

**THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUTH CHOIRS IN
GHANA**

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC,
SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN MUSIC**

JUNE 2016

DECLARATION

I, Emmanuel Douglas Kofi Esson hereby declare that this thesis with the exception of the quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and acknowledged is entirely my own original work produced from research undertaken under supervision.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My greatest gratitude goes to the Almighty God for His divine wisdom, protection and support throughout my research. I am most grateful to Dr. Joshua Alfred Amuah, Head of Department of Music, University of Ghana, Legon and Mr. Timothy E. Andoh, a senior lecturer for their supervision, guidance and encouragements to making this work a reality.

My appreciation also goes to Prof. John F. Wiredu of the English Department, Dr. Juan Diego Diaz, Visiting Scholar, Mr. Ken Kafui, Dr. Hilarius Wuaku, Miss. Adjoa Arhin, Mr. Benjamin Amakye-Boateng, Mr. Frank Ferguson Laing, Mr. Eric Sunu Doe and all lecturers of the Department of Music, University of Ghana, Legon.

I am again thankful to all other friends in the music department, Legon especially Mr. Dennis Amakye and Mr. Peter Marfo who in diverse ways gave me a great deal of motivation, encouragement, assistance and direction to be able to complete this project.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my family especially my dear mother Mrs. Comfort Esson and my wife Mrs. Sheila Narki Esson for their prayers, support, understanding and assistance offered me during the entire period of the research and my stay on campus.

To Mr. Kweku Acquah Harrison of The Ghana Police Church- Accra, and Mr. Kingsford Yaw Mensah of The Methodist Education Unit- Accra and to all the youth choirs directors most especially James V. Armaah, Andrew Addy, Ernest Acquah, Alfred Addaquay, George

Edzie and the others for their willingness to share with me some relevant information about their choirs.

Finally, I wish to thank Miss Gemma Dede Tettey, the librarian of the ICAM library of the Department of music, University of Ghana, Legon who contributed in the offer of materials to complete this research.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the entire Esson family and my dear wife Mrs. Sheila Narki Esson



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ABSTRACT

The primary focus of this study is to examine the development and contributions of youth choirs in Ghana. The research seeks to attempt an in-depth study at the concept of the youth choir as an institution which came to the limelight of choral music industry about three decades ago. The acceptance of this youth choir system due to its economic boom in recent times has gained a maximum popularity as well as provided an avenue for both professional and unprofessional musicians but has not received much scholarly attention.

The purpose of the study is to trace the historical events that necessitated the formation of youth choirs and delve into their development and contributions to the socio-economic impact with the specific attention on motivation of the formation, conflict management and the performance practices/styles. The research methodology is primarily based on fieldwork which includes discussion, interviews, participant observation during rehearsals sessions and performances, library research, journals and recordings of some of the works performed by the youth choirs.

The study discovered that the community youth choirs and all others when properly run will create employment to its members and become an asset to the host community and the nation as a whole in several ways. Youth choir system also provides an avenue to unearth and develop the musical prowess of the youth. It is therefore recommended that every community, institution, government agency and organisation should be encouraged to form a youth choir

or sponsor the existing ones since they help to address and solve some of the unemployment issues in the country.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The Oxford Concise Dictionary of Music Fifth Edition (2007) by Kennedy and Kennedy defines a choir or chorus as a mixed voice choir (or chorus) which is one of both women and men. A male voice choir is (usually) of men only, but may be of boys and men. A double choir is one arranged in two equal and complete bodies, with a view not merely to singing in eight parts but also to responsive effects. Chorus tends to be used for secular bodies; there may be many exceptions (Kennedy and Kennedy 2007: 145).

According to <http://www.independent.co.uk/biography/nail-crowley>, his article published on Wednesday October 10, 2012 speculates that;

There is a risk that in using choirs for everything from helping fragmented communities to stress relief, we drag them down to the level of the mundane. Choirs have been with us a long time. They have their origins in Greek Tragedy and the Italian Renaissance. Fifty years ago they were commonplace in our schools, workplaces and social organisations, but until recently most of us had come to associate them with Christmas concerts and village halls.

In addition, he explains that, though they are making a spectacular comeback like the growth of book clubs, debating societies and various specialist interest groups, choirs have benefitted from a renewed interest in communal activities. New choirs are popping up around the country. Friends and workmates are getting together, forming their own groups or joining

existing choirs in greater numbers. Organisations and institutions are helping ordinary members of the public find their voice for the first time.

Crowley (2015) in his article continues to argue that, choirs have moral dimension, which involves oneself and others in choral and music societies. This is generally seen as a form of self-improvement, and as a means of keeping the lower orders out of the pub and out of political intrigue. No matter how their social function has changed over the last few hundred years, there has always been a spiritual or metaphysical dimension to choirs. Whether it is reaching up to God, the act of making music for its own sake, or simply the immersive, almost magical experience of singing in harmony with others, choral music has the power to lift us up above our individual, everyday lives.

The concept of the youth choir system as an institution in Ghana gained the publicity in the choral music industry about three decades ago and had since met the admiration and approval of the Ghanaian populace, particularly the youth. The upsurge of these choirs with its dynamics of processes and development in most instances emanate from power and conflicts, construction of individual and group identities, ownership rights, financial and others are some of the challenges that reared their heads in the existing group as a result of members' interaction and interrelation. These conflicts and confusions which occur within the groups or choirs end up in the breakaway of some members to join or form new groups.

According to Brewer and Garnett, (2012), a fundamental question in the making of a choir individually and consensus in choral singing is how best to respect the individuality of each of

its singers while getting them all to work together for the good of the group as a whole. In this sense, a choir is a microcosm of human social life. The voice is the most personal and individual form of human expression as we can recognize people within seconds by the sound of their voice alone. Yet when people join their voices together in a choir they cannot assert that full individuality without disrupting the communal voice of the collective (Brewer and Garnett 2012: 256).

Every product is defined and identify by its content. A choir is universally admired by its practices and styles during performances. Performance practices/styles of these choirs have seen several changes and innovation vis-à-vis their repertoire, the types of costumes, performance settings, instrumental accompaniment, conducting and their general choral sonority. The uniqueness of each choir is exemplified in the various ways that they operate. Moreover, our works or compositions and performances which affect lives, promote sound societies as well as bring innovations and change in our churches or institutions musical culture remains part of the focus of this study.

Crowley (2015) again submits that, choral singing may have curative qualities but if we recast it as just another healthy lifestyle activity, like going to the gym, then all that is magical, inspiring and elevating about the choral experience might just melt into thin air.

Upon this premise, the researcher did a survey at the Ghana Police Church, Accra and other churches around including the Garrison Methodist Presbyterian church, Arakan Methodist

Presbyterian church among others on their perceptions of church choirs. The researcher interviewed some youth in these churches about their unenthusiastic attitude towards church choirs and why most of them drop from their church choirs and joined other singing groups outside the church.

The findings of the survey seriously pointed to the unfriendly attitude of some members of the adult church choristers. They also expressed of the sensation of being uncomfortable, shy and subjugated when they mingle with them. These untoward attitudes of the aging choristers gradually develop a catastrophe and ruin the interest of the youth in the church choir and eventually move them out of the choir. Besides, the attempt of compulsorily migrating members of junior choirs into the adult choir against their will in some traditional churches is another factor that exterminates their interest and disperses them from the church choirs. Nonetheless, in the quest for satisfying their desires and longing to express their gifts of music through singing, due to the above reasons, they end up finding a solace somewhere else by joining or forming a youth choir outside the church.

Aside of this, the proliferation of these youth choirs in other perspective is characterized by impatience behaviour of some young unprofessional nomadic musicians who are bent on forming their choirs regardless of its technicalities and challenges. However, whether all members in these choirs can really be described as ‘youth’ or otherwise is another mystery to unearthed.

In some circumstances, some individuals in the choirs are conspicuously adults but are still there with their reasons known to them alone. Apparently, these choirs currently operate as a business enterprises or companies to acquire wealth, so less can be complained or questioned about it. They organise concerts and other events and for social construction (identity) for themselves and the group.

Unquestionably, conflicts cannot be exterminated when and wherever human beings congregate. Conflict situations are inevitable and important aspect of any social institution due to human interactions and inter-relations of which the choir is no exception. Power, role conflict and ambiguity, age differential gap, technology, individual recognition (identity), ownership rights, financial and other contributing factors militate against the development of these choirs, hence, old groups are shunned and new ones embraced.

As a Director of Music in this industry, my experiences with some of these choirs offers me the power to reveal the incessant upsurge of the choirs which is quite a ‘virgin spot’ as far as the development of youth choirs in Ghana is concerned. Juxtaposing these to the earlier statements, there is a clear need to explore into this phenomenon.

The researcher therefore has the ethical will and the grounds based on these premise to investigate into their operations in order to unravel the factors that have necessitated the rapid spread of the development of this new paradigm across the length and breadth of the country.

1.1.1 Structure of Choirs

Generally in Ghana, choirs consist of three age groupings and performance groups:

- The singing lesson choir which introduces the youngest children (four to seven years) not only to singing in general, but also to working together in a group. This type can be found in the pre-school settings.
- Children's choir (seven to eleven years), the second category also prepares children for singing in the concert choir. It employs three identical parts as a choir and has its own repertoire of children's songs, folk, musical and film songs and lyrical dramas, which it performs on many occasions. This type is exemplified in the junior choirs system.
- The concert choir which is the standard type from thirteen years upwards sings as a mixed four-part choir, so it can cover the whole range of secular and sacred choral literature for mixed parts and a typical example of the youth, professional/symphony and church choirs.

1.1.2 Categories of choirs

Obviously, names of these choirs emanate from the type of the choir as well as by the institutions in which they operate. Examples of these are the Church choirs, Collegiate/University choirs, and Community choirs (of youth or adults) and other professional choirs.

Generally, choirs are categorized by the type of music they perform, such as the gospel choirs, show choirs, in which the members sing and dance, often in performances somewhat

like musicals, Symphonic choirs, Vocal jazz choirs and Modern and Contemporary choirs. In a summary, choirs can also be categorised as:

(a) Mixed choir (with male and female voices): this is perhaps the most common type found in almost all the choirs in Ghana, usually consisting of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices, often abbreviated as SATB. Example is a youth, professional or an adult church choir.

(b) Male choirs, with the same TATB voicing as mixed choirs. An example is the St. Anthony chorale of St. Anthony Anglican church, Abelemkpe in Accra and also in the boys' school/colleges.

(c) Female choirs, usually consisting of soprano, alto and tenor voices. These types are also found in most of the girls' schools/colleges.

(d) Children's choirs, often two-part SA or three-part SSA, sometimes more voices including a tenor part for boys whose voices are changing which is a typical example of a junior choir.

1.1.3 The Origin and Role of Choir

Ampiaaw, (2012) suggests that,

The place of choirs in worship dates back to Old Testament times. The Book of Psalms suggests there was singing back and forth between groups of people, probably sections of a choir. Moreover, Choirs became common in Christian Churches from the fourth century when churches became legal and worship more publicly.

He indicates that, a junior/youth choir is a choral group for children of junior and senior high school ages (i.e. 10/11 – 18/20) who do just what the adult choirs do in the ministry of music in God’s church, at the youth/teen and children services. Typically, their repertoire varies from sacred songs including hymns, anthems, canticles, contemporary choral and gospel compositions as well as secular art songs like patriotic and other general songs that blend both western and African idioms of choral music among other musical types’ (Ampiaw 2012: 47).

He continues by saying that, in our religious life in Ghana, choirs perform a vital role in Christian worship not only in leading congregations in their singing but in preserving great music of the church’s heritage and in introducing contemporary music to the Body of Christ (Ampiaw2012: 48).

Although, choirs are often refer to groups associated with a church and chorus to groups that perform in theatres or concert halls, I will use the terms choir and chorus interchangeably as a body of multi-generational singers who perform together in church, theatres or concert halls.

Ultimately, youth need to be encouraged to acquire their musical talents. In the past two decades, choirs and their development has taken a new dimension from the earlier church system. Hitherto, choirs were formed by churches for their events. By the advent of this new phenomenon of youth choirs, many choirs perform in one or many locations such as a church, opera house, or school hall.

From <http://www.personalityexplorer.com>, conflict situations are an important aspect of the workplace. A conflict is a situation when the interests, needs, goals or values of involved parties interfere with one another. A conflict is a common phenomenon in the workplace. Is conflict a bad thing? Not necessarily. Often, a conflict presents opportunities for improvement. Therefore, it is important to understand (and apply) various conflict resolution techniques.

Coser (1956) posits that groups require disharmony as well as harmony, dissociation as well as association; and conflicts within them are by no means altogether disruptive factors. Far from being necessarily dysfunctional, a certain degree of conflict is an essential element in group formation and the persistence of group life (Coser, 1956, p. 31).

Blacking (1974: 166) affirms that, “music is humanly organized sound and soundly organized humanity”. This does not mean that when people sing together conflict may not arise. As a director of music in one of choirs in Accra, I have witnessed how conflicts in choirs have resulted in the breakaway of some people to joining or forming new groups. This institution looks lucrative, and has provided an avenue for both professional and non-professional musicians to explore regardless of its technicalities and hidden script challenges.

Investigating into the mechanisms that activate and perpetuate conflict within choirs in Ghana is important because choral music is one of the most important musical expressions, and conflict can induce creativity and innovation within the choir community. Structural problem has been the antagonising agent which escalates into conflicts within the choirs. The offshoots of this anomie eventually result in the breakaway of people to form or join another choir/group

which provides a unique trend for investigation. Here, I emphasize conflict as a force that drives change. That change may be positive or negative.

Quansah, (2006) posits that, when these junior/youth choirs are properly run, they become assets to the church, community and the nation as a whole since it seeks to unearth and develop the musical potentialities of children. The upsurge has been incredible bringing about several changes and innovations in pursuance of their vision, mission as well as their individual and group identity constructions.

1.2 statement of the problem

The proliferation of youth choirs over the last three decades in Ghana is overwhelming and its luring power among the youth between the ages of thirteen (13) and forty five (45) is quite phenomenal. The provision of an avenue for both professional and non-professional musicians to explore and its development has also taken a new dimension from the earlier church system in relation to the motivational functions and development.

Today, these choirs have sprung all over the country and in every community and are spearheading the revival of the performances of choral music in Ghana through concerts. It is relevant to know the consequence of the breakaways and the changes and innovations it has brought into the music industry. This area of research is quite a ‘virgin spot’ as far as the development of youth choirs in Ghana is concerned. Juxtaposing these to the earlier statements, there is a clear need to explore this phenomenon.

1.3 Justification for the Study

Choirs perform a vital role in Christian worship not only in leading congregations in their singing but in preserving great music of the church's heritage and in introducing contemporary music to the Body of Christ. According to Ampaw (2012:48), if Christian liturgy is alive and dynamic, the choirs make a significant contribution to its vitality. The work of the choir is to provide musical offerings to inspire and uplift the people in their worship and to support and lead people in their singing.

To our dismay, gradually, most of our church choirs are under performing. This is due to the waning interest in the choirs' resulting in the inefficiencies of some aging members, and leadership. Some untoward attitudes of most Clergymen who find the role of the church choirs insignificant by the advent of the church bands also contributes to this anomaly. These have warranted an alternative approach to arrest the collapse or the fall of these church choirs as well as to sustain and promote church music and choral music as a whole. The youth choir system in Ghana now serves as an antidote and has brought a whole revival into the choir system upon which choral music treads on.

In our churches today, performances and renditions of anthems and other choral pieces during worship services and have been sacrificed for the sake of time. The few potential youth or young people who have very strong desires for choral music have no favourable environment to interact, hence, had to find their ways into the new paradigm of youth choirs formed outside the normal church context or system. Inspired by these, I sought to investigate into this new

phenomenon which is steadily creeping into the fabric of our society and the change and innovations they bring into the music industry regarding their development, performance practices/styles and their contributions to choral art music in Ghana.

1.4 Aims / Objectives

The objectives of the research are to:

- (a) Investigate the motivation of the creation, power, conflict management and developments of Youth Choirs in Ghana in relation to their interactions, inter-relations and conditions
- (b) Examine the activities, performance practice/styles and identity construction as well as scrutinize the profiles and bye-laws of selected Youth Choirs in Ghana
- (c) Examine their contributions to the contemporary choral music and their Socio-economic impacts in Ghana (employment, education, and tourism).

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of the study would add to the existing materials on youth choirs and help define our individual/ group identities as musicians and choirs. It will also serve as a source material for others willing to further the development of youth choirs and choirs in general. It will serve as a platform for other researchers to investigate into the other performance practices and styles in Ghana and help with its transmission and preservation of indigenous church music and choral arts music as a whole. It will assist in the explanation of the unique traditions thus, performance practices and styles of the youth choirs.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study will focus on the development, conflict management, performance practices/styles and contributions of youth choirs in Ghana with particular emphases on selected youth choirs in Accra including The Harmonious Chorale, Wesleyan Symphonic Choir, The Lapaz Community Youth Choir, and the Winneba Youth Choir among others as a case study. These choirs will assist in the explanation of how they have evolved, thus, which choir begot the other and their unique traditional regarding performance practices and styles.

