinders which was also known as "Rosen Abessinien" collection. Michael Powne's publication entitled *Ethiopian Music: an Introduction* (1966), mainly focused on secular and religious Amhara music. Following these works various studies were made. Tourney classified the works into the 1st and 2nd wave of ethnomusicologists. The first wave of professional ethnomusicologists whom he considered them include Ashenafi, Kimberlin and Shelemay made studies with the same kind of interest for Northern cultures, focusing primarily on the musical traditions of Christian and other communities in the central highland plateau region. However, the short field work made by Lortat-Jacob among the Dorze in the 1970s is taken as one exception among the first wave of ethnomusicologists on Ethiopian music (Tourney, 2006). Tourney (2006) regarding the 2nd wave of music researchers states that this wave has begun since the 1990s where new scholars have been doing field work all over the country, involved in two different programs initiated and coordinated by himself. The first one, sponsored by the French Embassy in Ethiopia (1999-2003), followed by a second project, hosted by UNESCO and Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009) have given opportunities for numerous international students to make new musical investigations.

On the other hand a study made by Woube Kassaye (1994) on "The Status of Music Research in Ethiopia" reveals the following findings: First, as compared with the rich music cultural heritage that Ethiopia has, the attempt to study/ research music is little. There exists scant research outputs. As a result the practice of research on the Ethiopian music is at the lowest level. Second, lack of getting the required skills through training/ not taking research courses is taken as the abject problem in conducting music research by instructors at the Yared School of Music. Third, getting published articles to read is taken as a challenge. Fourth, the number dissertation, thesis, 'articles' and monographs written on Ethiopian music and available both at the Yared School of Music and the Addis Ababa University libraries were very few: 3 PhD dissertations (from 1971 to 1977), 1 MA thesis (1968), 30 BA theses (from 1971 to 1993), 29 articles (few of them are published) (from 1949 to 1987), 11 mimeographed (from 1983 to 1964). Most of the BA theses are more of related with languages than music.

The other study made by Woube Kassaye (2005) on the Liturgical music of Ethiopia, also indicates the magnitude of the problem (challenges) of music research as follows: a) Lack of in-depth and inadequate study that resulted in contradictory and misleading ideas on the issue. b) Given the immensity of the field the work has already been accomplished is insufficient. Little prominence has been accorded to liturgical music. Lack of funds, lack of research experience, the non-existence of full-fledged institutions etc. have been the major bottlenecks. c) Despite efforts made by some organizations such as *Maison Des Etudes Ethiopiennes* and Tigray Institute of Languages is

appreciated in publishing articles/books on liturgical music, there is lack of publications of articles in a specialized journal. By and large, this study recommended that there is a need for thorough and comprehensive research and applying various viable interventions to overcome the problems.

Music research projects: an Overview

Despite few attempts made to study Ethiopian music by individuals, cultural bureaus, the two major projects - - French Embassy sponsored project in Ethiopia (1999-2003) and the UNESCO/Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009) could be taken as one of the significant studies ever made in the history of Ethiopian music.

The French Embassy sponsored project in Ethiopia (1999 – 2003)

This project was sponsored by the French Embassy in Ethiopia to study the Ethiopian traditional music of Benshangul Gumuz and Tigray. Instructors six in number from the Yared School of Music took part in collecting and analyzing the data from these areas. Although the findings of this study have not yet been published, few copies are available at the Library of the Yared School of Music. Tourny (2006) regarding this project stated that strange as it may seem, until the French Embassy project was launched in 2000, there had been no systematic research into Ethiopian music where many musical practices remain little known, even in the country itself and many of them are also threatened by the spread of hybrid cultures. He further states that “this meticulous musical study also opened up a passionate area of research in the Ethiopian field and progressively aroused interest in a multidisciplinary approach such as history, sociology, linguistics and anthropology that all have a bearing on ethnomusicology”.

