

**RAISING SECURITY CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH  
RADIO DRAMA: A STUDY OF EFCC'S  
EAGLE ON RADIO**

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**Abstract**

*Radio over the years has become an invaluable tool for social development and a means of enlightenment to the masses. In recent times, radio has gone beyond the boundary of providing light entertainment to its audience but stands determined in bringing educative, instructive and security programmes to the doorsteps of its numerous listeners. Security of life has become the major problem facing Nigerians in the present political dispensation. The corrupt politicians and some Heads of different organizations are major vehicles conveying atrocities through which the lives of the masses are threatened. State Governors are not left out of those elements committing this misdemeanour. It is on this light that this work is geared towards assessing the security consciousness of Nigerian media audience using radio drama as an adorable art that stands the taste of time. Therefore, this assessment is done using Economic and Financial Crime Commission's radio dramas titled Market Levy and Evidence in Court as packaged in Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) radio programme, Eagle on Radio.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The discovery of radio broadcasting came as a result of the efforts of the likes of James Maxwell a Scottish physicist and Heinrich Hertz, a German physicist. In 1960s James

worked out the formula that predicted the existence of electromagnetic or radio waves, though the first person that created what we call radio today was Heinrich Hertz who in 1880s and 1890s projected rapid variations of electric current into space in the form of waves similar to those of light and heat. The emergent of Radio Broadcasting in Nigeria according to Ohiri explains thus, Radio broadcasting was introduced into Nigeria in 1932. The establishment of radio broadcasting in Nigeria was the result of the determination of British colonial authority to link the colonies with the "mother country." (110). It actually kicked off during the Second World War. The masters had messages, especially message about the war, which had to be delivered to Nigeria populace and as a means of propaganda too. The British Broadcasting Commission (BBC) was in-charge of broadcasting in Nigeria at the time it started. In 1950s T.W Chalmers was seconded from BBC to prepare the ground for the setting up of a proper broadcasting system in Nigeria. After the completion of Chalmers's report in 1951, he was appointed the Director of Broadcasting in Nigeria with this appointment in 1952 Nigeria Broadcasting Service was established (NBS). In 1957 the Nigeria Broadcasting Service was transformed into a corporation with the motto "**Uplift the people and unite the Nation**". Today, this motto reads thus "**Radio Nigeria; Uplifting the people and uniting the Nation**" On February 28<sup>th</sup> 1978, a decree was promulgated establishing the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria. (FRCN). In 1992, the Government established the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) a body whose sole aim was to monitor and

regulate broadcasting in Nigeria. Today FRCN outlets can be seen in all the States of the Federation.

Security in the other hand has to do with the people being aware of their immediate environment so as to consciously safeguard their interests, thus, "security, safety from harm, a term that has different dimensions in psychology, public safety, defence and military matters, and information access." (Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009). **Speaking on security awareness campaign, the Honourable Minister of Information, Mr. Labaran Maku explains thus;** The Ministry's consistent messaging, to a large extent, has contributed to diffusing Boko Haram's objective of causing religious acrimony between Christians and Muslims, and between the North and the South. (26). **From his assertion, diabolical activities of some 'Bad Eggs' (Corrupt politicians, militant group, as well as Islamic sect tagged Boko Haram) in the society are being curtailed through the constant programmes embarked upon by the Federal Ministry of Information. He lucidly explains further that;** The NTA, FRCN and Nigerian Film Corporation (NFC) also produced several jingles on peace and security, which are aired on television and radio stations throughout the country (29)

**The security of lives and property of the Nigeria masses, protection of public interest and upholding national integrity are what this paper is looking into.**

#### **EFCC AS A WATCH DOG OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA.**

Corruption is all-encompassing in our society today that it has

turned public service for many into a kind of money making ventures, the poor masses and indeed the world over have seen Nigerian government as a corrupt system where the government officials fill their pocket and think less about the suffering of the masses but the establishment of Economic and Financial Crime Commission in December 2002, gave the Nigerian populace a kind of relieve and to some extent restored trust on the public service, according to Human Right Watch Report 2011

Graft has fuelled political violence, denied millions of Nigerians access to even the most basic health and education services, and reinforced police abuses and other widespread patterns of human rights violations. This report analyzes the most promising effort Nigeria's government has ever undertaken to fight corruption—the work of its Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Soon after it was established in December 2002, the EFCC began pursuing corruption cases in a way that publicly challenged the ironclad impunity enjoyed by Nigeria's political elite. (1)

Since its establishment in 2002, the EFCC has arraigned more than thirty nationally prominent political figures on corruption charges and has recovered US\$11 billion through its efforts, according to Human Right Report (4).