The study explores their roles, performance events and the type of music they perform. The focus on the performance practice/styles of the choirs will be on their recruitment, rehearsal stimulant of rehearsal, repertoire, and the types of costumes, performance settings, instrumental accompaniment, conducting as well as their general choral sonority which is illustrated in the table below:

Elements	Characteristics	Results
Ensemble	Balance and blending within each section and all of the sections together	Unity
Intonation	Precision and accuracy in the tuning of cords	Beauty
Nuances	The perception and fulfillment of the conductor's demands	Expressivity

Table 1: General Choral Sonority

1.7 Theoretical Framework

For a better understanding, the study employs several sociological theories. Turner (1974: 276) indicates that, much as Parson's (1951) emphasis in *The Social System* on the 'mechanisms' of socialisation and social control implied that a failure in these mechanisms would generate deviance, conflict and change so Blau's emphasis on the failure to enter exchange with, or develop through the exchange process, a common set of values and regulative norms reveals how those processes that create patterns of social organization can also operate to create opposition, conflict and change in the social system (Parson 1951:201-325).

According to Parson (1951: 27-28), a social system must have "a sufficient proportion of its component actors adequately motivated to act in accordance with the requirements of its role system. Moreover, social system must avoid "commitment to cultural patterns which either fail to define a minimum of order or which place impossible demands on people or thereby generate deviance and conflict."

Reflecting more on the tenets of Conflict theories of Hegel, Coser and Dahrendorf, I examine and analyse the conflict of power, (politics) role conflict and ambiguity, age differential gap, technology, individual recognition (identity), ownership rights and unequal financial distributions which are the major challenges that confront many organizations of which the choirs are no exception.

According to Turner (1974) the models of both Dahrendorf and Marx emphasize different sources of conflict, they reveal a similar causal chain of events leading to conflict and reorganisation of social structure: Relations of domination or subjugation lead to the “objective” opposition of interests, awareness or consciousness by the subjugated of this inherent opposition of interests occurs under certain specifiable conditions; under other conditions this new-found awareness leads to the political organisation and then polarisation of subjugated groups, who then join in conflict with the dominant group; the outcome of the conflict will usher in a new pattern of social organisation; this new pattern of social organisation will have within its relations of domination and subjugation which sets off another sequence of events leading to conflict and then change in patterns of social organisation (Turner 1974:95).

Dahrendorf focused on the interests of particular groups of people. Subordinate groups, for example, have an interest in shifting the distribution of authority to their own advantage. People with common interests form social classes or interest groups. The various groups come into conflict with one another, thus bringing about social change. For Dahrendorf, change in society is always imminent.

According to Dahrendorf (1959), authority, however, is dichotomous; there is always an authoritative hierarchy on one side and those who are excluded on the other. Within any imperative group are those who are superordinate and those who are subordinate. There is an arrangement of social roles comprising expectations of domination or subjugation. Those who

assume opposing roles have structurally generated contradictory interests, to preserve or to change the status quo. Incumbents of authoritative roles benefit from the status-quo, which grants them their power. Those to whom this authoritative power is exercised, and who suffer from it, however, are naturally opposed to this state of affairs.

He speculates that, group's conflict and change explores the dynamic relationships between groups, conflict and change. As far as groups are concerned, he distinguished among quasi group, interest group and conflicts group. In quasi groups, (self-styled) individuals occupy positions that have the same interest. Quasi groups are the recruiting grounds for the second type of group, interest group.

Interest groups are true groups in the sociological sense of the word, possessing not only common interest but also a structure, a goal, leadership, and personnel. Interest group has the capacity to engage in group conflicts, which means from the Marxian perspective that it can transform itself into "a group-in-itself". Out of the many interest groups often emerge conflicts groups, those that actually engage in conflict in society (Dahrendorf 1959).

He reiterates that while social relationships display systemic features, these relationships are rife with conflicting interests. This fact reveals that social systems systematically generate conflict and is therefore an inevitable and pervasive feature of social systems. Such conflict tends to be manifested in the bipolar opposition of interests. Conflict most frequently occurs

over the distribution of scarce resources, most notably power and it serves as a major source of change in social systems and can be attributed to the rise of conflict within the groups which result in the breakaway from one choir to another.

Coser (1956) argues functionally that, conflict can also be the basis of social order, thus titled his book significantly as the functions of social conflict to show that conflict sometimes performs useful role in society. According to Coser, conflict exists within societies or groups, in that case it is external conflict or it can exist within societies themselves. But whatever forms it takes, conflict has the following functions; it sharpens the sense of group boundaries and contributes to unity and a feeling of group identity.

Absolutely, these are some of the proponents of conflict resulting in the breakaway to joining or forming new groups. Based on the same principle, I will rely on Hegel's dialectic theory which was adapted by Karl Marx to the study of social relations in the material world where he viewed the economy as the crucial factor and thus, whoever controlled the economy controls the society. This held that any idea, termed thesis, takes on meaning only when it is related to its opposite or contradictory idea, called antithesis. The interaction between the two ideas forms a new idea, termed synthesis.

From realnewsaustralia.com, Maddox (2013) questions what exactly is the Hegelian Dialectic? He indicates that, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was a 19th century German philosopher who devised a particular dialectic, or, method of argument for resolving

disagreements. His method of arriving at the truth by the exchange of logical arguments is a system of thought process still in use to this day. To put it simply, the basis of Hegelianism dictates that the human mind can't understand anything unless it can be divided into two polar opposites. Good / Evil, Right / Wrong, Left / Right. According to him, another form of the Hegelian Dialectic is **Problem – Reaction – Solution**.

Most of us unwittingly fall victim to it all too often and sadly if we don't stop, we will continue to lose our free will and liberties. It has been widely used by our governments and corporations around the world. You could say that in terms of controlling the masses and society in general, its deployment has been an effective tool in keeping humanity in check.

Almost all major events in history employ the Hegelian Dialectic of:

- a. **Problem** – manufacture a crisis or take advantage of one already in place in order to get the desired
- b. **Reaction** of public outcry whereby the public demands a
- c. **Solution** which has been predetermined from the beginning (Maddox 2013).

HEGEL'S DIALECTIC THEORY

THE DIALECTIC

INTERPRETATION

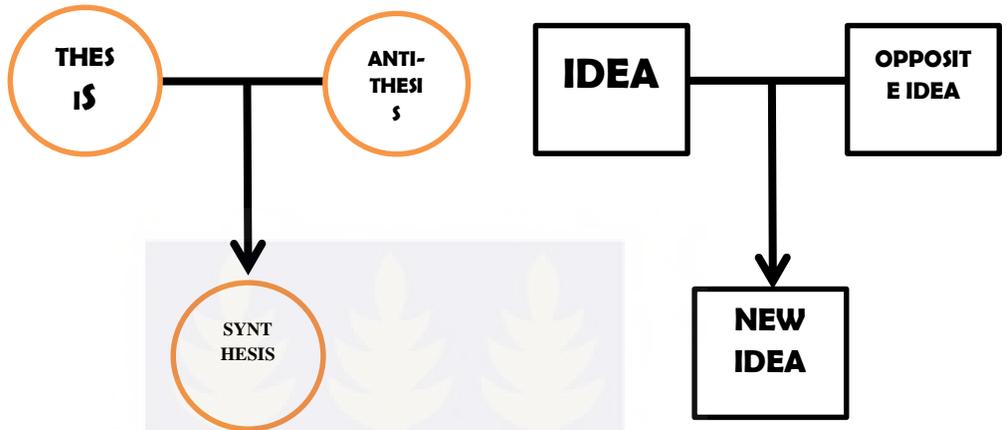


Figure 1: Hegel's Dialectic Chart

GENERAL INTERPRETATION

FORMATION OF A NEW CHOR

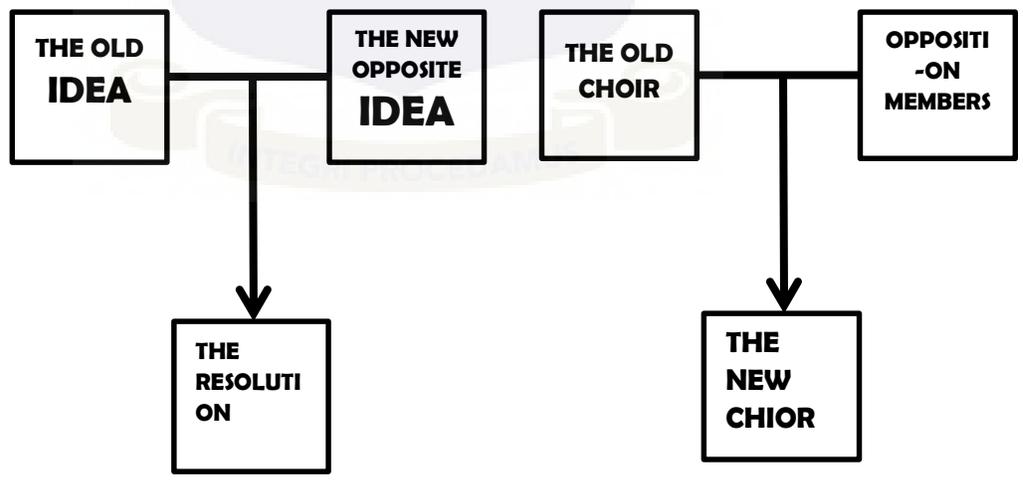


Figure 2: Hegel's Dialectic Interpretation

The dialectic process, through its reconciliation of opposites, served as a method of interpreting history. My work will be based on the premise on this theoretical abstraction of thesis (an existing group or choir) as against the opposition (anti-thesis) through deviance or conflict of role or power which will rise against the old order to form a new group (the synthesis). This new formed choir may change its content to achieve a new identity and provide an opportunity for stylistic variations as a result of youth subculture.

From 2012-2016 EduNote.info., organizational conflict arises when the goals, interests or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible and those individuals or groups block or thwart one another’s attempts to achieve their objective. We can identify the stages that a conflict born and grows in an organization. In this post we will look at the stages of a Conflict covering the birth, rise and ending of it. The conflict process can be seen as comprising five stages.

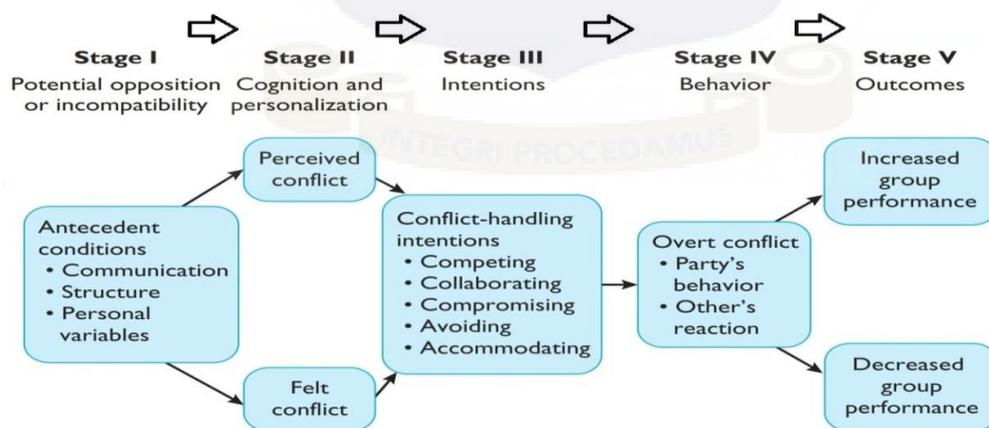


Figure 3: Conflict Process Chart

The structural strain theory or anomie which was used to explain the cause of deviance proposed by Robert K. Merton and is an adaptation of Durkheim's Anomy Theory. Adopting this model theory as part of the framework, will aid this project to interrogate the several ways in which some people break away from one group to forming a new one as well as finding contemporary ways of representing this unique tradition. It provides us with the insight into how societies and organizations in an unequal distribution of its economic resources and opportunity can inadvertently generate deviance and criminality.

Merton (1968), a functionalist who does not go with structural functionalism asserts that social behaviour must be analysed from individual's institutional area of the focus of two dimensions: the Manifest function (the intended function), and the Latent function (the unintended function). He believes that some consequences, whether functional or dysfunctional, are intended and recognised by system incumbents and are thus, "manifest" whereas other consequences are not intended or recognized and are therefore "latent" (Turner 1974: 64). This will help the study to examine the motivation behind the formation the choirs.

Identity construction is one of the essential components underpinning youth choir system in Ghana. According to Cerulo (1997:393), when moved by identity, collectives take on distinct properties. Spurred not by ideology or resource mobilization, identity-based movements act rather than react; they fight to expand freedom, not to achieve it; they mobilize for choice rather than emancipation. Cerulo (1997) quoting Alberto Melucci, central in this area, notes:

The freedom to have which characterized industrial society has been replaced by the freedom to be. The right to property has been, and remains, the basis of both industrial capitalism and its competitor model, 'real socialism'. In post-material society, there emerges a further type of right, the right to existence, or rather, to a more meaningful existence (1989:177–78; also see Calhoun 1991a:51, Giddens 1991:207–17).

In this way, identity politics creates “new social movements,” collective initiatives that are self-reflexive and sharply focused on the expressive actions of collective members (Melucci 1989:60, 1997). This summarily shows how individuals and groups identities are achieved and are demonstrated in the pursuit of the roles and functions of the leadership in the choir or group.

Structural functionalism is one of the major theories used to analyse social issues in the society. A functionalist believes that society or systems are made of different parts playing different roles and functions in the larger society or system. All the parts are interdependent which establishes a stable social order which is the structure. If something happens to anyone component, all the other components naturally readjust to produce new stability.

Structural functionalism provides an integrative approach to the study of human interaction, bringing together several aspects of culture. Structural functionalism aims to generalise and find laws for the interworking of the parts of society. This theory will help to explain how structures in the various choirs function in relation to power, authority and management.

Symbolic interactionism, a perspective which was introduced by George Herbert Mead, an American philosopher is on the basis that, people assign meanings to their actions and

attitudes and thus, people's actions are not determined by external structures. Turner (1974) Symbolic interactionism emphasizes the process of role taking in which human mutually emit and interpret each other's gestures. While social structure is an emergent phenomenon that is not inducible to the constituent actions of individuals, it is difficult to understand patterns of social organizations without recognizing that they represent an interlacing of the separate behaviours among individuals (Turner 1974: 178-79).

This theory establishes the fact that human behaviour is very unstable, always changing from one situation to another and being interpreted by different people at different times and this is overtly or covertly which are exemplified in their subculture, this theory helps to interpret and appreciate individuals' actions through their own lenses. Also it will be used to analyse and explain how some of the choirs perform in a particular style and mode.

Hermeneutic is a Greek word meaning "to interpret". It has a linguistic relationship with Hermes, a messenger of the Olympian gods, who mastered the language of the gods, understood and interpreted what these immortal beings had in mind, and translated and articulated their intentions to mortal beings (Demeterio III, 2001). This theory is mostly used in interpreting works which include writings, speech, music as well as performances and will be used in this study to interpret the performance practices and styles of the various choirs.

1.8 Literature Review

There are some literatures on this area of study which deal with the formation and management of both junior and youth choirs in Ghana. Most of the papers deal with how to

address the same challenges of these choirs, the historical events that necessitated the institution of Junior Choirs, differences in performance styles and some contributions they have made in the socio-economic development of Ghana.

Acquaah-Harrison, (2010) in a paper with the title “The Choir for the Future - A Well Trained Junior Choir” discusses some problems associated with the formation and management of a Junior Choir in our churches. He admitted, along the line, that in everything that is good in God’s house, especially music, Satan finds a way to blindfold and confuse the minds of people who may even be in high echelon (level) of the church. He discovered that there were so much wrangling about how the Junior Choir is to be managed and under whose authority. This is as a result of misunderstanding of the issues involved, concerning the formation and the running of such a choir. His discovery reveals one of the facets of a choir management which this study seeks to explore regarding power/authority and conflicts.

Agordoh, (2011:160) reveals some similarities and differences in performance styles where he asserts that in Christian practices, music for worship has both spiritual and aesthetic dimensions. This gives the basics upon which the performance practices and styles of the various youth choirs will be examined and analysed in pursuance of the focus of this study for further advancement.

Ampiaw, (2012:63-71) in his book titled ‘Confronting Technical Challenges for Effective Music Ministry: A Manual for Church Musicians and Singers in Ghana’, addresses challenges

Junior Choirs pose for Churches. He asserts that, it would be worthwhile generally considering how adults interact with children and teenagers in the church, being mindful that our actions could draw them to our music ministry or repel them. He also articulates that, we should encourage more collaborative acts in our respective churches periodically so the young ones are not estranged from us and praise when it is due as well as find the most un-embarrassing means to correct straying youngsters. His book does not specify the type of conflict that arises within the choirs and fails to appreciate the actions of the youth as exemplified in their subcultures. This gives the present study enough space to explore.

Amuah, (2013), also explore the twenty five years of choral music performance: contribution of Winneba youth choir (WYC) in the socio-economic development of Ghana. In the study, he highlights how the activities of Winneba youth choir have yielded positive results in terms of employment, education and social recognition (identity) among the youth in Winneba and its environs.