UNESCO and Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009)

The other big music project is UNESCO/Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009) entitled “Ethiopia - Traditional Music, Dance and Instruments”. This project is financed by the Government of Norway, involves Ethiopian and non-European experts on Ethiopian traditional music and dance. Various institutions represented through their authorities include: Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage of Ethiopia, the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES), the Yared School of Music as well as the Local institutions in Bahir Dar, Jinka, Harar and Mekele are represented by their authorities. The management of the project is handled by UNESCO through its field office in Addis Ababa and the coordination of its scientific aspects is ensured by team leader Dr. Oliver Tourny (CNRS/Paris V). The three major goals set by UNESCO regarding this project are: a) Identification, documentation and inventory making, b) Training and enhancing local capacities and c) Promoting and protecting Ethiopia’s cultural diversity (UNESCO/Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

Nuredin Satti (2007), director and representative UNESCO Addis Ababa Office, made a report on the developments that have taken place between June 2006 and March 2007 in the framework of the UNESCO/Norway Funds-in-Trust project “Ethiopia - Traditional Music, Dance and Instruments”. The report is categorized under field works, teaching and review of past research. a) *Field works*: Field works in musical traditions of Southern Ethiopia including Jinka, Tigray, Amhara (Bahir Dar area and Gondor) and Harar which were completed. Regarding dance traditions a Japanese visual anthropologist completed to produce a film on different dance traditions represented in Addis Ababa. Preparation is underway for a pilot project “Musical Landscape of Addis Ababa” which aims to provide Ethiopian students with fieldwork in identifying

recording and documenting traditional music and dance expressions. Future field work will commence on. *b) Teaching:* Graduate level course materials on Ethnomusicology: a set of graduate course materials (syllabuses - Ethnomusicology in Ethiopia and an Introduction to Musical Ethnography), Reader in Ethnomusicology and DVDs containing three lectures presented by Professor Kay Kaufman Shelemay. The introductory course was given at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies and the Yared School of Music for experts from the cultural bureaus, the Ethiopian National Archive and Library Agency. The intermediary courses on ethnomusicology will be given in the middle of 2007. *c) Review of past research and activities:* The document regarding collection and presentation of relevant information of past research, projects and instrumental or recording collection on Ethiopian Music and Dance Traditions will be published towards the end of this Year.

The attempt made to increase research capacity of cultural bureaus in Ethnomusicology research made through UNESCO/Norway Fund-In-Trust cooperation project "Ethiopia - - Traditional Music Dance and Instruments", UNESCO Cluster Office in Addis Ababa was encouraging. Husen Hindessa (2007), for instance has overviewed the Ormo Traditional culture in his writing project in Ethnomusicology through this project. In this study various tribes of Oromo traditional music, famous musicians, and musical instruments were discussed.

Indeed the UNESCO/Norway Music project could be taken as a significant that contributes to enhancing research in the country for the following reasons. A project that encompasses various components of music was not conducted in the Ethiopian History. Various researchers -- Ethiopian and non-Ethiopians -- have taken part and different concerned organizations are represented in this project. Although this project could have its own shortcomings, the efforts that have been made so far is encouraging in laying the foundation for further research, documentation, bringing some researchers together to share their experiences. Indeed UNESCO and the Government of Norway should be commended for providing due attention for the project in terms of funds and technical assistance.

Although some few attempts were made to study Ethiopian music and projects were developed and implemented, it is safe to conclude that no comprehensive studies were made on the practices of music research in Ethiopia. Hence this study was necessary. The study attempts to answer the following research questions.

1. What is the practice of research on Ethiopian music?
2. What are the factors that either enhance/hamper research on Ethiopian music?
3. What should be made to overcome the problems that are prevailing?

Research Designs

A descriptive method of research is preferred for this study. Such method involves in making careful description of the phenomenon. Specifically, descriptive research in this study is considered because it can help to:

- a) secure evidence concerning the existing situation or current condition on research on Ethiopian music,
- d) identify the cause or factors that affect research on Ethiopian music.
- e) describe the experience and to illustrate the way events have typically happened. This included how music researchers on Ethiopian music conduct their researches, what do researchers believe or value, how do institutions functions, and so forth.

Sampling: This study preferred purposive and available sampling. The main reason for selecting such sampling is that the issue to be studied likely requires rich and depth information with respect to the purposes of the study. In other words the sampling technique is neither designed to achieve population validity nor represent a defined population rather it focuses on an in-depth understanding of the issue. Hence the criteria for selecting sample are: experience/involvement in research projects; coordination of research projects; involvement in publication committee; involvement in giving music research courses; or affiliation with tasks related to culture or music. The total number of respondents was twenty three.