Having done some extensive work on corruption, arresting some of the highly respected politicians in the country; one may be tempted to say without any shade of doubt that the EFCC is indeed fighting corruption. The EFCC deemed it necessary to make its voice heard over the radio so

as to further carry out its campaign to the larger part of the society other than the ruling class.

### **RADIO DRAMA AS A VERITABLE TOOL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION**

Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) broadcasts some programmes that deal with security issues. such programmes include the *Police Diary* which comes on air every Tuesday at half past eight in the morning, The *Police diary* is an interactive program that requires the listener to call-in during the program, and report a case hedging on security matters. As the program is going on, the masses are educated on the security situation of a particular Area, Town or State in Nigeria. The *Consumer Protection Council* broadcast on FRCN every Wednesdays at 8:30 AM Nigerian Time on the other hand, alerts the consumers of different products in the market, it helps the consumers to know about sub-standard products in the market today. It also ensures that the consumer's right is protected. The EFCC sensitization program *Eagle on Radio* broadcast every Monday by 8:30 AM Nigerian time is my topic of discuss. The program has different segments ranging from the introductory part in which the anchor introduces the program and the second part is the news segment. In the news segment, the anchor brings to the public notice, the activities of the EFCC during the week. These activities may include the trials of EFCC's cases, EFCC's arrest if any, and EFCC's intention in the new week and so on. Then the next segment is treating the listeners mails sent to the Anchor during the week. Different emails are read out and immediate solution or

suggestion is offered to the writer of such mail. After this follows the Drama segment which happens to be the most important part of the program because in the dramatic piece the EFCC's programs are made succinct to the listeners.

The drama dovetails a lot of issues, such as; (i) The menace of bribery and corruption, (ii) Theft, (iii) Fraudsters' activities (iv) Scam, and '419' etc. The language of the drama is Nigerian Pidgin English and the Queen's English, such that the majority of the audience can grasp the intended message. It has chronological plot, in other words the events are arranged sequentially. Having compiled with all these forms and structures, *Eagle on radio* pose no treat to an ordinary radio audience without formal educational background, who by mere listening to his radio will understand the message clearly. In analysing the security consciousness of the masses, the EFCC's dramatic pieces to be treated here are *Market Levy* and *Evidence in court*.

#### ***Market levy***

*Market levy* starts with the market men and women shouting against the ugly situation of over taxation placed on them by the chairman of the market traders association

**Crowed:** We no go giri ooo! We no go giri, pirate fighter  
we no go giri

This crowd is actually saying no to the corrupt chairman who still doesn't know that the traders will one day raise alarm against his constant exploitation. But what has given this

crowd the impetus is the awareness of the EFCC. During the protest a trader asks his apprentice what the noise is all about and he replies

**Oga:** Anthony, What is all this noise I am hearing?

**Anthony:** Oga I hear say the EFCC go come market today.

**Oga:** What are they coming here to do?

**Anthony:** Na oga chairman they wan come carry.

From the conversation above, one may come to conclusion that the masses have actually taken their plights to themselves; they are not ignorant of the activities of the EFCC. The major target of this dramatic piece is for the general public to know that they can rise against their oppressors. At the end, the EFCC came and whisked the Chairman away and charged him to court after reading out some court charges which include (i) Unlawful possession of shades in the market (ii) Exploitation of the traders, (iii) Over taxation of the traders. (iv) Misappropriation of traders' funds. Etc. After hearing such charges placed on the chairman, and knowing that the EFCC has taken action, the audience (Market audience) listening to the radio will take precaution knowing that one day if care is not taken the EFCC searchlight will see his evil activities and take him up. As for the heads or leaders of organizations they will be careful with their conducts because their subjects may rise one day and seek to defend their rights and by so doing will in turn attract the EFCC's attention. This dramatic piece lasted for five minutes, no introduction of characters or actors were made by the anchor instead, the characters introduced themselves to the audience by constantly calling each one's

name as they speak. As the drama segment finishes, the anchor (Chris Oluka) continued with the rest of the program. And in concluding the programme for the day, he signed out with the following lines "Corruptions not only spoil your image and that of your country but it is an infection that contaminate any body around you"

#### *Evidence in court.*

This drama starts with background music, after the introduction of the play by the anchor Nwanyimma Ukano, the action starts. The voice the listener hears is that of Akpofu who is happy that a foreign court has convicted Mr. Obioma, something he believes the EFCC has failed to do over the years. He rejoices thus:

**Akpofu:** God don catch am, useless man, leave this EFCC, two hundred criminal charges, against am, na for poor man body they dey get power, nothing them go do am, this EFCC no dey try.