The paper addresses the need in preserving the authenticity of the choral musical art as one of the avenues in developing the cultural values of an individual and recommended that every youth experiences any of the musical arts in his/her lifetime. In this paper, the reasons for the Junior Choir's departure from the church to becoming a Youth Choir outside the church due to conflict was not adequately established where my study sought to do.

McCray, (1997) deliberates the development of Children's and youth choirs and concludes that, children's choir are an investment in the future of our choral art and church music in particular and if inspiring leadership is given, youth choirs can be one of the most dynamic forces in any church music programme. I agree with him since his idea buttresses the aim of this study.

Nketia, (1992) posits on the conventions of musical practice. He notes that one of the conventional ways of presenting music is to stroll along with it, following routes along which spectators can be attracted, routes that pass through areas occupied by those to whom the performance is directed, or routes prescribed by tradition because of the nature of the performance or the meaning and significance of the music, dance, or the visual display being performed. This will help put into context the performance practice and style of the youth choirs under discussion.

Quansah (2006) discusses Junior Choirs in the four mainline historical churches in Winneba. In the study, he traces the historical events that necessitated the institution of Junior Choirs as part of Christian churches music ministry and worship, and delves into their development, training, objectives, modus operandi and their impact. He also asserts that, Junior choirs help to unearth and develop the musical potentialities of children. However, the study fails to address how the individual's interactions and interrelations affect the group and whose consequence brings about change and innovations within the group as well as the historical area. This serves as one of the fundamentals of my study.

1.9 Methodology

1.9.1 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher consulted written relevant documents that included books, journals, magazines and back issues of newspapers. The research employed multiple forms of qualitative data collection strategies which included observations and face-to-face interviews to collect extensive data on the development and contributions of youth choirs in Ghana. This is to trace the historical antecedents of a choir, the events that necessitated the formation or institution of the Youth Choirs as well as investigate their development, aims, power, conflict management, performance practices/styles and their contributions to choral music through question schedules and phone calls to cross-check certain facts that needed further clarification. The researcher also made use of recorded performance videos for the performance.

1.9.2 Data Processing

All data collected were compiled to reflect the true image as set out in the research outline. Evidences collected were cross-checked from other sources to ensure that they were coherent.

1.9.3 Field Experience

I adopted a qualitative method of approach which was comprehensively dominated by fieldwork. I also used participant observation and library research as a method of data collection. Even though there are scant published materials on Youth/Junior choirs, the researcher stands at an advantage since the founders of the selected Youth Choirs are available and can be interviewed.

I visited them to have a first-hand experience as to how they operated. I also consulted some composers and directors of other choirs to share some ideas on the practices of these choirs. In consulting them, I employed interview techniques to allow me more space to ask follow up questions during the interview sessions. Data collected were examined to reflect the goals set out in this research project.



CHAPTER TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH CHOIRS IN GHANA

2.1 Preamble

This chapter discusses three comprehensive segments; the account of the origin and the development of youth choirs in Ghana tracing its root from the 1946 to date, background and the origin and the formation of the choirs are dealt with in A, Segment B also examines the formation of new choirs as a result of conflict of power, authority and ownership right while segment C tackles the quest and investigation into other reasons why people breakaway from one choir to another and to establish the consequence of the break away.

2.2 Background Account of its Origin

A choir has different levels of action, and promotes individual integration in various dimensions; personal (motivation), group (interpersonal relationships), communitarian (improvement on life quality), social (inclusion) and political (democratic participation in public actions, free expression of aesthetic, ethic, artistic manifestation of ideas and ideals according to Mathias (1986).

Takyi Donkor (2013:14) notes that:

The development of gospel music in Ghana can be traced as far back to the activities of missionaries in the 15th century in Ghana when Christianity and European forms of music were introduced. Baeta (1967) cited in Andoh (2008) notes that on the 19th January 1482 when the Portuguese first landed on the Guinea Coast, they erected a banner and set up an altar. On this altar the first mass was sung in La Mina (Elmina) and prayers said for the prosperity of the church which they intended to build on the very spot (Andoh 2008, Debrunner 1962:17). According to their accounts, prayers were

also said for the conversion of the natives from idolatry into Christianity. This ceremony is said to have marked the introduction of Christianity and Art music in Ghana (Agordoh 2011). The first batch of missionaries into the country, according to Agordoh (ibid), failed to establish Christianity permanently until the 19th century when missionary works began. Agordoh further explains that in the course of the missionary activities the seed for a new musical culture was sown. The life of the African depicts a belief in the Supreme Being hence, the idea of God as the Supreme Being, and the process of missionary activities received little resentment in Ghana.

It is believed that the La Youngster's Choir was one of the earliest youth choirs ever formed during the 1940s in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Coester, (2012:4), discusses that the La Youngster's Choir was formed around 1949 by Marte Markwei. The paternal home in the centre of La became the first rehearsal ground for the young women and men Markwei had grouped together to learn and perform songs.

In the course of the 1950s the group grew into quite a large choir of around thirty members, eight female singers, the rest male, and quickly gained a reputation as a very good choir. The La youngster's choir was among the first choirs (if not the first) to draw on Ga traditional music and dance for their repertoire, which Markwei arranged for it. They became well known for their outstanding performances and were one of the first choirs to appear on television in Ghana. While leading the La youngsters' choir in the early 1950s, Markwei worked as a teacher at La Bonne Secondary School (before he joined Broadcasting in 1956). During this time, the choir performed regularly at wake keeping and for church festivities. During the Christmas season they went round in the evenings to sing Christmas carols, a tradition he had inherited from his parents (Marte Markwei 2011:7-8).

This concept became silent after the late “50s” perhaps, due to lack of interest of the then youth, management, conflicts and ownership rights up until the late 80s, when the Ebenezer Methodist Church in Winneba as well as the Wesley Methodist Church Kumasi among others started a juvenile choir dubbed “Methodist Junior Choir”.

Amuah (2013) indicates that the main aim for the establishment of this choir by George Mensah-Essilfie upon the direction of the church elders was to prepare the youths to take over the mantle of singing from the adults in their old age. The church elders also deemed it doctrinally sound to ensure the retention of the youth by engaging them in such an activity. Apart from singing in the church during the Sunday service, the junior choir also assisted the church in her open air evangelism works by attending and singing during the crusades, camp meetings, dawn and radio broadcasts among other events organised by the church.

Further on, he mentions that the effort of the Ebenezer Methodist Church, encouraged other sister churches in the town to form junior choirs. In a shortest period the Anglican, the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion, the Roman Catholic and the Mozama Disco Christo Church had all formed junior choirs that performed similar functions as Winneba Youth choir in their churches. Unexpectedly however, about ninety percent of the membership of the Methodist Junior Choir, Winneba broke away to start a youth choir. The new junior choir which took on the name “Winneba Youth Choir” has since developed in their choral music performances (Amuah 2013: 105).

This catastrophe is demonstrated in the Hegel’s Dialectic theory of thesis (which is the earlier motion) and the antithesis (which is also the counter motion by the worrying party) and

resulting in synthesis (the agreed motion if the conflict is resolved amicably or the new idea formed out of the unresolved conflict).

2.3 The Motivation and Benefit Factor

Most of the music directors I interviewed appeared to have the same intentions of forming their choirs. They rarely mentioned money as the driving force but to promote the musical compositions of Ghanaian and African religious (church) musicians, performing all kinds of choral music, evangelising and ministering to the world through its melodious and spirit filled repertoires and tunes and most importantly serving as witnesses of our Lord Jesus Christ. In principle, their intentions are genuine and forthright; however, the vision of the choir directors after the establishment, due to the boom of the industry becomes questionable. The suspicion becomes apparent when some members of the group later decides to break away to form their own for recognition and money.

These choirs have become businesses which are used to amass wealth and other benefits. To some of the unprofessional musicians, their manifest functional reason is to use that platform as classroom for learning songs and other things regarding the management and directing. The acquired knowledge and experience are then transferred into running their private one which is the latent functional reason.

Freedom of association is a right of every individual and the choice of joining a particular group is an individual's distinct prerogative upon which the onus lies. However, some group members are motivated by creating interpersonal relationships with other members of the group. According to Clinton (2015), the reasons for people joining an organisation are often not fully understood. It is usually a combination of factors including the image and reputation of the company, the job itself, location, travel, people in the team and the impressions gained during the recruitment process. The following points suggest some key factors underpinning the reasons why people join groups/organisations according to (Clinton 2015).

- **Group Synergy:** Group synergy refers to the idea that two heads (or more) are better than one. There is a saying, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts," which also refers to group synergy. Groups are often capable of performing higher quality work and making better decisions than an individual can make alone.
- **Support and Commitment:** A group is generally always being more willing to undertake a large project than would an individual. In addition to its improved ability to perform work, the group can provide encouragement and support to its members while working in a big project.
- **Interpersonal Needs:** Individuals often join a group to meet their interpersonal needs.

Shetty (2010) identifies some reasons why people join a user group and reveals that user group's provide a unique opportunity for people to learn from their peers and provide an opportunity to network and make new connections with industry peers, make new friends is endless. Most human beings love to share and highlight their expertise and knowledge. By this

opportunity, most people have benefited immensely by way of financial support, employment and education. This is true because most of the choirs have a pool of people from different professional backgrounds. They offer special support to its individuals and help them to form an identity.

Just like some people work not basically because of money but satisfaction, other people also join groups only for satisfaction. The spirit of belonging is an essential aspect of life which is generally economic in nature and provides an opening for interaction and to discover themselves as friends. This interactions and interrelations bond people with similar attitudes, personalities or economic standings together who form the foundation and tenets of a choir. There is always a burning desire of some people to belong to a particular choir by dint of its uniqueness of vision/mission of their core mandate and its performance practices/style.

2.4 The Formation of the Youth Choirs

An investigation I did on the formation and upsurge of youth choirs in Ghana reveals that Greater Accra alone can record over thirty two (32) youth choirs and still counting. This phenomenal increase is as a result of change and innovation of the youth subculture. Their quest for new things through their interactions, inter-relations and their precocious ambitions, have occasioned the spread of these several brands of these choirs sprung up all over the country. As many youth pursue nothing but new things, they become overly ambitious; however, many things militate against their wishes which they abhor most.

Change is one of the things most youth resist. They are desirous to do things their own way, however, become rule or law breakers and easily become tired of following a particular direction. They are enthusiastic and have the ‘can do spirit’ to embark on anything they want to do and hence seek for their freedom.

According to Chand (2013), change is always difficult to make, be it individual change or organisational change. Attachment to familiar habits, practices, places and people may have to be given up. Change scares people. Individuals tend to find security in traditional approaches to life and situations. One of the major reasons for resistance to change is uncertainty about the impact of change. The fear of the unknown always has a major impact on the decisions of the individuals.

New technology, new procedures, new systems can all create uncertainties and hence inhibit the change process. An example of this phenomenon can be sited in the Singing Band of the Ghana Police Church where I worship and a director of music. They are used to the usage of congas drum during performances. The Band (choir) becomes very uncomfortable any time I tried to use the programmed instrumentations in the keyboard and so had to stop using it. Not knowing exactly what the change would bring about makes members anxious and apprehensive about the change.

In choir management and practice, change in the leadership attitude and style can also induce resistance to change regarding discipline and general maintenance of the structure of the choir.

Lack of proper communication can also lead to resistance, thus, if the need for the change is not communicated well in time and in an acceptable manner. A sense of participation in the change process by the members reduces the extent of this resistance. Similarly, slow changes in the process result in lower resistance than sudden or rapid changes. Naturally, some individuals resist change because the group to which they belong resists it. The individuals usually comply with the group norms and codes and support the group attitudes and activities.

In the spirit of solidarity, some people choose to follow or take side with some untoward actions of friends who are punished by authority over a breach of the rules and regulations of the choir. A classic example of this is what happened in the then Ebenezer Methodist Junior Choir, Winneba when the leader of the group was suspended and had some members following him which resulted in the creation of a new group; the Winneba Youth Choir outside the church.

Another major reason for resistance centres on the emotional turmoil that a change may cause, especially if the past experiences with changes have not been positive. This results in misunderstanding and lack of trust so that even when the change is well intended; its significance is misinterpreted, leading to resistance. Hence the emotional responses must be properly diagnosed and predicted and all efforts should be made to alleviate any fear that the employees may have regarding the consequences of any change.

There are times when a change will reduce the power base of a group and the prospect of such loss of power will create resistance, even though such changes may be considered good for the choir as a whole. This resistance to change can have some very unfavourable consequences. If the change is considered or perceived to be a threat to the individual or the group, it can result in implicit defensive behaviour such as loss of loyalty to the choir, loss of motivation to work, persistent reduction in output, excessive absenteeism, sudden hostility, increase in errors and so on. It can also result in overt defensive behaviour such as disobedience within the choir and consequence of the failure to conform to the new swing or change result in the breakaway from one group/choir and join another which may be as a result of internal conflict.

Youth of today can be distinguished by the differences in their language use, interests, ambitions as well as their own territories. What they abhor most is to be subjugated or be under any sort of oppressors rule whether from within or without. They seek nothing but their freedom in order that they can achieve their goals by invoking their entrepreneurial spirits.

Generation gap has also created a parallel gap in language that can be difficult to communicate across. This problem is common to many groups, institutions and within the choirs. As new generations seek new things, they adopt new practices and styles as a generation to create a sense of division from the previous one. This is a visible gap between generations which creates and defines their reality.

In relation to this, the age ranges of members of these choirs vary from one choir to another. Some choirs are purely youth while others are quite adult. Although a choir is a multi-generational group, there it is very needful to clearly define the age boundaries. In Accra, mention can be made of the “Dansoman Youth Choir”, “Jesus and Mary Youth Choir”, “Wesleyan Youth Choir”, “Abeka Lapaz Youth Choir”, and the “Harmonious Chorale.” In Cape Coast there is the “Oguaa Youth Choir”, while in Koforidua one finds the “*Kyeman* Youth Choir”, and in Tema, the “Tema Youth Choir”, “Ashaiman Youth Choir” and the “Inspirational Singers”. In Kumasi the situation is a little different; they have constituted groups whose members are adults. Examples are the “Adehyeman Choral Group” and the “Amamreso Choral Group.”

Senya Bereku Youth Choir is one of the choirs whose membership is predominantly adult and are above the youth age bracket. I have met with them at two Carols Services performances at the Ghana Police Headquarters in Accra with the Ghana Police Church Youth Choir. I think the Senya Youth choir the others in the same category of having suspected youthful membership, can rename their group from the youth choir to a community youth choir to appropriately fit their identity as a choir.

Acquaah-Harrison (2010) asserts that, around the mid-sixties in Kumasi, at the Wesley Cathedral, some young men in the church choir felt the need for another choir to serve the church when the early morning service was started. The membership of the choir then numbering over two hundred (200) seemed too large for the addition of new young members,

hence the birth of the first Junior Choir in Ghana. According to him, most people were recruited into the church choir at the age of 8 or 9, the universally accepted age of a young chorister. Recruitment was not too difficult because it was done from the Missionary schools at the time. He affirms that some of the Choirmasters/Organists were either school heads or teachers; so, all that they did was to commandeer, as it were, those whose voices were satisfactory into the choir.

These young choir boys and girls had to serve a probationary period between six months to one year before being robed as fully-fledged choristers, with very little knowledge of the singing of the tonic-sol-fa notation which was hurriedly taught without an aural-training. Later, approximately twenty years after that, a junior choir was formed in Ebenezer Methodist Cathedral, Winneba which marked the rebirth of the Junior/Youth choirs concept in Ghana. The good performance of this choir influenced the formation of many Junior/Youth Choirs as we see today.

Acquaah-Harrison who is one of the renowned musicians and an organist in Ghana admitted along the line that, for everything that is good in God's house, especially music, Satan finds a way to blindfold and confuse the minds of people who may even be in high echelon of the church. He discovered that there were so much wrangling about how the Junior Choir is to be managed and under whose authority. This is as a result of misunderstanding of the issues involved, concerning the formation and the running of such a choir.

To him he agrees that the choir must be under the senior choir, because they think, in this case, no conflict will arise if the Choirmaster formed the Junior Choir and therefore he would automatically and easily control both choirs. On the other hand, if another person who has not been delegated by the church goes ahead to form the Junior Choir for the Church then administrative problems would have been created where, if care is not taken, there would certainly be conflict between the Choir Master and the one who formed the Junior Choir. His emphasis was that, Up until the time he was adding his voice on the Junior Choir matters none of any church authority had authorised the formation of a Junior Choir where this exists. For instance, in Winneba, one Tagoe, a Sunday school teacher, started it from the Sunday school for some time before inviting Mr. Mensah-Essilfie, the organists of the church to bring them to an appreciable standard. Even after this great effort it took some time for the Leaders' Meeting to recognise it. In his suggestions, he recommended that:

- ❖ In whichever situation, any Junior Choir should be an entity just as any musical group in the church under the Leaders' Meeting with its own administration under its own Choir Master, because as the saying goes: "that one dog cannot keep guard in two separate houses" a Choir Master of a Senior Choir cannot conveniently be administering the Junior Choir. He will be merely interfering. In fact, the Choir Master for the senior choir and his executive will add nothing to the progress of the junior choir. "I know where such problems have reared its head to the detriment of the Junior Choir, and such must be avoided" he cautioned.
- ❖ The church must invest heavily in the administration of her choirs, and come out with proper policies to guide their growth and help enhance their performances. Anything short of these

will not yield good results because the church has neglected the well-being of the choirs under them as well as their Choir Masters/Organists.