Instruments preferred for collecting data: Questionnaires that are both closed and open forms were preferred. The administration of the instruments was processed in three ways through telephone (for few respondents from the regions), internets (for respondents residing abroad) and in person (for respondents residing in Addis Ababa and nearby regions).

Method of analysis: Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. Percentage was preferred for the qualitative analysis. Regarding qualitative analysis pertinent views were either paraphrased or quoted in the discussions.

Results and Discussions

Background of respondents

Researchers, music experts, teachers and students both Ethiopians and non-Ethiopians numbering 23 were considered for this study.² The respondents were selected from: a) Yared School of Music 5 (21.75%), b) Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES) 3 (13.05%) where two of them were not directly involved in music activities, c) The newly established Ethiopian Music Association 1(4.35%), d) Ministry of Culture and Tourism 1(4.35%), e) Martin-Luther-University in Halle-Wittenberg, Germany 1(4.35%), f) France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)/ Paris University V and Paris University VIII 2 (8.7 %), g) USA (Point Richmond Music Research Institute, California and Harvard University, Department of Ethnomusicology 2 (8.7%), h) Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, SNNPR as well as Addis Ababa Administration Bureaus 5 (21.75) i) Harari Peoples Mobilization Cultural and Social Affaires Bureau 1 (4.35%), and Private researcher 1 (4.35%). Regarding respondents see on appendix A.

The distribution of respondents in sex wise is that 19 (82.65%) and 4 (17.4%) were males and females respectively. The majority of the respondents 19 (82.65%) have qualification in music. Out of these respondents hold 4 (17.4%) PhD, 8 (34.8%) MA; 1 (4.4%) BA; 4 (17.4%) diploma. The rest hold 2 (8.7%) PhD in Sociology and Anthropology, 1 (4.4%) BA in Theater Arts and Ethiopian Languages, 2 (8.7%); 1 (4.4%) BA and 1 (4.4%) Diploma in Ethiopian Language and Literature.

Participation or involvement in music researches

The majority of respondents i.e. 12 (52.2%) of Ethiopians and all the non-Ethiopians 4 (17.4%) indicated their involvement either in research committee or research project or journal publication committee.

² Without sincere and prompt answer to my questionnaire by the respondents this study would have not come to this stage, which all deserve many thanks (see their lists at appendix A).

A respondent from Tigray Culture and Tourism Bureau confirmed that in addition to the research he conducted on Zar Music (witchcraft music) took part in the research initiated by the Bureau regarding Kunama and Eurob Music. Kunama and Eurob societies are residing in Tigray Region. Three respondents from the Yared School of Music reported their involvement in research project particularly organized by the French Embassy and *Frances Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)* in 2003 and 2004.

The number and the quality of the publications are so vital in promoting research in the field. Publications could be categorized as scientific and non-scientific publication. Scientific research articles provide a method for scientists to communicate with other scientists about the results of their research. Article authors are required to present their researches in an orderly, logical manner which is based on the standard format. Peer review is a process that journals use to ensure article/s to be published. In other words it is taken as mandatory for publishing scientific articles in Journal/s. The finding reveals that few respondents 5 (21.7%) indicated that they published scientific articles in journals. Out of these five respondents, three of them (13%), hold PhD and have extensive experience both in teaching and research, published scientific articles on Ethiopian music. In general the responses of non-Ethiopian respondents particularly in publication of scientific articles and books indicate that their involvement regarding research in Ethiopian music is high. The majority of them have published more than five articles and even some of them published books.

On the other hand, although most respondents have not published scientific articles in the reputable journals, some of them i.e. 8 (34.8%) Ethiopians and 1 (4.3 %) non-Ethiopian say that although they have not published scientific articles, they published in different forms. It is worth to mention the attempts made by one of the respondents, a private researcher to publish works in music: a) *The Beginning of Modern Ethiopian Musical Bands (1897-1936)* in IES Bulletin. No. 31-32, 2002 (published); b) *Krar Method* (1998 (published), c) *Children Song book*, it is completed but not yet published and d) *History of Ethiopian Bands* (under study). In general the finding reveals that the participation/involvement of Ethiopians is found to be little as compared with non-Ethiopian researchers with regard to publishing scientific articles and exposure in research.