Folabi comes into the sitting room hearing Akpofu speaking to himself; she now asks him what is going on, why he is soliloquizing. But Akpofu continues to enjoy his newspaper, as such Folabi approaches him and sees the newspaper he is reading, Oga Festus enters, Oga Festus is the owner of the house and a little bit enlightened because of his use of the Queen's English, Folabi is his wife while Akpofu is Oga Festus's brother in-law who pays visit to Oga Festus. Akpofu speaks the Nigerian Pidgin English. He represents the general

masses that are actually not conversant with EFCC's mode of operations. Hear the conversation among the characters as Oga Festus enters his sitting room.

**Oga Festus:** What is going on here?

**Folabi:** Nothing dey happen oo, my darling na Akpofu dey vex and dey happy at the same time,

**Oga Festus:** Folabi, what do you mean he is angry and happy at the same time?

**Folabi:** E dey vex say EFCC dey punish only poor people. E dey happy say oyibo court don sentence Mr. Obioma seven years in prisonment.

**Akpofu:** I happy say they don catch this man, e steal over so many million pound, dollar, Europe money. oyibo court don sentence Mr. Obioma for seven years in court na only 40 court chargers, *Evidence* dey court. EFCC no dey try at all.

**Oga Festus:** Let me clarify you, EFCC can only charge a suspect to court, it is not a court, and cannot detain a suspect, a lawyer may represent EFCC in court and the suspect will also be represented by his own lawyer, both lawyers will present their case and evidence in the court and the judge takes decision, even if the suspect is discharged and acquitted that does not mean that EFCC is

behind it. It might be that EFCC evidence was not enough to convict the suspect, or some technical legal issues.

**Akpofu:** Eh! Oga Festus, na so the thing bi before I no no ooo!

**Folabi:** EFCC go catch you anywhere, any time, stop these corruptions.

The six minutes drama ends with the conviction that the EFCC spares no one when it comes to fighting corruption. It also clears doubts of people like Akpofu who believe that EFCC is being partial in their Judgement. He believes that a rich man can commit criminal acts and go scot free, whilst a poor man can not do the same without being caught and punished accordingly, but the character of Oga Festus makes things clearer to the listeners that the EFCC is not a court, it doesn't try criminals but it can charge criminals to court and bearing in mind that the court has the final judgment, EFCC does not command the court on what to do or judge. The suspect's lawyer sometimes may be more powerful (Presenting more convincing evidence) than that of the EFCC so if a suspect that people are looking forward to be served with a severe judgement gets light judgement it does not mean that the EFCC is weak but the court is the final arbiter and its judgement stands final.

## CONCLUSION

The EFCC radio drama is a major tool in making the activities of the EFCC known to the masses hence, it is instructive in nature and has the power in raising security consciousness of the Nigerian radio audience but the problem is how many people listen to radio drama this days, even if they listen to the EFCC's *Eagle on radio*, how many of them wait patiently to the drama segment which happens to be one of the concluding parts of the programme. The drama segment needs to be made very important part of the programme because words without action bore radio audience who can only listen but cannot see the speaker. Going with McLeish's opinion which says that "The listener to radio drama supplies his own mental images in response to the information he is given" (178). 'Mental images' here stands for what the audience can easily recognize, something within our environment that the audience does have to go to his dictionary searching for the meaning while he misses the important message. The EFCC's *Eagle on Radio* creates this mental image but lacks consistency. Familiar characters and a single sense of style, it needs a variety of new events, some fresh situations and people, but this program is all about promoting EFCC's positive activities, thereby closing the mind of the audience to 'other aspects' of EFCC's activities that some people believe have doubt of credibility. In other words, the program boils down to propaganda just as we had it when radio first came to Nigeria, but more efforts are needed from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission so as not to be bias in its operations as any attempt to mislead the populace (The audience) may lead to

"Half-baked information" which will in turn leave the audience in doubt of EFCC's trustworthiness in combating corruptions in Nigeria.

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