- ❖ Now it has become necessary for the church to recognize the importance of a Junior Choir and to have a clear-cut policy for its formation, training and management in a business-like manner, and for which;
 - ✓ The church must form a consortium of knowledgeable musicians who can train the children properly in rudiments of music, aural perception, voice production techniques and the keyboard (organ) techniques.
 - ✓ This consortium of musicians may also help train the Choir Masters and Organists who are going to take charge of the choirs.
 - ✓ To pay appropriate remuneration and allowances to the members of the Consortium whenever their services are needed. This will even help to solve the perennial problem of no-organist syndrome.
 - ✓ To have a world-class standard choirs for the future we should not merely say that at 18 junior choristers should advance or be promoted to the present untrained senior choristers. We should rather form new choirs with the younger and well-trained choristers who will eventually replace the older choristers who were not given such opportunity to train as proper choristers and therefore have problems of easily learning the pieces that they are thought.

In conclusion he asserts that, the formation of Junior Choirs should be what the Church should pursue with all seriousness and vigour applying the correct training methods and management.

It should be an on-going project so that as the well trained products are being formed as Junior Choirs more children are being prepared annually to join or be formed into another choir.

By this earlier submission, if one exterminates the contributions of some Churches concerning the build-up and the formation of this new phenomenon, the history of community youth choirs system in Ghana will become incomplete. This is because most of the Directors of the community youth choirs are school music masters/church musicians. Indeed, most of these community youth choirs actually emanated from Churches Junior Choirs of which it can be traced to the Winneba Ebenezer Methodist Junior Choir.

According to Amuah (2013), the emergence and formation of Youth Choirs in Ghana can be traced to the Winneba Youth Choir. According to him in 1997, about ninety percent of the membership of the Methodist Junior Choir, Winneba, broke away to start a youth choir. The then director of the junior choir, Francis Arthur Yamoah, (Paa John) assisted by Edwin Atta Ghunney (organist), and His Excellency Kow Nkansah Ackaah, pioneered the registration of the group as non-profit making association, independent of the church (Arkhurst 2012: 1). Thornhill (2008: 1) is of the same view that a choir is usually incorporated, not for profit making or a registered charity.

In conclusion, he asserts that, the emergence of youth choirs in almost every region in Ghana, some of whose leaders were once members of the WYC. To remain as the best youth choir in the midst of the emerging youth choirs in Ghana, it is important that permanent musicians and qualified instrumentalists (accompanists) are engaged to constantly train them. Having

permanent choral directors will help them reach greater heights in their bid to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. If this is not done, they may stand the risk of being overshadowed by these emerging groups who are equally good in providing choral music at state functions (Amuah 2013:106-67).

Amuah (2013) again indicates that, the effort of the Ebenezer Methodist Church, Winneba, encouraged other sister churches in the town to form junior choirs. Within a short time, the Anglican, the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion, the Roman Catholic and the Mozama Disco Christo Church had all formed junior choirs which performed similar functions in their churches. It was also found necessary to keep the younger generation actively involved in the church through singing. So, the then Methodist Junior Choir was born to perform independently or complementarily in the church without any reward (Amuah 2013:107-111).

Quansah (2006) also reiterates that the choir was started as the Ebenezer Methodist Junior Choir from the Sunday school of the church in 1988, by Mr. Hayford and Mrs. Tagoe who were the Sunday school teachers. They consulted Mr. George Mensah Essilfie, the church organist to come to their aid in training the children who also willingly accepted the appointment and started auditioning and teaching them songs. He further indicates that, there has been diverse views as to how the Winneba youth choir broke away from the Ebenezer Methodist Church. One school of thought he exclaims has it that the church initially left them to do their own thing. Their activities and movements were not controlled nor monitored.

Their needs were neither provided for by the church and when the Leaders of the church later wanted to come in and involved themselves in the running of the group, the members were upset. They thought the church was poking her nose into their affairs and dictating to them so they had to rebel and that brought about the breakaway (Quansah 2006).

These acts of behaviours are demonstrated in the structural strain theory or anomie which was used to explain the cause of deviance proposed by Robert K. Merton and is an adaptation of Durkheim's Anomy Theory. Modes of individuals adaptation to anomie varies from one to another. The modes include conformity, innovation, ritualist, retreatism and rebellion.

According to the modes, some members will conform to the rules of the group or the choir by having internalised the cultural goals of the choir and also have the means to attain its goals. Innovation addresses the acceptance of the cultural goals but lacks the resource power; hence resort to other means for survival. The ritualism falls in when the individuals lose touch with success goal while abiding by the institutional means. When this happens, it means the center cannot hold and thereby things begins to fall apart and therefore retreatism sets in for the individual to reject both the goals and the means and rebel.

These best explain how the rebellious actions of the members of Ebenezer Methodist Junior Choir, Winneba served as a springboard and facilitated the breakaway to start a youth choir outside the church due to the conflict that reared its head and at the negligence of duty in the parts of the church authorities. The church initially;

- Left them to do their own thing.
- Failed to monitor and control their activities and movements and
- Failed to provide their needs and later wanted to come in and involve themselves in the running of the group
- Poke her nose into their affairs and dictating to them when they were already fending for their own selves, so had to rebel and that brought about the break away.

According to Quansah (2006), the Ebenezer Methodist Junior Choir's brouhaha has to do with the arrogance, indiscipline, pride; immorality and misappropriation of funds were some of the unattractive character traits that reared their heads in the choir, especially with the leadership. This was confirmed and made open on one Palm Sunday by Rev. Jonfia, the then Superintendent Minister of the church when the choir refused to sing when they were called upon to render an anthem in the church. This compelled the leaders and the church to reprimand the conductor by asking him to proceed on an indefinite suspension. This did not go down well with some members of the choir who in solidarity, joined the conductor on suspension and never came back. In 1998, the choir was incorporated and registered as a non-profit making association, with the objective of providing a platform for the education and development of the youths in Winneba and its environs through singing (Quansah 2006).

The Durkheim's anomy theory interrogates the several ways in which some people break away from one group to form a new one as well as finding contemporary ways of representing this unique tradition. It provides us with the insight into how people who get frustrated with

the existing system or the status quo and reject the goals and means of the society but create or substitute new goals and means for the society or group. In the light of the church and the choir, it can inadvertently generate deviance.

2.5 Conflict of Power/Authority

According to Turner (1974), and Lockwood (1956) argue that, Parsons, in continually assuming for analytical purposes a system in equilibrium, had created a fictionalised conception of the social world. From this world of fantasy, as Lockwood phrased the matter, it was inevitable that analyses would emphasize mechanisms that maintained social order rather than those that systematically generate disorder and change. Furthermore, by assuming order and equilibrium, the ubiquitous phenomena of instability, disorder, and conflict too easily became viewed as deviant, abnormal and pathological (Lockwood 1956: 134-46, Turner 1974:78).

Karl Marx hypothesizes that each social system contains elements of strain and of potential conflict; if in the analysis of the social structure of a system these elements are ignored, if the adjustment of patterned relations is the only focus of attentions, then it is not possible to anticipate basic social change.

Turner (1974:78) inscribes the intellectual springboard for conflict of power according Marx and states that:

- While social relationships display systemic features, these relationships are rife with conflicting interests.
- This fact reveals that social systems systematically generate conflict.
- Conflict is therefore an inevitable and pervasive feature of social systems.
- Such conflict tends to be manifested in the bipolar opposition of interests.
- Conflict most frequently occurs over the distribution of scarce resources, most notably power.
- Conflict is the major source of change in social systems.

Therefore, the product of loss of power and control is highly exemplified in the theory of anomie and structural strain of Merton. His model on deviance and functionalism best can be used to explain how conflict in a group or a choir can generate and induce separation.

Authority/ power and ownership right is another major area of concern which induces various forms conflict of within most of the youth choirs in Ghana. Roberto (1930:319) defines authority as the capacity, innate or acquired, for exercising ascendancy over a group. It is a manifestation of power and implies obedience on the part of those subject to it. One principal means of exercising authority is the dispensation of rewards and punishments.

According to Coleman's (n.d.: 33) paper on Authority, Power, Leadership: Sociological understandings, authority, for Weber, is legitimate power. It rests on a voluntaristic understanding and is intertwined with notions of imposition of will, obedience, and assent to commands. The major difference between power and authority rests in the fact that power is

essentially tied to the personal characteristics of individuals or groups, whereas authority is always tied to social positions or roles. Weber notes that while power is a merely factual relation, authority is a legitimate relation of domination and subjection.

In page 33 Coleman S.J., The distinction between authority and power can be illustrated by an industrial manager who would try to control people outside his factory or the private lives of those who work inside the firm. These actions would trespass the borderline between authority and power. Although the manager has authority over defined aspects of the work life of people in the firm, his control would assume the form of mere power as soon as it goes beyond the specified persons and spheres of legitimate control. In the case of the choir, the choir director has the gregarious authority and power over all members of the choir while the members also have limitations to their powers. Their power is somehow defined and it is subject to the highest authority or the powers that be.

But, of course, just this kind of trespassing is ubiquitous in almost every authority relation because power. Even legitimate power is never simply neutral or totally benign. Indeed, as British sociologist, Lukes, (1974:26) has persuasively argued, power (like justice) is “an essentially contested concept.” Power is one of those concepts which “inevitably involve endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of users. To engage in disputes about the meaning and locus of power is itself, to engage in politics.

In any human institution where there are no rules or laws and no direction, that interaction within the institution becomes like a jungle where survival of the fittest becomes the new order for the strongest and the powerful. Where cheating becomes highly predominant, the focus as well as vision the group (choir) will be displaced in the light of leadership. Protest in any form is resorted to as a means of getting what is desired. The consequence of this is either a walk away or otherwise.

Zambrano (2000) defines authority as a relation that exists between individuals. He further explains that, relation of authority exists when one individual, prompted by his or her circumstances, does as indicated by another individual what he or she would not do in the absence of such indication. This is referred to as the authority relation. The legitimacy of an authority relation is what keeps the relationship from breaking down, and is the answer to the question: why does the one who follows do as indicated by the one who rules?

2.6 Ownership Right

There is a perception that youth choir institution looks lucrative, and has provided an avenue for exploitation for both professional and non-professional musicians. Conflicts relating to power struggles/leadership and ownership rights are very key in the administration structure of the youth choirs in Ghana leading to the breakaways. Some breakaways occur when the issue of ownership becomes disputable.

It does happen that, the thought of conceiving the idea of forming a choir may come from an individual who may not have the technical capability in music. He/she may have a good leadership, organisational and managerial prowess who can also finance the group. This person may have to appoint, employ or engage a professional musician to team up with to manage the choir. Ownership right becomes suspect and contentious when the founder of the choir is an unprofessional squabble with the hired professional would want to claim ownership of the choir.

Additionally, conflicts in some of the choirs occur as a result of members struggling to attain more resources and because resources are scarce, they must struggle within. Groups and individuals try to protect their own interests, therefore blocking the progress of other members of the groups. As a result of this, they try to instigate other members to either disrespect or do anything to disregard the integrity of the manager. This is very evident during sharing of money or other things after an activity or a programme. The mismanagement of such unfortunate circumstances escalates into conflicts within the choirs and the offshoots will eventually result in the breakaway. Unfortunately, the one leaving leaves not alone but with his followers to forming or joining another choir.

Coser (1957: 197) emphasizes that conflict is the nuisance of thought. It stirs us to observation and memory. It instigates to invention. Conflict not only generates new norms but also new institutions. Economic historians often have pointed out that much technological improvement has resulted from the conflict activity of trade unions through the raising of wage levels. These

among others are some of the basic reasons people move out of one choir to either form a new one or join another choir.

This phenomenon of conflict emanating from a choir being formed out of an existing one is best explained using Hegel's dialectic theory. This held that any idea, termed **thesis** takes on meaning only when it is related to its opposite or contradictory idea, called **antithesis**. The interaction between the two ideas forms a new idea, termed **synthesis**. By this theory, the idea, termed thesis in the conflict circumstance of a choir constitute the main or the original idea or motion if the choir by the leadership which comes in face to face with the opposing or counter idea from the aggrieved members which is also termed as the antithesis.

The interactions between these two ideas create a tension or confusion within the choir forms a new idea after the resolution, this will be termed as the synthesis. When the disagreement is unresolved and ended up in breakaway of some members to form a new choir, the new choir also becomes the synthesis of the old choir.

2.7 Some other Reasons for the Breakaway

Blacking (1971) asserts that, because music is humanly organised sound, there ought to be relationships between patterns of human organisation and the patterns of sound produced in the course of organised interaction (Blacking 1971:91-108). By this assertion, the general management of some choirs especially the community youth choirs over the years has been very informal regarding authority, power, leadership and the entire administration. These have been mismanaged and had become an albatross to most of the choirs.

Ampiaw (2011:64) remarks that:

“When junior choirs are led by incompetent musicians who have not mastered the canons of their trade, they display whimsical leadership that achieves nothing or very little. The enthusiastic children soon discover the challenges of their technical leadership and the near-total absence of managerial skills in their leaders. They lose their love for the choir and begin looking out for which other group they could join. Sometimes the fear of losing networks of friends becomes the only good reason the singers might have for their continuing association with a poorly-led choir.”

There are no clear cut of structures and schemes for management and development for some choirs. There are only a few who have made the efforts to develop a policy or bye-laws for their choirs which would be investigated in the next chapter. An interview with some youth choir directors like James Varrick Armaah of the Harmonious Chorale, Theophilus of the Gramophone Chorale, Andy of the Vocal Essence, Alfred Addaquye performs with most of the youth choirs around, Emmanuel Arye of the MMC Chorale, George Edzie, Mr. Benjamin Amakye-Boateng, Dennis Amakye-Okyere of Cristal Echoes and others regarding their departure indicate that, this phenomenon usually occurs due to the following factors or reasons:

- i. They are of the view that, it was time for them to leave and become independent due lack of clear direction of the choir, displacement of the manifest/latent vision of the choir, loss of interest in the choir, unequal distribution of funds, lack of motivation.
- ii. They point to the boring nature of the choir due to the low rate of learning/ type of repertoire, success/failures of concerts/performances as well as loss of faith in the leadership.

- iii. The phenomenon of being with the best, that is, the alignment to the well-established and famous choirs around gives them satisfaction.

Their intention of joining or forming their choirs can be exemplified in Roberts Merton's (1968) structural functionalism theory, where he analyses social behaviour from individual's institutional area which focuses on two dimensions: the Manifest function (the intended function), and the Latent function (the unintended function). Their latent and manifest functional reasons examine the motivation behind the formation of the choirs.

It is assumed that once you are able to form the choir, you can organise concerts or attend programmes which will yield some money and other benefits, and so forming their own choir becomes a target that ought to be achieved at all cost. A typical instance of a latent reason of joining a particular choir is not necessarily because they enjoy singing but some business contacts as well as other welfare issues like wedding, funeral and other ceremonies.

Sparingly, some people join other choirs because of their friends in the choir or somebody marked in the choir as a soul partner. As others are coerced into the choir as a result of their association with the leader of the group lest they lose their benefits, other people also join the choirs just for fun without counting on the hidden script.

2.8 Some of the Breakaway Youth Choirs in Ghana

Due to the economic boom and practical benefits of the industry, some of the personalities including James Varrick Armaah of the Harmonious Chorale, George Eddzie of the Young

Chorale and others moved out from the Winneba Youth Choir to form their own choirs and to established their own identity and style. Applying the Hegel’s dialectic theory, the table below shows some of the personalities who broke away to form their own youth choirs in Ghana:

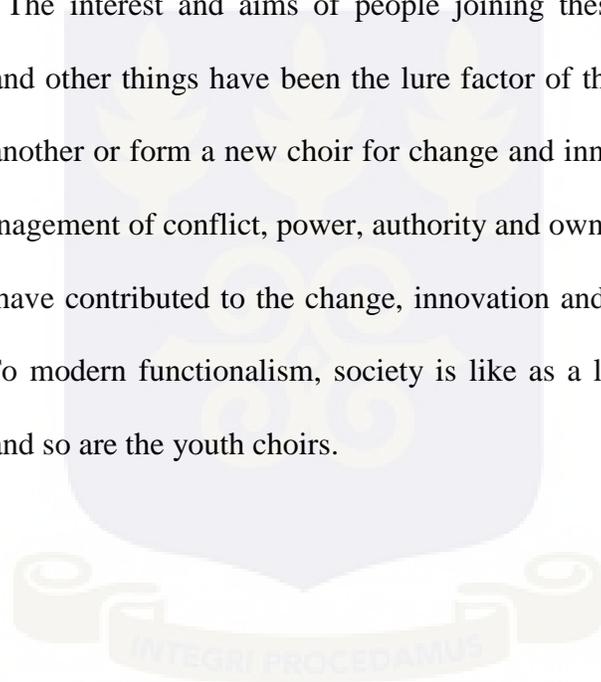
PERSONALITY	OLD CHOIR	NEW FROM THE CHOIR
James Varrick Armaah	Winneba youth choir	Harmonious Chorale
George Edzie	Winneba youth choir	Young Chorale
Andrew Andy	Dansoman Youth Choir	Vocal Essence
Theophelious Essandoh	Wesleyan Symphonic Choir	Gramophone chorale
Brother Bugu	Lapaz Community Youth Choir	Mighty Orchestral Chorale
Mr. Sampson	Tema Youth Choir	Saint Anthony Male Choir

Table 2: Dialectic Table

The Harmonious Chorale- Ghana Choir has become a model choir amongst all others. It has developed a thriving industry in Ghana providing employment and opportunity for self-development to many budding music professionals in Ghana. This is to say that, the choir has shaped the career opportunities of many young people and has provided a unique identity for

themselves in Ghana and the West African sub-region. Some of the youth choirs have tried portraying the capabilities of the youth of Africa through choral music. The youth who travelled outside Ghana have highly been motivated by the various invitations to either contest or serve as guests in choral music performances.