Several reasons could be given as to why little publications were made by Ethiopians. A respondent for instance, from the Yared School of Music explained the reasons such as the nonexistence of reputable music journal in the country, lack of time and determination to find and publish materials in any journal. It is also stated that “although the contribution of non-Ethiopian researchers with regard to publishing articles and books is commendable, however, the availability of most of their publications is in scant in the Ethiopian libraries”.

Determination of research issues

Criteria for selecting research issues are very important in any research endeavor. Without having criteria for selecting research issues it creates difficulty in processing research projects. The majority of the respondents who took part either in research committee/projects/publications indicated that there existed criteria for determining research where some of the criteria are specified below based on the experience of the respondents.

According to one of the non-Ethiopian respondents from France's *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS)/ Paris University V the criteria for determining research issues are as follows: a) context; this includes Ethiopian musical traditions are as rich as diverse and – are not known much even in Ethiopia. b) Major topics which are connected with anthropology, sociology and history, training and safeguarding, archiving and publishing. A researcher from Point Richmond Music Research Institute says that evaluation of the projects/proposals by colleagues in the field and in related fields and disciplines is taken as the determining factor in selecting research issues or proposals. Funding Committees/ selection committee are usually consisted of academic scholars who preferably have experience working in Africa and/or academic knowledge about Africa.

A non - Ethiopian respondent, a member of the project UNESCO and Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009) PhD student from Paris University regarding criteria for selecting research states:

I developed my own criteria based on what I have already observed and recorded among the Arsi Oromo. Because there haven't been ethnomusicological analyses of Oromo music, I have tried to present as many facets of the music and culture as possible. I have tried to make a musical calendar based on the life cycle, and then analyze specific repertoires in function of my thesis. It is also essential to document, record and create archives for the Oromo in the areas concerned. As for general Ethiopian music, criteria would no doubt be based on a specific thesis that has come out of the cultural and musical context.

Similarly the same respondent indicates that the criteria employed in UNESCO and Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009) project is similar to her PhD's criteria.

According to the response of research coordinator from the Newly Established Ethiopian Music Association the criteria for selecting research issues include the availability of finance and the appropriateness of the issue. The same respondent explained that the research issues were identified through board members of the Association. Researchers particularly members were invited to take part by submitting proposals as per the Association criteria. Then the screening of the proposal would follow. He said that this year (2006-2007) for instance, out of the proposals submitted, twelve were selected. The focus of the research topics was on the works of singers such as Tilahun Gessese, Kuku Sebsibe, Asnakech Worku.

Research Funds

Research has cost implications. Almost the majority of Ethiopian respondents indicate that one of the abject problems to conduct research is lack of financial support. The budget for some projects was secured through donors (NGO, French Embassy, and UNESCO and Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009) which is indeed encouraging. In fact this study is partly sponsored by these organizations.³ It was reported by almost all non-Ethiopians that the budget allotted by the Government including regional Governments for conducting research in music is almost null. In this study it was identified that there are NGOs and international organization and a foreign Government who funded some Music projects. One of the respondents, for instance from the newly

³ This research is partly financed by UNESCO Cluster Office in Addis Ababa and French Research Center in Ethiopia (Centre Français Etudes Ethiopiennes - CFEE) which the author would like to greatly thank these institutions. Dr. Fumiko Ohinata, Programme Specialist for Culture at UNESCO and Mr. Francois_Xavier FAVELLE, director of CFEE in the respective institutions deserve special thanks for their unreserved support and encouragement rendered to me for this research.

established Music Association reported that fund was secured for their research project from *Selam East African Music Net Work*. According to the same respondent Membership fee is minimal to cover costs for research projects.

Similarly a non-Ethiopian respondent from Point Richmond Music Research Institute indicated that funds for research is secured through private funds, sponsorship, Awards, American Council of Learned Societies Grant, travel grants, University research grants. One of the Ethiopian respondents living in Germany states that fund is secured from German Research Association for East Africa Music (includes Ethiopia), UNESCO for her research which was conducted in Tigray 2006.

Regarding the same issue a PhD student, underlines that “In 2002, I received a scholarship from the city of Paris, called *Paris Jeunes Aventures*. I also received financing from the French Embassy in Ethiopia”. The fund for other projects was/is secured through a) the French Embassy in Ethiopia b) UNESCO/Norway Trust-In-Funds Project. Most Ethiopian respondents indicate that there is little/no budget allotted for research in music and dance.

Research unit/center, linkage and networking

The availability of Research unit/center is unquestionable. In this regard the experience of respondents with respect to their institutions varies. The finding shows that neither the Yared School of Music nor the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES) has research unit or center in music. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Regional Bureaus (Amhara, Tigray, Harare, Oromia, Addis Ababa City Administration, SNNPR) also do not have a research unit/center for music.

A respondent from Harvard University indicates that there is no Music Research Center on Ethiopian music in the University where she is working. She states that “our University has strong African studies, but does not focus on a single country to the exclusion of others”. Regarding the availability of a program on Ethiopian Ethnomusicology she responds:

No, although I occasionally teach courses on Ethiopian and other African music traditions. We do have a doctoral student who will specialize in Ethiopian music. We need more scholars specializing in Ethiopian music who are part of the international scholarly discourse.

Most respondents indicate that the linkage and networking among the different institutions and universities are weak.

Output of music research projects

Different experiences were reported by the respondents on research outputs. A non-Ethiopian respondent from Point Richmond Music research Institute enumerated the output of music projects as follows:

Projects would all result in publications, participation at regional and international conferences and symposia, and new initiatives. The results expand knowledge to local, regional, national, and international communities. Musicians are compensated either monetarily or in kind, and benefit from expanding their audience as widely as possible via publications, film, and recordings. For example, I introduced a number of Ethiopian musicians on a UNESCO recording of my field recordings and a recording in a book on music. As a consequence, the musicians became better known...

The other researcher who has been a scientific coordinator for UNESCO/Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009), explained that more than 20 students and researchers are currently working on this project, most of whom are French and Ethiopians, but also including Italians, Belgians, Germans, Americans and Japanese. The aim is to document, collect, preserve, study as well as to disseminate the traditional music, dances and instruments which is one of the richest and most complex African countries in this field. The same respondent regarding the output of the project says that the project team has already worked on Ethiopian lyres, Ari and Male polyphonies from the south of the country, liturgical dances of the Christian Orthodox Church, Harari wedding songs, Gurague dances, and various religious traditions. The project is now set to lead to the founding of the Ethiopian National Sound Library which will house the recordings (audio and video) made by the researchers, the archives of historical sound recordings, and local documents.

Successes made in music researches

Although there are various constraints that affect the enhancement of Music research few success stories were reported.

Introducing Ethiopian musical studies into ethnomusicological mainstream was taken as encouraging experience. However, a respondent from Harvard University underlined that in the University where she is working the challenge is getting students to specialize in Ethiopian music. She states that “We need more scholars specializing in Ethiopian music who are part of the international scholarly discourse.” Indeed this indicates that a University like Harvard has given due attention for Ethiopian music.

A respondent from the Yared School of Music points out some of the successes include the involvement of few Ethiopian researchers in music research work, producing term papers by the students of the Yared School of Music and the creation of interest to study Ethiopian music mainly by foreigners. One of the Ethiopian respondents from Martin-Luther-University in Halle-Wittenberg, Germany pointed out the successes made on Ethiopian Ethnomusicology as follows: a) to learn a lot from field researches and collect as much materials as possible, b) to understand that there are still quite a lot untouched cultures in Ethiopia and c) collecting quite a lot of audio visual materials which can be used optimally for teaching purposes.

The other non-Ethiopian researcher from France’s Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)/ Paris University V listed out the successes in the following way: First the involvement of Ethiopians and foreign researchers on Ethiopian music through the projects (UNESCO/Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (2004-2009) is encouraging. Second many papers on Ethiopian music have been produced however, they were written in French, and there is a need to translate them into English and third a Syllabus for introductory course in Ethnomusicology has been developed.