In conclusion, the upsurge and the development of these choirs over the past two decades have been phenomenal. The interest and aims of people joining these choirs in relation to the available benefits and other things have been the lure factor of the upsurge. The breakaways from one choir to another or form a new choir for change and innovation as well as create an identity, proper management of conflict, power, authority and ownership right have been some of the factors that have contributed to the change, innovation and the development of youth choirs in Ghana. To modern functionalism, society is like as a living organism which must grow and develop and so are the youth choirs.



CHAPTER THREE

PERFORMANCE PRACTICE / STYLES OF YOUTH CHOIRS GHANA

3.1 Preamble

Chapter three scrutinizes three broad sections regarding the activities, performance practice/styles, identity construction and competition among the youth choirs in Ghana. Section A discusses some common practices of the youth choirs regarding their recruitment, rehearsals, stimulant at rehearsal, teaching/learning methodology. Section B deals with stage arrangement, costumes, conducting, singing style, instrumental accompaniment, other technology, performance setting, repertoire; and section C handles the identity construction, competition, preparation processes for events and their general choral sonority.

Hilton (2011) speculates that;

“A singer needs to be able to communicate using both forms. Body language is a vital form of communication between humans, along with vocal tone and the words especially on stage where distance becomes a barrier if the singer neglects to deliver to the folks up the back. Other ways of communicating our personalities, ideologies and beliefs are expressed through the way we dress, the accent we use, the people we hang out with, music we listen to, organisations we support, places we choose to live or go on holiday to and life style choices we make”.

The music industry creates and performs music, both in the form of composition and performances. Singing is a form of communication and as such it is very important for the performer to communicate well with the audience. To achieve this, the performer needs to be identified with the song and have an understanding of its content in order to convey it

meaningfully in singing to the audience. The performer therefore needs to develop a personal relationship with the music which will be translated and exhibited in the performance.

Fucci Amato *et al* on their proceedings of the 22nd annual production and operations management society (POMS) conference, Reno, Nevada, USA indicate that:

“Choral singing, professional or amateur can itself be considered as a work practice, which provides cultural products and services, such as concerts and records. Under this point of view, choirs are based on material resources (such as musical instruments and scores) and, prominently, by human resources (such as conductor and choristers). These characteristics indicate that choirs are social groups or organizations and require management of their operations and processes”.

Adedeji (2012) also suggests that performance styles and practices are the key issues in stylistic criticism and African musicology in general. While the former examines various manners and nuances of performances, the latter looks at variables of factors that preempt its overall stylistic outlook (Adedeji 2012:55).

Performance practices/styles of the various youth choirs in Ghana over the past two decades have seen some tremendous changes and innovations with the advent of technology and theatrical influences. Hitherto, some church choirs and the community youth choirs performed using only one keyboard to accompany the choir but currently, some of these choirs are being accompanied by either the orchestra or the usage of four to five keyboards involuntary to give an orchestral accompaniment and microphones.

Previously, one would require quite a number of people or singers to perform at functions for their voices to be heard but technology does it all in this present age and time. A simple quartet can be heard loud and clear in performance like a thousand voices choir. An example of this performance that I observed took place at the Christ Temple of the International Central Gospel Church at the burial service of the late Danso Abiam by the Accra Symphonic choir. The choir was made up of only eight (8) singers, an orchestra and an organist with each singer having a microphone. Surprisingly, they sounded like a massed choir filling the entire church auditorium with their amplified voices and music.

Amuah (2013: 242) indicates that choral music performance in Ghana has been exuberant and ubiquitous. From the rural communities through the districts, regions and the capital cities, churches and schools, work places and the radio stations, Ghana is full of choral music performances. There are many church choirs as well as youth choirs, institutional and industrial choirs who are engaged in the performance of the choral musical genre.

Merriam, (1959) says that:

“Our basic understanding of the music of any people therefore depends on our understanding of that people’s culture, the place music plays in it, and the way in which its role is played. It is through this sort of understanding that we can approach on a firm foundation, our further understanding of what structure is and how music achieves whatever aesthetic ends are sought”.

Agordoh, (1987) also remarks that:

... In our chapels today, dance movements to the rhythm of songs are no more an abomination. The dondo (hour-glass drum) which was once associated with ‘Tigari’ worship is now a primary membranophone used by church choirs and other musical

groups in the church. Our musicians in the church now freely write anthems in African idioms – using African rhythmic motifs and taking care of the tonal inflections of our languages. Some even write works using rhythms of our musical types like *Adowa*, *Atrikpui*, *Boboobo*, *Agbadza*, *Gabada*, *Gahu* etc (Agordoh 1987:3).

Our hymn singing in the Evangelical Presbyterian and the Global Evangelical Presbyterian churches today is better enjoyed when it is accompanied with African instruments. In this light, Agordoh, (1987) furnishes us with the roles and contributions of some composers and musicians with regards to improving as well as transforming the musical cultures of our churches.

Agordoh (2004) citing Debrunner, says:

“The manner of singing is both African and Christian, having been developed in Ghana and Togo in the last thirty years under the influence of African Church Musicians, especially by the Ewes Ephriam Amu and R. Kwami, and the Twis Otto Boateng and Robert O. Danso. This combination of African rhythms with European Music has been highly successful and most suitable for conveying the Christian message (Agordoh 1987:3)”.

Similarly, the various youth choirs in Ghana have developed several ways and means regarding performance practices and styles by employing the use and blend of both Western and African styles. Various forms of instrumentation have greatly influenced the choir practices and styles.

3.2 SOME COMMON PRACTICES OF THE YOUTH CHOIRS

3.2.1 Recruitment And Retaining of Members

McCray (1997) postulates that, it is often said that getting money is not difficult, keeping it is the hard part. So it is with the church choirs members. A typical church choir membership is a

mixture of those who are regulars, and have been for years, contrasted with those who are as passengers on a bus entering and exiting with great freedom. The challenge is to co-mingle them so that consistency and continuity are achieved (McCray 1997:11). Recruitment of members into the various youth choirs in Ghana is done in several ways and has no clear - cut procedure or structure. It is done by either personal invitation or poaching.

A study I conducted revealed that all but the Harmonious Chorale-Ghana during their recruitment go through proper auditioning and have the regular and probationary members. According to James Varrick Armaah, the director of Harmonious Chorale, new entrants are properly auditioned before they are accepted into the choir.

He added that, for some apparent reasons, only people who are working or in any business are recruited. This is so to avoid those excuses of the inability some members to attend rehearsals because of money. Most of the directors and the choirs suffer from this predicament. Members turn down rehearsals because there is no money for transportation. Obviously, members are not from one particular area, they are from different places within and out of Accra.

Again, the choir does not also give members transport subsidies to and from rehearsal regularly, hence, the need to get people who are ready to sacrifice their all and to avoid the regular feedback from members “I can’t come because I don’t have money for transportation”. They all come either with their own cars or those of friends. The other choirs similarly have their way of assessing new members but not as rigorous as the former. Some of the choirs will

at your arrival allow you to sit at any part you choose to enable you decide which part you want to sing. The director later places you at the rightful part.

By this practice, the new members are allowed to relax, feel comfortable and enjoy and observe the choir as they rehearse. This was observed when I visited the Lapaz Community Youth Choir (LCYC) and the Wesleyan Symphonic Choir (WSC) from Kwashieman who rehearse at the Ghana Police Church, Accra during their rehearsals.

McCray (1997:1) affirms that,

“Recruiting good singers to a church choir is a primary condition of success for any conductor. In the 1986 Journal of Church Music Survey, recruiting was listed as “the greatest disappointment of the church musicians.” With the limited time for rehearsals and the necessity for new music on a weekly basis, it is vital that the choir contains leaders with fine voices and solid reading ability. Identifying and recruiting these singers is a task that takes considerable effort and time. This is a keystone on which all other elements depend.”

Clinton (2015) stresses on how to improve the recruitment experience; the recruiter should be highly credible, for candidates will not engage if the recruiter is not knowledgeable and professional. Candidates decide whether to engage based on who approaches them and how. Again, he/she must ensure that there is a common message that will excite and appeal to the level and experience of the candidates being targeted.

She stresses that, there is no one reason why people join an organisation but their research proves that the way recruitment is organised does make a significant difference in the candidate’s experience and ultimately means whether they accept an offer or continue to hold

the organisation in high regard. Clinton's key points serve as a classic approach that can be adopted for the recruitment of choristers into a choir.

Recruitment into a choir must be made as formal as possible as it may authenticate their genuineness to the call. This will also help to enrol very competent people or singers into the choir. The youth choirs in these times operate like a company which requires very dedicated, selfless and committed people for better performances and identity to be achieved.

Some directors and members resort to several ways and means of getting members for their choirs. They visit educational institutions, churches and other organizations to recruit interested members. Others also resort to poaching of members who already are members of another choral group by any luring means. They assure them of better conditions and benefits. Some people in pursuit of their ambitions, very desperate and simply cannot stay with one group would move from one group to another all in the quest of their gains. Others also belong to more than one choir.

Clinton, (2015) again affirms that there are several ways by which retaining of members of a choir can be achieved. These can be done by keeping attendance register to check the movement of members, by personal achievements, announce and use of music bulletin to celebrate the achievement of those in the choir to boost their morale.

In pursuance of retaining members, some of the directors / leaders send personal notes to members for paying attention at rehearsals or for showing musical leadership during the repeated practicing of a difficult passage as well as send missed you and success cards to deserving members. Some organise choir retreats to bring together all members for socialisation, organise a re-dedication service for the choir and engage members regularly in several choral activities.

3.2.2 Rehearsals

All the youth choirs in Ghana go through a lot of vigorous activities during their rehearsal times. Days are scheduled for rehearsals depending on the nature of the agenda or programme ahead. According to McCray (1997), rehearsals must be a time of intensified joy. There needs to be a balance of concentrated work and unbridled fun. He notes that singers especially need physical relaxation as part of rehearsal since their instrument is their body. To produce good tone and a beautiful sound, prevention of excessive tension is required. This is not to suggest poor posture or a relaxed focus, but rather an attitude. He therefore stresses that choirs function differently than bands/orchestras, particularly in rehearsals and that they require the same kind of discipline, yet egos need to be massaged more, particularly in a volunteer group (McCray 1997:29).

Characteristically, all the youth choirs have their scheduled days and times for their rehearsals. Since most of the members also belong to their church choirs, rehearsal days are set outside the church choir days and time. Due to inadequate time at their normal rehearsals, most of the

choirs go through all night rehearsals, thus, from Friday evening at 10:00 pm to about 5:00 am on Saturday morning. Moreover, when there is a program which requires adequate preparation, daily or continuous rehearsals are declared. Members are refreshed during these times to boost their morale.

3.2.3 Rehearsal Structure

Generally, there are certain rules, regulations and norms that are not compromised by any of the groups. For a choir rehearsal to be successful, some fundamental outlines which serve as a guide for preparation should be followed, and contain these elements:

- ❖ Opennig prayer; prayer is said to invite the Spirit of God for a successful rehearsal.
- ❖ Sequence or the order for music rehearsal
- ❖ Warm-ups (physical and vocal)
- ❖ Pace of the rehearsal (build in vocal rest)
- ❖ Learning of songs
- ❖ Nonmusical elements (jokes, announcements etc.)
- ❖ Closing Prayers/ departure.

McCray (1997:32) speculates that, there are two schools of thought on rehearsals. One is that the most important work is done at the beginning while everyone is fresh, and the other is that the intense work is done in the last half of the rehearsal when everyone is vocally prepared.

3.2.4 Teaching and Learning Methodology

Normally, there are two major methods of teaching of songs by the directors or the leaders. It may be rote learning where the singers are taught to sing by repeating after the teacher. This style is used when there are inadequate music scores and to very simple tunes. This approach is also very effective when the singers cannot read from the music score or sight read. The other approach is the adequate use of the music scores where the singers go through the music or the tonic solfa of the song before the text is taken.

This method is applied when learning a classical piece or a lengthy anthem. The teaching and learning has always been different from one choir to another. It is highly dependent on the type of programme and song under study. In the case of the Harmonious Chorale, Wesleyan Symphonic Choir, Lapaz Community Youth Choir, Winneba Youth Choir, Tema Youth Choir and other professional choirs, the second approach is used. All the singers are provided with copies of the songs. They first of all go through the tonic solfa of the song to the end, treat the text then sing the song with the text.

Apart from the directors, each part has a leader who also helps the directors in teaching the songs. At their practices, there is always one or two people on the keyboard providing an accompaniment and the rest will be doing the teaching. Learning under this approach is faster and lessens the work of the directors or leaders.

According to the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church musicians (2007), the musical arm of the Archdiocese that strengthens and perpetuates Greek Orthodox liturgical music in America, their position statement regarding the roles and responsibilities of choir members indicates that, not all choir members are trained musicians, able to read music and experienced in singing with a group. However, even with “amateur” and “volunteer,” choir members can grow in their knowledge of music and creating a sound that matches the beauty of our services and their surroundings that is, the music, the chanting, the icons, the vestments all strive to be as perfect and beautiful as possible as we offer up worship to God.

Interestingly, youth choirs in Ghana have adopted a new approach and attitude of allowing more hands regarding teaching and learning coupled with good materials and singers. This approach is so amazing, hence propelled them to give incredible and awesome performances. The communal spirit is always high, which enhances their musicianship by their regular attendance to rehearsals.

From my research, it was noticed that most of the directors resort to the first approach because of some economic constraints. Some of the choirs are not financially sound to cater for photocopies of songs for its members. The situation becomes worse when the pages of the song to be learnt exceed three pages. Some of the directors with this predicament will go to the rehearsal hall very early, write the text on a chalkboard before the arrival of the members.

One of the common practices that I witnessed at some of the rehearsals of some choirs like the African youth choir and Cape Coast youth choir was very unique. The singers or choristers were encouraged to come with their singing note books. Songs which are quite short and need not be photocopied were dictated to them to write down. Very simple tunes were also written down to be taken home for their use.

Mr Ben Amakye-Boateng, the director of the Lapaz Community Youth Choir and Mr Ernest Acquah of the Wesleyan Symphonic Choir in an interview enumerated some of the challenges they go through regarding teaching and learning of songs. Their problem concerns with the shift – running attendance pattern of members. According to them, this problem occurs when members feel there is no major or specific event or programme ahead of them. However, the choir, like the army must be ready at all times for any impromptu events.

On the contrary, in the case of the Harmonious Chorale, rehearsal days are adhered to with the exception of those who have properly sought for permission. The attitude of waiting for a programme before attending rehearsals sometimes becomes discouraging, hence, draws back all the activities of the choir which results in turning down of programmes and other engagements, he added. In building a formidable and efficient choral group, punctuality at rehearsals and all programs must be observed earnestly. Also important is respect for one other and the director.

Even though singers may have good suggestions to offer during rehearsals, the director has the final word and works with the priest to plan and coordinate the music for the worship services of the parish. If you do have a suggestion, it is best to offer it before or after the rehearsal so rehearsal time does not get bogged down with discussions. Be open-minded to learning new music and not complain that “we have always done it this way.”

At one of the visits to the rehearsal of the Winneba Youth Choir, on March 12, 2016, I found out that a lot of the choristers were schooling outside the town. This reduced their total number drastically but the few left were still keeping the flame high. As singers or choristers, it is important to keep your eyes on the director for direction and cues, mark your music with the director’s instructions and keep your music in proper order. Be sensitive to tempo, balance, dynamics, articulation, and phrasing when singing, according to your director’s instruction.

3.2.5 Stimulants at rehearsal

Motivationally, factors that lure some members to their desired choirs are how members are motivated during rehearsals and performances. Some choirs have patrons who help to organise the choirs’ programmes and activities. Some patrons give out their homes and other belongings for the use of the choir. Generally, because most of the rehearsals of these choirs are held in the night, (thus all night), there is always a small refreshment for the members in the form of hot beverage and bread. One of the comments of members of the Wesleyan Symphonic Choir at one of their all-night rehearsals regarding the refreshment was their preference of heavy food to the so called light food like tea.