A graduate programme coordinator from IES underlined that since recently a course on Ethnomusicology has been given at IES assuming that the Yared School of Music will handle it in the future. A PhD student regarding the major success states that “there are now a great many students and professors researching and making recordings and videos in areas all over the country”. She further stressed that it is also inspiring to see the enthusiasm for the research, on a regional level, which is very encouraged and facilitated. In other words the support given by regional and local offices is greatly appreciated by the same respondent.

Major Challenges and Suggestions

Various challenges were reported by the respondent. These include: inadequacy of music research, lack of commitments from the concerned body, lack of dedication and commitment to conduct music research, absence of supportive staff, lack of professional experts in the field /trained manpower, lack of research experience among music professionals, budget constraints, lack of research experience among music professionals, not giving due attention for a course on music research to be contained in the school program, not establishing a music research center, lack of references, the existence of very few Ethiopian researchers, the research materials are based on second hand information, the inexistence of responsible body to coordinate interested music researchers, less participation in research projects, the non-existence of indigenous institution that encourages and takes music research as its own agenda.

Budget constraint was dominantly stressed as one of the problems. Interestingly one of the non-Ethiopian respondents, a PhD student identified the challenge different from other respondents. She writes:

Often it is too difficult to get access to read archived books or listen to old recordings. In the IES, for example, they ask for a substantial monetary donation before considering letting you listen to recordings. It is a shame for young researchers because they may never get the chance to compare some of the old recordings to the new ones they have made. Furthermore, they are less interested in leaving their recordings in archives when they can't even access the older archives.

The same respondents stressed that there are still a great many areas and music that need to be documented but have not been due to lack of materials, training, funding, etc. Although, there are many people working in regional offices on culture who are ready to go out to the field to do recordings, however, the recording quality is poor. Regarding music inventory the same respondent indicated that because there are many documents, recordings, instruments, etc. all over the country in small regional offices, it is difficult to come up with a clear, defined inventory. These resources are not always well inventoried at local level, so the researcher often has to look in many areas before finding essential information that could have been easier located.

One of the scholars from Point Richmond Music Research Institute lists the challenges that include Government bureaucracy (“Occasional Government bureaucracy; the “*ishi nega*” factor”); learning Ethiopian music since the music and songs are taught via orally; learning the customs of the local communities is a long process in which an outside scholar works; providing little attention for preservation of recordings. Furthermore, regarding the little emphasis given to Ethiopian Scholars, the same respondent underlines:

Ethiopian scholars will no longer be treated merely as informants and assistants to support the work of European, Asian, and American academic scholars but are treated as full scholars in their own right on an even playing field. That Ethiopians should head their own research projects affecting their own country. Outsiders can still participate e.g. in an advisory capacity, as a member of a collaborative effort.

This implies that encouraging Ethiopians to engage themselves in research should be given priority in terms of resources, manpower capacity, infrastructure, scholarship etc.

Various suggestions that the respondents forwarded to overcome challenges identified earlier are discussed below.

A researcher from point Richmond Research Institute underlined that “There are a number of steps that should be taken to overcome the challenges but she has listed the following as important in any research endeavor”: First, teach students fieldwork methods in recording, gathering, and documenting data and music so they will have the skills necessary to lead and conduct their own field research. Second, researchers should understand the difference between first, second, and tertiary sources and that original (first hand) sources are the most important in verifying statements. Third, local community support is critical in order for any research project to be credible and successful. Fourth the benefits of research should be reciprocal for the community studied as well as for the researcher and his or her team.

There must be a responsible body that coordinates interested and dedicated professionals in music research. It was indicated that it is very difficult to conduct research continuously without the absence of institutions that takes research as its own agenda. Hence, this implies that establishing a National Music Research Center is highly significant. It is also reported that since the dedication and commitment of professionals in research engagement is not satisfactory, it is necessary to provide them continuous training and orientation regarding research in music. Since there is no indigenous organization responsible in music researches, dissemination of results is difficult. Hence, a creation of such institution/s is indispensable. To do so, the Yared School of Music and other similar institutions should be given due attention to carryout such responsibility by capacitating the existing staff in music research and employing highly experienced researchers in music, opening a graduate program in Ethnomusicology and creating a linkage/networking among the different institutions or universities.

A respondent from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism suggests the following in order to improve music research in Ethiopia: Undertake inventory and demarcation of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples music; Undertake rigorous research and study; Establishment and expansion of “Music Researchers Association” and creating network with other music institutions. Furthermore, it was considered as imperative to open graduate programs, create linkage and networking with the different departments at Addis Ababa University as well as other foreign Universities, Strengthening the National archive and all historical researches etc.

Regarding IES ethnographic museum one of the respondents indicated that no fundamental research has been made i.e. it does not go beyond labeling. He goes on saying that this requires organizing the museum in modern ways such as digitization. Collecting the musical instruments is not enough. It has to be supported by research. The IES museum lacks the criteria as to determining the time of the collected instruments (No analysis was made after the musical instruments were collected).

The other respondent from Paris University stressed that “capacity building needs to happen on a regional level because there are so many people ready to help on research outside the capital. It would be good to try to find financing in order to do training and especially in order to buy proper equipment for better videos and recordings.” Furthermore, the same respondent says that “it would also be good to try to do better inventory in regions and to put it on a computer network so that researchers could know where to find documents and who they could contact for information.”

Prioritization of research was a concern for some respondents. In this regard a respondent from Martin-Luther-University in Halle-Wittenberg, Germany argues that "All possible areas should be studied; above all the Southern parts of Ethiopia; South-Omo Region; some forgotten ethnicities like the Karo, Mursi, Benna, Beshada, Dassanetch etc. should be given due emphasis.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has attempted to assess the practices of music research in Ethiopia where opinion of researchers, music experts and instructors who are directly or indirectly involved in music research were sought in order to answer the basic questions of this study. The study indicates that the Non-governmental and International organization like UNESCO and the Government of Norway and the French Government through its French Embassy and French Research Center in Ethiopia (CFEE) and Selam East African Music Net Work have given financial and technical support for music projects which is indeed commendable. Various researchers, particularly the non-Ethiopians have extensively taken part in studying the Ethiopian music. By and large, although attempts were made to enhance music research in Ethiopia the finding reveal that it is unsatisfactory as compared with the rich cultural heritage the country possesses. It was identified that this is attributed to lack of research experiences among the Ethiopian music professionals and the non-existence of full-fledged institution/center for music research, the existence of both weak system of research units or center, linkage and networking among the different universities/institutions, lack of clear policy or guidance for music research, the non-existence of both graduate programs in music as well as 'Music Researchers Association', lack of adequate funds and little or no encouragement and incentives given for Ethiopian music researchers. Hence this requires a paradigm shift or prompt intervention by concerned bodies such as professionals, various Ministries related with Culture and Education, different institutions such as IES, the Yared School of Music, the Ethiopian Music Association, NGOs and scholars in the field.

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Appendix: List of Respondents

Almenesh Awol, Asfaw Shimeles, Aklilu Zewdie, Belay Cherent, Ezra Abate and Tekle Yohannes Zike teaching staff of the Yared Music School; Lakew Yirga Senior culture expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism; Zelalem Tefera (Dr.), instructor and Graduate program coordinator, IES; Tadesse Birisso (Dr.) researcher, IES; Simeneh (MA student); Dawit Yifru, The newly established Ethiopian Music Association, board member and coordinator of research; Bisrat Tamene, Private researcher; Timkeht Tefera (Dr.) researcher, Martin-Luther-University in Halle-Wittenberg, Germany; Kay Kaufman Shelemay (Prof) instructor and researcher, Harvard University, USA.; Cynthia Kimberlin Tse (PhD) researcher, Point Richmond Music Research Institute, USA; Olivier Tourny (Dr.) instructor and researcher, France’s Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)/ Paris University V.; Leila Qurash, PhD student and researcher, Paris University VIII; Solomon Tsegaye, Music expert, SNNPR Culture and Information Bureau; Mulu Gebeyehu, Music expert, Addis Ababa Administration Culture and Information Bureau; Abreham Nigatu, Music expert, Tigrai Culture and Information Bureau; Hussein Hindessa, Head, Dep’t, of Heritages Research and Conservation, Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau; Mesfin Engedashet, Theater Arts expert, Amhara Culture and Tourism Bureau.; Mekbebe Asrat and Abdulhakim Umer, Music expert and head Harari Peoples Mobilization Cultural and Social Affairs Bureau, respectively.