Undisputable, all the youth choirs are not equal. Some are bigger or better structured than the others. To my surprise, at one of the all night rehearsals of the Harmonious Chorale, the sort of refreshment provided for the choir was mind blowing. It was a little below a birthday party refreshment. A complete served table with vegetable salads, beverages and others. Some of the less endowed small choirs like Lapaz youth choir and the likes resort to hot tea, water as well as members' own provision. They enjoy the Harmonious Chorale's type only when there is a bigger performance like a concert. This means that, like regular adage goes, 'Monkeys play by sizes'. The ultimate motivation is seen at the end of any event or performance where all members are properly served before and after and a small token given them from the proceeds realised. Due to the lack of this initiative, most indecisive members move in and out of some choirs trying to look for greener pastures where they will always receive something in return of their services.

3.2.6 Stage Arrangement

There are several stage arrangements by the youth choirs during performances. It is best to establish a specific seating arrangement and use it for some time before adding another one. This does not mean that individual changes cannot be made within each section. These changes may be necessary because of a discipline problem, inability to see the conductor, or an error in judgment when the person was originally assigned.

The way the various parts are grouped and positioned on the stage for a beautiful communication between the conductor and the singers and also the organist is rehearsed

properly. Below shows some examples of standing arrangements employed by the various groups. Stage work is one of the serious things to work on at any event or performance.

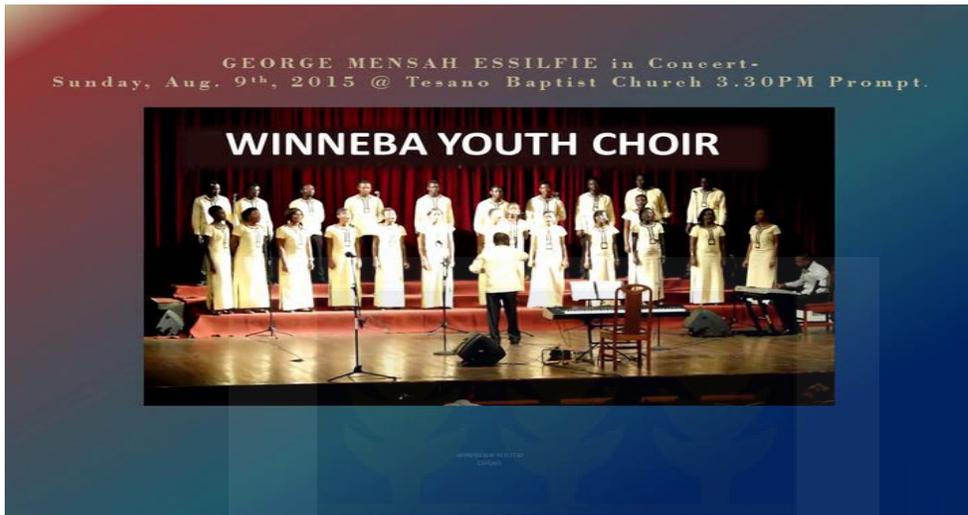


Figure 4: Stage Arrangement





Figure 5: Stage Arrangement

3.2.7 Costume

No performance is complete without proper costume. Every performance requires a particular type of costume to wear. Most of the choirs have different types of attires for every event. During a particular concert, a group can change into several types of uniforms, typically of the Harmonious Chorale-Ghana and the Wesleyan Symphonic Choirs. The uniform ranges from official suits to local fabric sewn into very fashionable designs and styles. At some occasions, choir robes are used in their performances. These uniforms like jerseys of the footballers illuminate them and enhance the aesthetic of their appearance of the choirs or groups. Whenever there is a music festival, each and every group invited presents itself in particular attire which is unique and gives them a symbol of identity. These uniforms also define the groups in terms of how organised and worthy they are. Some of the costumes worn by the choirs:



Figure 6: Types of Costume

3.2.8 Conducting

Music, like a vehicle requires a driver to direct it from the beginning to the end. This noble activity is achieved through the conductor or the director. A successful music performance or renditions greatly depend of the conductor. The basic requirements to understand and analyse choral conducting is to appreciate the conductor's level of education, vocal ability, musical

proficiency and managerial capability. Relaying the artistic decisions, feeling and emotion to the chorus is the primary function of choral conducting.

In my experience, the power of talking about how a piece should sound or what it should invoke is limited. Telling a choir when to sing forte, when to do crescendo or when to breathe is effective to focus on techniques, but emotional conducting is much more effective for focusing the feeling in the piece.

Words can be very powerful, but their meanings and understanding are subject to interpretation. The human mind has an incredible ability to understand and comprehend feeling, emotion and meaning through subtle facial and body movements. Some music directors in certain youth choirs in Ghana currently have adopted other means of conducting their choirs during concerts and other performances. They achieve that by the use of their body languages and facial expressions.

Perhaps, for lack of competent assistants, some directors place their keyboard in front of the choir, play as well as conduct at the same time. This practice, though not the conventional way, gives the director a dual role of playing and conducting at the same time. The picture below shows the illustration of such practice and style to achieve performance goals, thus, playing and conducting:



Figure 7: Conducting

This usually happens when the director is the same person who does everything, thus teaching of songs, playing the keyboard and conducting as well. In this regard, a choir (particularly an amateur choir) must first learn the notes and rhythms before being fully capable of bringing a piece of music to life. Conducting is done purely by the use of the head to give signals, general body movement and occasionally the use of the hand.



Figure 8: Conducting

3.2.9 Singing Style

Garfias (2004:32) posits that:

Sometimes a distinction is made when music is played by professional musicians rather than by amateurs. The implication is that professional musicians would as a matter of course, spend more time learning the trade and practicing their music, thus being more proficient than those who took it up only now and again or when a community function required it. This would separate into a different class, musicians who were paid for their performances or were compensated in some other way, from those who were more or less randomly selected from the group and asked to perform.

Amuah (2013) shows the wonderful performances of the Winneba Youth Choir which caught the attention of all such that, a number of choral music enthusiasts have established youth choirs in most communities in Ghana in the last fifteen years. Their mode of operations and singing styles are not different from the pioneer junior choir.

Singing style is another major element that distinguishes various brands of the Youth Choirs in Ghana. Although various techniques are freely used in combination, there still exist peculiar

vocal styles associated with each of the choirs that, the semi-classical vocal acappella style which combines Western ‘art’ singing aesthetics with Africa traditional ‘popular’ singing style as indicated by Adedeji (2012) making reference to the Nigerian gospel music.

Improvisation and extemporisation, which refers to the method of composing while performing simultaneously and a characteristic of traditional African music is also common to most of the styles of choral music. The variation and its sub-techniques of elongation, embellishments and slurring are also important in choral singing. The descant, which is used sparingly, makes use of improvisatory melody sung over the original melody. In overlapping/interlocking technique, melodic phrases and call and response sections overlap, which creates an interlocking chain. Moreover, call and response and other techniques are employed in the singing style as demonstrated in the type of composition being performed.

3.3 Performance Practice

An important remarkable trait about the performance practices/styles of these youth choirs is the rearrangement of existing compositions from both the popular gospel songs and old choral melodies. A song may be rearranged according to the choice-style of the artiste. Examples are “Joy Like a River”, *Kasa* by Newlove Annan, *Obeye* by E.D.K. Esson, *Mekasa a obi nnte ase*, “Blow the Trumpet”, *Ayeyi wura* by James V. Armaah, “Kept by the Power of God” by Adu Nti etc, etc. Generally, the performance styles range from highlife, funk, reggae, rock, disco, swing, blues, *adowa* and *agbadza*. In the effort to satisfy the audience, the repertory and creativity of the choirs are built to give the audience series of stimulating songs that would require their full participation.

Apart from the above, their record producers and sponsors put together some of the performances on CDs for commercial purposes. Musical subcultures of communities are often readily identifiable, by distinctions in performance and the education, age, or ethnicity of the audience. Given its importance in these settings, the music must hold the audience's attention. Imbuing music with the repetitions and variations of a story is a standard way of doing this.

According to McCray (1997:34), early each year, the choir needs to develop the understanding of the four basic singing styles. These styles dominate most choral music; the clear differentiations within an anthem will immediately raise the quality level of the performance.

The four basic styles to be mastered are:

- ✚ Legato: very smooth, connected lines indicated by a slur
- ✚ Portato: slightly detached articulations on syllabus/words
- ✚ Staccato: short, crisp light notes with space between each syllable indicated by a dot.
- ✚ Marcato: heavy, accented attacks on a note indicated by a (V)

He indicates that, in a non-selected volunteer choir, intonation is certain to be a common problem. Directors can minimise, but probably not totally eliminate, pitch discrepancies. To meet once a week with shifting personnel common to church choirs, achieving absolute, consistent intonation perfection may never occur. However, directors need to be aware of what causes singers to sing under pitch, and to use the rehearsal as a time to solve as many of the causes as is possible.

The most widespread reasons are breath control, air flow, wasted breath, poor posture and lack of forward resonance, physical and mental fatigue / no alertness. The rest are vocal range problems, chest tone carried into upper register, too many heavier timbered voices, too much heat in the room, acoustics, lack of resonance in the room, repeated notes and difficult pitches in different voice ranges and poor tongue placement, rigid jaw and throaty quality (McCray 1997:36).

Some of the youth choirs during their performances give out brochures, programmes and programme notes to guide the audience about the entire performance. Well prepared brochures sometimes go for a little token to help support the choir. They are able to do this through their able sponsors and patrons. It is also during these events that old and new records of the choir as well as compilation of music scores are sold.

Although there is no general agreement as to exactly what music communicates or how it communicates it, some individuals believe that music possesses great powers of communication. Interpreting the performance practices and styles of the various choirs, the theory of hermeneutics provides a good platform to examine and explain and interpret some of the practices and styles of the various choirs.

Nketia (1974) identifies some traditional African singing styles as falsetto, yodeling, humming, idiosyncratic style, whispering and vibrato as quoted by Adedeji (2012: 55). Peasant (1992: 346) also identifies various styles and techniques used in popular singing as oratorio or conversational, crooning, the use of appoggiatura, mordent, turn, slur and rubato.

Adedeji (2012: 55) in his article cited Hollenweger (1992: 347) who wrote about “singing in tongues” as a technique used in improvised singing style of Western Christian music.

However, notwithstanding all these interpretations, the qualities of vocal styles, the listener and the audience are the judges. According to him this fact was reaffirmed by Oscar (1975) when he wrote:

Always to be remembered, however, is the circumstance that singing is for the listener and hence it is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ according to how it sounds, not according to how it conforms to a theory or method of production. (Adedeji, 2012: 55).

Notwithstanding all these statements by authors and authorities, youth choirs in Ghana have maintained their peculiar characteristic traits, their performance practices are somehow flexible, based on the principle of contextualization and adaptability to the setting. Each choir has unique strategies and practices by way of their presentations at concerts and other social events.

With this, one could identify a particular group or choir per their total sonority on how they sound and are heard, regarding diction, phrasing, vocal quality and largely, the repertoire for various occasions. Unfortunately, one major contagious characteristic militating against the idealism and uniqueness of the various choirs is the phenomenon of becoming like ‘them’, that is, sounding and behaving alike with a similar trend of repertoire. Examples of these are seen in how the groups like the Harmonious Chorale- Ghana, the Lapaz Youth Choir, Wesleyan Symphonic Choir, among others perform during their concerts.

One major characteristic difference between these choirs and the church choirs to a large extent is how each group is organized, the type of works they perform and how they veered away from the pendulum way of dancing.

3.4 Instrumental Accompaniments

Garfias, (2004) suggests that:

There is no denying that in our times a strong relationship exists between music and electronics. Today we use electronics as an aid to listening as well as in producing music. Amplifiers, CD and cassette players, sound systems, car stereos all use electronics to amplify and make recorded sound audible to us. Electronics are used to amplify live sound in concerts. Traditional musicians in the European classical style insist that the natural sound of un-amplified instruments in a good concert hall or chamber is the way music was meant to be heard. Others have joined in and a small wave of acoustic instrument aficionados has arisen. Still there is no denying that electronics are around and in wide usage (Garfias 2004:232).

Choir accompanying instruments vary widely from one instrument to a full orchestra. Basically during rehearsals, pianos or organ accompaniment is often used, even if a different instrumentation is planned for performance, or if the choir is rehearsing unaccompanied music. In some cases choirs' join up to become one "massed" choir that performs for a special reason by which case they provide a series of songs or musical works to celebrate and provide entertainment to others.

Butler (2008) notes that;

Before mass media made it possible to share music worldwide, most musical cultures could be identified through several practices. These included the instruments used in musical performance, the structural components of the music such as scales, and recognizable performance practices such as bending notes in a certain way. The many

technological developments in musical recording and delivery systems during the 20th century have helped to blur the boundaries between these cultures.

The creation of synthesizer keyboard orchestra has become the practice of the day where during performances about three to five keyboards properly orchestrated are used to accompany the choir. They are set or programmed to produce the sound of the orchestra with all the effects. One of the keyboards with the organist is set to play the strings section, the other set to play the brass section, one to play the bass section (cello and double bass), and the other to provide the piano or harpsichord and the other to give the timpani effect. Undoubtedly, the combination of all these really sound just like the full orchestra in session.

The orchestration is done according to the type of the repertoire or the works being performed. The keyboards are also programmed to produce style to accompany musical styles like the highlife rhythm, blues, reggae, adowa, agbadza and the others. During the highlife times, the keyboard can be divided for the left hand to provide a bass guitar effect while the right hand plays the other harmonies.

With the advent of these keyboards, there is no need for complex instrumentation like the drum set, bass guitar as well as the other pop band instruments. You only need the keyboard and a very good combo and you are set for a performance. However, some choirs who have difficulty in acquiring their own organist invent by programming the accompaniments into the keyboard or use a pen drive.



Figure 9: Instrumental Accompaniment

3.5 Technology (Other musical Equipment)

Through technological advancement, music production has become very sophisticated in quality and simple to produce. By the use of powerful microphones, public address systems and mixers, vocal production can be manipulated and altered to please the ear. Again, only four (4) people can sing and sound like a mass choir by the use of microphones and the other supporting gadgets.



Figure 10: Microphones

Electronic instrument, or electrophone, refers broadly to any means of generating, modifying, or amplifying musical sounds electronically. Thus any instrument played through an amplifier becomes an electronic instrument. The term most often refers to instruments that generate sound electronically. There is no concert organised by any of these choirs without the use of these musical instruments. It aids the singers to sing without shouting and they can be heard from all corners of the performance hall with less or little effort. However, if the voices are not good, all the noise produced will also be amplified and thrown to the audience. Because of this, music directors of the various choirs go through a lot of pain to polish the voices of the singers before they are presented. This technology also provides the avenue to also record the performances instantly either on audio or video CDs for instant market.

3.6 Performance Settings (Set Design and Lighting)

Performance Settings is another essential aspect of performance practice and style that need not be compromised. Music, like theatre or drama, requires a well-designed stage for a performance. The total beauty of a performance is exemplified in the type of the settings at the background. Good performance settings create moods and enhance the serenity of the performance.

Nketia (1974) asserts:

‘Since the traditional approach to music making makes it a part of the institutional life of the community, the physical setting for performances can be any spot suitable for collective activity. It may be a public place or private area to which only those intimately concerned with the event are admitted, regular place of worship, such as a shrine, a sacred spot, a groove, a mausoleum, the courtyard of the house where

ceremony is taking place or the area behind it, the scene of the communal labour, the corner of a street habitually used by social groups for music and dancing, a market place or a dance plaza' (Nketia 1974: 31).

Occasions like Christmas, Good Friday, Easter and other general choral festivals have their unique settings to depict the seasons. It creates an imagery of the reality which represents the total idea of the performance. Almost every youth choir within the year organises a concert to mark the various periods named above at the various halls, church auditoria as well as the national theatre with the appropriate settings.

In addition to this stage settings are the lighting and other theatrical elements which create themes and make the performance even stronger. Below shows an example of a set design and lighting:



Figure 11: Lighting

3.7 Repertoire

One of the biggest challenges of some directors is repertoire building. This has to do with understanding and employing basic genres of church music. Generally, the repertoire of the youth choirs in Ghana spans across the genres can be grouped under three different categories namely the church year, variety and genres. While the general considerations are important musical bases for the choice of music, it is also true that factors other than musical ones often enter into the selection of music. These may include music for specific occasions, rehearsal time and lack of instruments, lack of reading skills by the choir, a mediocre or poor accompanist and lack of funds to purchase desired music, and still others that are peculiar to any given situation.

3.7.1 Christmastide

During these periods, most of the church auditoria and other halls are booked by the various choirs for their concerts. These bring some sort of revenue to the various owners of the halls. The most popular concert organised by the various youth choirs which attracts greater audiences is the festival of nine lessons and carols in which the Handel's Young Messiah as well as other popular contemporary carols are commonly performed.

3.7.2 Easter

Easter, due to its reflective nature provides an opportunity and the atmosphere for most of the youth choirs to organize their Pre-Easter concerts. Easter, the capstone of the Christian year is a culmination of everything preceding it; that Sunday morning always demands exciting,

festive music, usually with extra instrumentalists included. This wide variance of feeling dictates more than just a casual choice of repertoire. The music must trace the season of penitence through the capture, trial, persecution, crucifixion, death and ultimate resurrection, a formidable task. Very focused texts are needed. However, Palm Sunday is also Passion Sunday in the church, and this presents a problem in the twentieth century. The repertoire of the youth choirs during the Easter concerts spans from Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) to His crucifixion (Good Friday) then to His resurrection (Easter).

3.7.3 Variety:

McCray (1997) again speculates that,

“At some point, possibly yearly, church choir directors will find themselves caught in a maelstrom of controversy about their choices of repertoire. Naturally, we can never please everyone all of the time, but the challenge is to please everyone some of the time. The repertoire balancing act among minister, congregation, choir, and director is one of those thorny problems we all face”. McCray (1997: 71)

The youth choir directors consciously design variety of songs into their repertoire choices. They design their own realistic expectations for a complete year and to program toward them. Regrettably, many directors fail to structure a large, comprehensive programme of repertoire. Exact numbers will vary according to the involvement of the choir. For example, singing both an anthem and an offertory song permits broader coverage of repertoire.

3.8 Preparation Processes for Events

In the preparation for a musical event or a concert, one of the most important things to think about is the venue for the concert. Some popular venues for choral concerts have been the National Theatre, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the International Conference Centre, the British Council and other church auditoriums and halls.

Losseff, (2012) indicates that musical material operates in a domain of non-verbal information, whether we believe it to be divorced from, or an essential part of, a social fabric of being. Its meanings may remain personal and unarticulated in any kind of verbal form, whether it be interpreted through listening, analysis or performance. Interpreting, in the broadest sense, allows all listeners, performers and other contemplators of music to place themselves inside aspects of the musical material; it is our way of participating in it and essentially defines what interpretation (Losseff 2012: 50).

This gives an indication that there are common practices and styles amongst the youth choirs in Ghana as a result of how they poach members from one group to another. These members bring along some of the practices and styles from their old group into the new one and thereby cause a significant dimension of change and innovation. This new group or choir because of the new entrants will behave similarly like the old choir which would consequently induce competition. All the youth choirs in Ghana go through some processes and periods before any performance of event. These are the common practices and styles practiced by all the youth choirs which include:

3.8.1 The Rehearsal Period:

This is the period where all songs for the concert are learnt and mastered. This occurs within three to six months depending on the nature of the concert and the type of works to be performed. The rehearsal times also vary from one choir to another. It could be a daily practice, all night times, or all day.

The Harmonious Chorale who appears to be more organised and professional with some experience singers give out scores to members to take home to do their private learning. This approach reduces the pressure and the work load of the director since about fifty per cent of the learning would be done by the singers themselves. The director had to contend with just some minor corrections at rehearsals. Moreover it helps the singers to learn faster and develop their musical abilities and capabilities. Any other activity or movements in terms of dancing are all thoroughly rehearsed during this time.

3.8.2 Pre-concert Period

Also known as the 'dress-rehearsal' is the time when all the items to be performed are rehearsed on stage with all the instruments and sound to take sound levels and to have a feel of the whole performance in their order. They do this in the early hours of the actual performance time before the arrival of the audiences. By this time, the final preparations including stage settings, lighting and others should be set with the sitting arrangement and tickets ready. Ushers have to stand by with the programmes and to usher the audience to their seats.

3.8.3 The Concert Period

The actual performance takes place here. There is always a Master of Ceremony who leads and regulates the occasion or event through a structured programme drawn and followed. There is a common knowledge and practice that, anything sacred must begin and end with God and this is done through prayers which is a characteristic feature of all the choral groups.

In the case of the Harmonious Chorale, the performance would begin with an opening prayer by a Reverend Minister who would be introduced by the master of ceremony. A short welcome address will be delivered by the Executive Chairman- Rev. Dr. Joyce Aryee which will be followed by the performances of the songs. The performances will be interspersed with some expositions on the songs by the Master of Ceremony (MC) as well as a homily by either the chairman or an appointed personality. Offertory is also collected according to the type of the event to support the group or the choir. A vote of thanks and a closing prayer are said after the whole performance to bring it to a close.

3.8.4 Post-concert Period

At this period, CDs produced instantly during the performances and other products are sold out and the audiences depart.

3.9 Identity Construction

Each of the youth choirs in Ghana has a unique characteristic trait. The realist theory of identity emphasizes on the extent to which identities are subjected to multiple determinations

and to a continual process of verification. It is in this process of verification that identities can be (and often are) contested, and that they can (and often do) change according to Maya (1997: 139).

These youth choirs achieve their identity through their performance practices and styles in relation to how they sing and sound when singing, their style of instrumental organization, costume, their general management and the type fame and name that they have couched for themselves. Some of the newly formed choirs try to learn and imitate the practices and styles of seasoned choirs and thereby displace their own identity. This is evident in the area of instrumental accompaniment and other things.

McCray (1997:53) indicates that for a choir or group to achieve their identity, they must:

‘Develop a departmental logo that appears on all music publications. This logo could be used on T shirt/sweatshirts which could be special gifts or for general purchase. Having a “secular” uniform for the group offers many advantages for other kinds of musical performances such as at a church social event. Giving the choir a unique identity clearly professes who they are and that they are a team (family).’

Currently, the youth choirs in Ghana have a wider spectrum for performances. This ranges from general concerts, weddings, funerals, Christmas and Easter seasons, anniversaries, state functions, church services, Outdoorings, institutional and ministerial ceremonies and any other events that require music. It is believed that these social needs have occasioned the need and the proliferation of the youth choirs, not forgetting the economic dimensions.

3.10 Competition

Choirs coming together for musical events naturally induce competition. In order to achieve both individual and group identity, there is always the desire for members to do things differently and to be named among the best groups. Once they are all striving to be seen and appreciated by their audiences, they go through thick and thin, burn their candles to rehearse and learn songs from both western and locally known composers.

This is demonstrated in their performance practices and styles which induce competition amongst them. It is believed that if you are able to perform some classical pieces by Haydn, Bach, Handel, Mozart and the others as well as from the contemporary choral art music by Newlove Annan, Asare Bediako, Ken Kafui, Mensah Essilfie among others then you are rated as one of the best choirs.

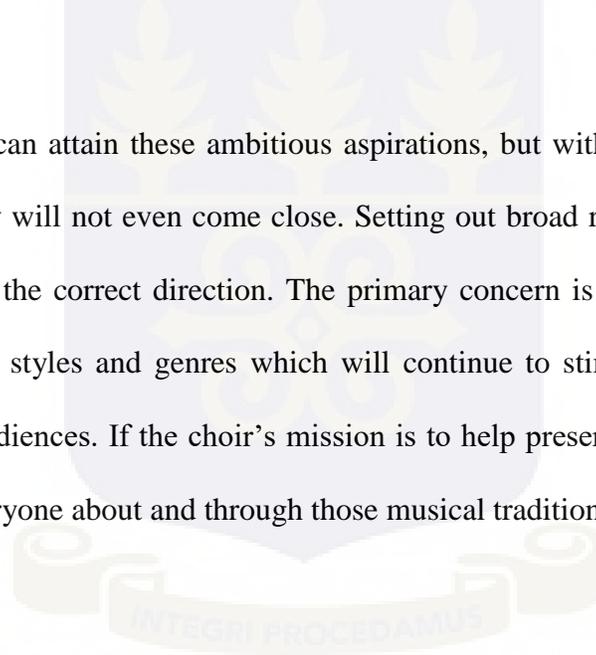
Just like conflict having its positive side which induces change, innovation and development, these competitions which emanate when come choirs together also urge them to learn and prepare very well for any concert or music performance.

3.11 Conclusion

On performance culture, to Takyi Donkor (2013: 5) citing Stone (2008:137) writes on Bauman's assumptions on performance theory which captures clearly the essence of performance analysis. These assumptions note that:

- Performance enhances experience bringing a greater intensity of communication between performer and audience. The special characteristics of performance contribute to making performance a special arena of experience that is rich with communicative devices of many sorts.
- The goal of research is to study performance as a series of strategic devices that serve to structure the performance. The strategic devices, special formulae, stylistic devices and paralinguistic devices help shape the process of creating the performances. (Stone 2008:137).

Not all the choirs can attain these ambitious aspirations, but without some sort of structured plan, they certainly will not even come close. Setting out broad repertoire goals for the choir will point them in the correct direction. The primary concern is that directors bring to their choirs a variety of styles and genres which will continue to stimulate them, as well as the congregation or audiences. If the choir's mission is to help preserve and revive choral music, then educating everyone about and through those musical traditions is imperative.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, PROFILES OF SOME SELECTED YOUTH CHOIRS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Preamble

This chapter has three sections. Section A scrutinizes the organizational structure; section B covers the profiles and bye-laws of some selected youth choirs, and section C explores their contributions to the contemporary choral music and socio-economic impacts in Ghana and contribution of some personalities, composers and the media.

4.2 The Choirs' Structure

All the organised youth choirs in Ghana follow a structure which aids in the smooth running of the various groups or choirs. These structures are quite common and similar to all the groups. It identifies each job, its function and where it reports to within the organisation. This structure is developed to establish how an organisation operates and assists the organisation in obtaining its goals to allow for future growth. The structure is illustrated using an organisational chart.

Although there are many types of organisational structures developed to meet each organisation's needs, all of them provide a hierarchy that reports to a centralised location and group of executives. The highest ranking member of an organisational chart is one or several top executives referred to as the president, chief executive officer or chief operating officer.

The youth choirs as organised entities are also modelled in the same structure with the highest ranking member as the director of music. Some of the choirs have patron counsel who forms the governing body in conjunction with the executives of the choir.

Mintzberg (1979: 2) defines organisational structure as “the sum total of the ways in which it divides its labour into distinct tasks and then achieves coordination among them”. With reference to the simple structure, the author presents the direct supervision as the main mechanism of coordination, centralisation and organisational structure as key parameters. In the simple structure of an organisation, the power to take relevant decisions tends to be centralised in the hands of the chief manager, what may allow quick responses.

The executive is responsible for strategy formulation and this design is intrinsically dependent on the director’s personal beliefs and experience, being focused on leadership. Mintzberg (1992) says that there are some problems associated with simple structure, because of its dependence on individual contingences and wishes. For some people, this simple and organic structure presents itself as highly restrictive: an individual decides and the others follow the instructions.

There are various aspects of being a choir member. Most importantly, there is a liturgical role, and of course there is a musical role. But also, there are outreach and educational roles that are important to the work of being in a choir. With dedication, choir members, even are though volunteers, they should be able to commit to their roles and accompanying responsibilities.

Administering a choir requires several strategic manoeuvrings and approaches in order to keep the choir healthy. The onus is on the executive committee to decide whether they need a constitution, a choir bank account, a business plan or anything provided it is of benefit to the choir. Having an executive body can help with the day to day running of a choir but must avoid a lot of jobsworths or people who like being on committees and talking endlessly.

4.2.1 Responsibilities of Choir Officers

All Officers must:

- Provide strong musical and personal leadership.
- Display an attitude of enthusiasm, hard work, support, and loyalty to the choir.
- Always display cooperation and support of the director and choir by words and actions.
- Have time to devote to the choir.

The executive committee is there to make things easier for the choir and the choir leader, not to complicate things. The committee can be as formal or informal as you want it to be. If you do end up with a constitution, then the roles and responsibilities of committee members will be spelt out there, together with how people get on the committee and how long they can stay there. This is to make sure that there is accountability and that the choir leader does not run off with the money.

Constitution of these choirs does not need to be very complicated. It could be adopted from any community choir or organisation that is similar to yours and adapt it to your own needs.

Most of the constitutions and bye-laws/ regulations of the youth choirs in Ghana are drawn from the Association of the Methodist church choirs- Ghana (GHAMECC) and other sources. The constitution establishes the structural framework of the choirs for effective dynamics of the interaction and interrelation within the groups. Structurally, the choir as a body has many parts and playing different roles in the system. All the parts are interdependent which establishes a stable social order which is the structure. If something happens to anyone component, all the other components naturally readjust to produce new stability. It provides an integrative approach to the study of human interaction, bringing together several aspects of culture which help to explain how structures in the various choirs function in relation to power, authority and management. Some of the choirs who operate under no constitution and bye-laws are considered not organised and they become very vulnerable to the prey of poachers.

An example of a hierarchical structure of a choir (the executive committee)

- **The Music Director:** the principal leader, teach the Choir in music and administer its affairs.
- **Organists:** responsible for the entire choral accompaniment and efficient performance of the Choir and assist the Director in the teaching of music and administer the Choir in his absence
- **Secretary:** The Secretary records minutes of all meetings and handles all correspondences of the Choir and also acts as a liaison Officer between the Choir and its outside publics.
- **Financial Secretary:** records all monies received/paid out and issue receipt for monies received by the Choir;

- **Treasurer:** keeps an accurate account of the Choir's funds.
- **Prayer Secretary/ Precenter:** in charge of prayers before and after every rehearsals and he/she is also responsible for the spiritual development of the Choir.
- **Welfare Officer:** ensures that sick and bereaved members are promptly visited and comforted and arrange for transportation for Choir's outings.
- **Curators:** in direct charge of all the properties of the choir and ensure that hymn books, leaflets, etc. are systematically arranged in their respective places.
- **Part leaders:** the Part Leaders maintain order and discipline in their various sections, both at practices and at other events.

4.3 PROFILE OF SOME SELECTED YOUTH CHOIRS

One of the most challenging aspects of this study is the lack of write-ups and scant information about some of the youth choirs in Ghana. Unfortunately, most of them are not organised yet and are struggling with structures, procedures and processes. Fortunately, profiles of some of these choirs can only be derived from programme brochures of choral concerts and events which have helped this study immensely. The following are profiles of selected youth choirs in Ghana, including;

- ✓ The Winneba Youth Choir
- ✓ The Harmonious Chorale
- ✓ Tema Youth Choir
- ✓ Wesleyan Symphonic Choir

- ✓ The One Voice Choir
- ✓ Vocal Essence Chorale
- ✓ Divine Chorale
- ✓ Symphonials
- ✓ African Youth Choir and
- ✓ Accra Youth choir

4.3.1 The Winneba Youth Choir



George Mensah Essilfie

(Founder)



John Francis Arthur Yamoah

(Director of Music)

The perspective on the Winneba youth choir detailed by Amuah, & Acquah, (2013:

105-112) indicates that, the number one choral music group in the country was founded in May 1989, under the patronage of Mr. George Mensah Essilfie and conducted by Mr. John

Francis Arthur-Yamoah (Paa John) when about ninety percent of the membership of the Methodist Junior Choir, Winneba, broke away to start a youth choir. His Excellency the late Kow Nkansah Ackaah pioneered the registration of the group as a non-profit making association, independent of the church.

According to John Francis Arthur Yamoah, the Director of Music of WYC, the new junior choir which took on the name “Winneba Youth Choir” has since developed their choral music performance. It has in effect become the “National Choir” (Ghana) and has featured prominently at almost every state function. Indeed their wonderful performances have caught the attention of all such that a number of choral music enthusiasts including pioneers of the WYC have established youth choirs in most communities in Ghana in the last ten years. An instance is James Varrick Armaah who has established the Harmonious Chorale, Ghana. With its new non-church affiliation, more youth from Winneba community and its environs, between the ages of ten (10) and twenty-five (25), were auditioned and recruited into the group. That is, interested prospective members who expressed a very good sense of pitching and hearing were tested in voice quality joined the group. They further reiterated that, Winneba Youth Choir has the sole objective of providing a platform that would educate and develop the youth in Winneba through rendition of edifying songs. As a pioneer of independent youth choral groups in Ghana, the WYC also aims at remaining an internationally recognised youth choir that projects a positive image of the African Youth and the African Choral music.

According to Arkurst (ibid), the WYC has pursued this vision through hard work, adopting the posture of a learning organization, and the formation of productive associations with other internationally acclaimed choirs. The Choir has progressed steadily to the extent that it is now recognized by the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM), of which it is a member, and also the accredited agency for Ghana's recruitment into its World Youth Choir initiative. The choir also plays key roles in providing strategic direction to the establishment and growth of the African Federation for Choral Music. Whilst remaining distinctively African, the Choir blends its repertoire with songs from all regions of the world. The Winneba Youth Choir boasts of being the only choir which has performed for three visiting U.S Presidents in a row (i.e. President Bill Clinton, President George Bush, and President Barrack Obama), Excellences Horst and Eva Luisa Kohler of the Republic of Germany; as well as the Prince of Orange and his wife. The choir has toured Germany, Denmark, USA, South Korea and neighbouring West African countries. The Choir has received many National and International awards. Among several are:

- Ghana Best Choral Group in the maiden edition of Ghana Gospel industry Award (2011).
- Choral Ambassadors of the Efutu State of Winneba (2004)
- Best Mass Choir (2003) National Award for the promotion of Tourism through Music (2003)
- Choral Group of the year for three years running (2000-2002)
- International 2nd Best Choral Group
- Ethnic, The Busan Choral Festival and Competition-south Korea (2010).

The WYC in addition to these choral genres performs slow and fast danceable tunes, Negro spirituals, patriotic songs and re-arranged contemporary gospel tunes. It has in its repertoire these sacred based songs. The reason is not only as a result of the retrospective orientation from the Christian perspective but also because most Ghanaian composers write sacred anthems and hymns, re-arranged gospel tunes and patriotic songs. It is also to complement the activities of pastors; to win souls to Christ, since most of their edifying songs are gospel related.

Amuah, & Acquah, (2013) concluded by alluding that the repertoires of WYC are however Christian related, because they had their orientation from the singing tradition of the Methodist Church. Most of their initial repertoire was popular hymns and anthems of the Methodist Church. They later incorporated varied choral music genres of the periods - Anthem, Cantata, Carol, Chorale, Hymn, Madrigal, Magnificent, Motet, Oratorio (which include part-song and passion), Requiem, Stabat Mater and Te Deum (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2004:146). All these songs have sacred themes.

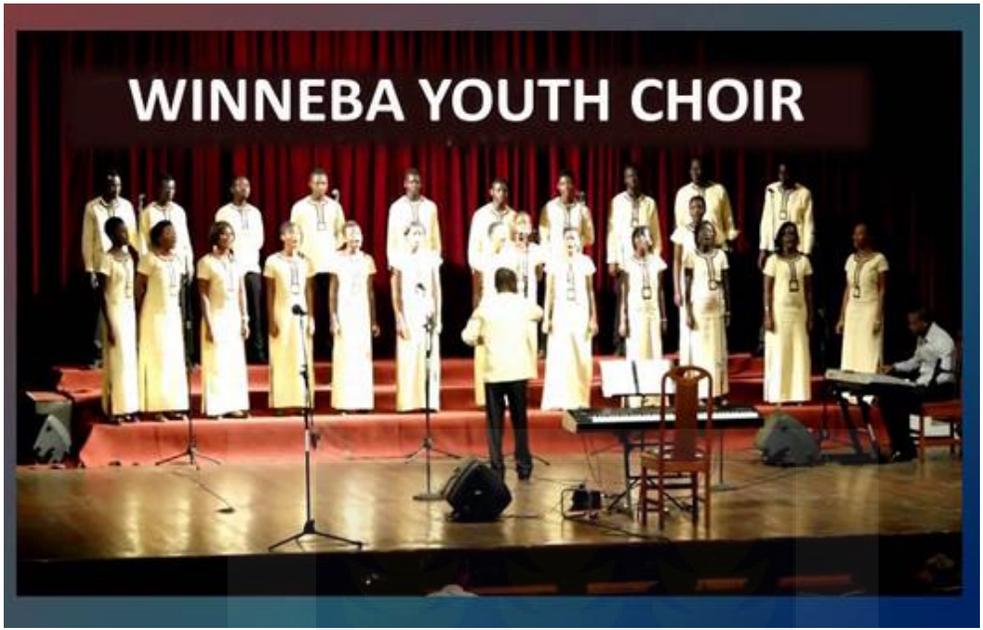


Figure 12: Winneba Youth Choir

4.3.2 The Harmonious Chorale-Ghana



James varick Armaah (Founder/ Director)

The program brochure of “An Evening with Sam Asare-Bediako” on October 4, 2015, pages 10-11 at the Calvary Baptist Church, Shiashi-Accra, reveals that, The Harmonious Chorale was founded in October, 2005 as harmonious Quartet, and later the numerical strength was increased to form the Harmonious Chorale in 2007. Since its formation, the choir, through dedication and hard work by its membership has carved for itself an image and an identity. With matured voices, unity of purpose for ministration, professionalism and dynamism, they thrill their audience and well-wishers and continue to treat them to soul inspiring repertoires.

The Harmonious Chorale is a certified chorale group under sections 27 and 28 of the companies’ code, act 179. The choir is under the chairmanship of Rev. Dr. Joyce Aryee, the Executive Director of Salt and Light Ministries and under the directorship of James Varrick Armaah, a composer and graduate of the School of Performing Arts-Music Department of the University of Ghana, Legon. James is ably assisted by a three-member Choral management unit headed by Kennedy Duodu Dankwa.

Its numerical strength stands at 60 (comprising a performing choir of 40 singers and 5 instrumentalists) and can boast of some well-known soloists like Eddie Gaisie (a founding member), Kennedy Dankwa (a founding member and Head of choral management), and Gertrude A. Pratt, Adwoa Asiedu, Eddie Opare Addo, Benjamin Adjei, Nana Kojo Hayles, Elizabeth Lartey, Lordina Osae and others.

Vision:

The Harmonious Chorale has among its objectives: the promotion of the musical compositions of Ghanaian and African religious (church) musicians, performing all kinds of choral music, evangelising and ministering to the world through its melodious and spirit-filled repertoires and tunes and most importantly serving as witnesses of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Performances:

The choir has featured at the following programmes:

National/International

- Centenary celebration of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (2009).
- Two concerts in the Republic of Togo (January and June 2014)
- 9,999 voices, a Christmas Carol programme organised by the Akwa-Ibom State Government in Nigeria (December 2014).

Activities with some Institutions/Organizations:

Indeed, the spectacular performances of the Harmonious Chorale are not experienced only within the four walls of the theaters and the concert halls, but to other institutions and organisations within and without Ghana. Apart from the various concerts, they were invited to perform at the Annual Board Dinner of Standard Chartered Bank –Ghana (2008-2009), HFC bank annual thanksgiving service (2009), Ecobank Ghana Ltd annual thanksgiving service

(2010), 10th Anniversary Celebration of Wisconsin University College-Ghana (2010), Wisconsin University college-Ghana-Congregation (2009/10) academic year, Centenary celebration of CFAO-Ghana (2010).

Others are the Millennium challenge account/Millennium development authority thanksgiving (February 2012), 50th Birthday celebration of Dr. Dei Tumi, CEO of Future Leaders (2014), Celebration of Justice Georgina Theodora Woode's 7th year as Chief Justice of Ghana (2014), RIGWORLD Annual thanksgiving (December 2014), Ecobank Ghana limited Nine Lessons and Carols (2014), Johannus Organ outdoor concert (May 2015) and Graduation of the International Community School, Ghana (June 2015).

Others:

- Main Performing Choir of Salt and Light Ministries organized programmes (including quarterly concerts dubbed "Evenings with composers" series: Prof. J.Y. Sekyi Baidoo, James Varrick-Armaah, Ken Kafui, Tsemafo Arthur, Rev. Newlove Annan, J.G. Koomson, James Scott Bennin, George Mensah Essilfie and Osei Boateng.
- Performed the Creation by Josef Haydn-June 2011.
- Performed the Messiah by G. F Handel-December 2011/March 2014.
- Performed with the vocal Concertisten from Germany at the anniversary concert in Tema on the 7th of October 2012.
- Performed with the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra Under the directorship of Larnoh Adjei a German born Ghanaian conductor in 2011 and 2012.

- Performed the Oratorio ‘ELIJAH’ composed by Felix Mendelssohn in 2015 at the National Theater, Accra.

Recordings:

- Holy inspirational Hymns and Anthems (Harmonious Quartet)-2006.
- *Makoma so Adea*-2008
- Come let us sing-2009
- Harmonious Adoration 2-2012.
- *Odo Ben Nie*-2014

Awards:

- Best Choral group for 2015 at the Music of Ghanaian Origin awards (MOGO).
- *Oye*, a song composed by James Varrick Armaah and Sung by Harmonious Chorale won the Christian community music awards “choral song of the year 2013”.



Figure 13: Harmonious Chorale

4.3.3 Tema Youth Choir



Mr. Ebenezer Allotey (The Director and Founder)

From www.ghanaweb.com, Five Years into its formation, Tema Youth Choir has matured into one of the most powerful mass choral groups whose presence is really felt wherever it performs, no matter the number and quality of other groups which perform too. Founded in November 2001, the group which was put together to fill the void created by the collapse of the Tema Presbyterian Secondary School choir today can boast of being amongst the elite musical groups. The director and founder of the choir, Ebenezer Allotey said he started the choir when he was teaching music at the Presbyterian Secondary School in Tema. He said “when music faded in secondary school so he was forced to teach social studies”. After shifting to teaching social studies, the school choir almost stopped functioning and as a professional musician he decided to form the Tema Youth choir. In order for the choir to become one of the top choir groups in Ghana, he stopped teaching in order to give the group full attention. So far they have performed classical concert at British Council in Accra, Easter

concert at Osu Ebenezer Presby Church Hall in Accra, Nine Lessons and Carols at the Christ the King Parish Hall. He said the group draws its members from the students of Tema Presby Secondary School who also bring friends from other schools as well as any youth around who shows interest in joining the group.

Mr. Allotey said the rationale behind the formation of the choir was to develop the musical talents and skills of the youth and promote choral music in Ghana. He also wants the group to be recognized outside Ghana as well. He said the group has helped members in paying their fees. As part of the activities to celebrate their fifth anniversary, the group has undertaken a blood donation and clean up exercise at the Tema General Hospital and have other programmes lined up to be undertaken.



Figure 14: Tema Youth Choir

4.3.4 Wesleyan Symphonic Choir



Mr. Andrew Ernest Acquah, (Co-Founder and Leader)

The choral music concert by George Mensah Essilfie at the Tesano Baptist Church on August 9, 2015 dubbed “OTOMFO”, discloses that Wesleyan Symphonic Choir, an inter-denominational choir, was cofounded by Mr. Andrew Ernest Acquah who is the leader and the director of the choir together with Mr. Francis Sasu on October 15, 2006. The choir has members from various churches and from various parts of the country. Over the years, the choir has been ministering lots of authentic Ghanaian choral high-life amongst a wide repertoire ranging from hymns, anthems, classical and other sacred choral music. Wesleyan Symphonic choir performs at various functions for example, concerts, engagements, weddings, funerals, birthday parties and other ceremonial functions.

The choir’s objective is to

- ✓ Propagate the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through music.

- ✓ Provide a platform for the education and development of youth in Ghana through choral music.

The choir can now boast of a branch at Sekondi-Takoradi which was formed on October, 2014, Mr. Eugene was appointed the coordinator for the Sekondi-Takoradi branch. Through him the choir has witnessed a tremendous increase in membership. The new born Sekondi-Takoradi branch had their first performance with their mother (Accra) branch on the 22nd December, 2014 at the choir's annual Christmas concert at Rev. Ernest Bruce Memorial Methodist Church, Accra.

The choir was able to organize a concert dubbed "9 HYMNS AND THEIR MEANINGS" in collaboration with rev. Joseph Ato Brown in May, 2015 at the choir's Bethel Methodist church Takoradi. Directors of Music: Jeffery Amponsah-Mensah, Richard Neequaye Kotey Organists: Ishmael Koffie, Andrew Mbeah Baiden Jr., Maxwell Little, Osei Emmanuel, Agyapong Isaac, Obeng Pratt, Augustine Eshun.

Programs co-coordinator: Felix Dzokoto

CD PRODUCTION: 1. CHOSE YOU THIS DAY: composition by Newlove Annan and George Mensah Essilfie. 2. NYAME YE: composition by Newlove Annan worships songs and highlife. 3. "HYMNS & THEIR MEANINGS" stories narrated by Rt. Rev. Joseph Ato Brown. The choir is currently preparing to launch a new album (danceable tunes composed by George Mensah Essilfie) titled, 'ON THE LAST DAY'.

Recognition by any international body

The friendship Ambassadors (FAF) invited the choir to represent Ghana at the “RHYTHMS OF THE WORLD” festival in Geneva, FAF holds this event in conjunction with the UN but unfortunately due to lack of funds the choir could not make the trip. Seasonal concerts: The choir organizes Annual Christmas & Easter Concerts to entertain its well-wishers.



Figure 15: Wesleyan Symphonic Choir

4.3.5 The Lapaz Community Youth Choir



Mr. Ben Amakye-Boateng (Founder and Director)

The Lapaz Community Youth Choir (LCYC) was formed on the 24th of March, 2007 as a community based choir for the people between the ages of 12 and 35, living within the Lapaz Community and its surroundings.

It is non-denominational; as such, regardless of one's church affiliation, one can be a member.

The aims and objectives of LCYC are;

- Unifying the community through concerts and other activities
- Offering moral, spiritual and financial support to its members
- Offering career counseling to its members
- Instilling patriotism in its members so that they will have national interest at heart
- Offering music lessons to interested members, thus creating job opportunities to help in the national poverty reduction plan started by the nation
- Admonishing members to live exemplary lives free from sexual immorality, violence, truancy, and drugs
- Encouraging members to achieve the maximum in education
- Promoting choral music, thus helping to preserve the rich Ghanaian Musical Heritage

LCYC's repertoire includes Religious Songs, Anthems, Patriotic Songs and Gospels

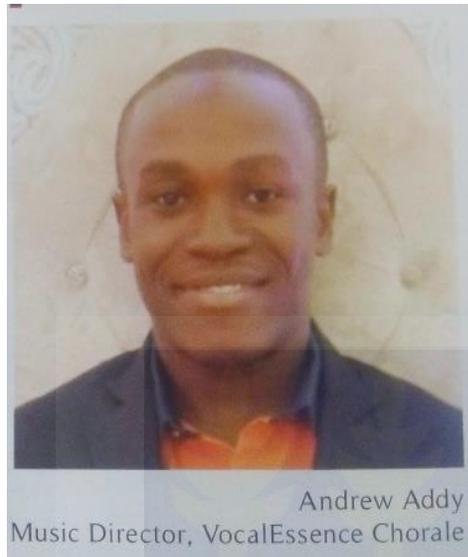
LCYC has honoured several invitations since its inception, including the launch of a critical edition of Dr Ephraim Amu Songs by Prof Willie Anku at the University of Ghana. The Choir currently meets on Sundays between the hours of 4pm and 5pm for Music Theory and

Practices, and then between 5pm and 7pm for Choir rehearsals. The Venue is the Auditorium of the Light of Life Gospel Mission behind the Lapaz Standard Chartered Bank.



Figure 16: Lapaz Community Youth Choir

4.3.6 Vocal Essence Chorale



Andrew Addy
Music Director, VocalEssence Chorale

The program brochure of “An Evening with Sam Asare-Bediako” on October 4, 2015, page 16 at the Calvary Baptist Church, Shiashi-Accra, has it that, The Vocal Essence Chorale (VEC), is an inter-denominational choral group in Accra (Dansoman). It was founded on 18th January, 2013 by Derrick Bonney and Andrew Addy. Vocal Essence Chorale is a young, dynamic choral group basically composed of youth with the passion and desire to witness the gospel of Jesus Christ through the medium of spiritual songs. Since the choir’s formation in 2013, the choir continues in ministrations to its esteemed audience with soul inspiring repertoires at different stages. The journey of VEC started with 12 members on the 18th January, 2013 and later increased in numerical strength to over forty-five (45) when the choir was officially inaugurated on 6th July, 2013.

Currently VEC has grown into a large chorus, working towards its vision of music evangelism, standing out among all choirs and be the best choir by all standards now and in the years to come. It is the aspiration of the choir to provide opportunities and services for learning through communal singing and as ambassadors of Christ. The mission of the choir is to serve its community by sharing choral music through quality performances as a way of evangelism, and providing the platform to promote, encourage and foster the educational and cultural enrichment of its members through the study and performances of choral music by establishing choruses that will strive to grow continually in ability and excellence, and above all creating a learning atmosphere conducive to the skills development of its members in the utilization of music repertoire diverse in style.



Figure 17\: Vocal Essence

4.3.7 Divine Chorale



Pat-Darko (Director of Music)

From the program brochure of “An Evening with Sam Asare-Bediako” on October 4, 2015, pages 19 at the Calvary Baptist Church, Shiashi-Accra, Divine chorale, the main performing choir under the Pat-Darko Divine Music Chamber started as a performing group that operated on the University of Education, Winneba Campus and performed solely for music students during the music department’s annual final composition project presentation from 2006-2009.

As part of the music chamber’s vision, an interim trio known as Divine Trio was established in Kumasi in early 2010 and later, Divine Quartet was also formed. In pursuit to the standard of quality choral music, the Executive Director of Pat-Darko Divine Music Chamber established Divine Chorale in Kumasi in June 2010 and has raised the standard of music performance since its existence. It was officially inaugurated in September 2011 and was widely attended by thousands of choral music lovers. The group has performed at numerous high profile functions like the International Leadership Awards Night (Tuzoya Oungozi), National Peace

Makers Rally at the national theater amongst many others including live performances on TV and radio.

The Choir is under the directorship of Emmanuel B. Darko (Inspector De Sanku-Man). It is the vision of the choir to touch hearts and evangelise through soul inspiring choral music.

Major Activities held:

Concerts:

- Ist Anniversary and Inaugural concert September, 2011
- “11.11.11- Adom Birthday Music Party” November, 2011
- Peacemakers’ Rally (National Theatre) May, 2012
- Great Alliance Concert (Accra) May, 2012
- “11.11.12-Sing Ghana 4 Peace” Nation-wide Tour November, 2012
- “11.11.13-My Love” November, 2013 Great Alliance Concert (Takoradi) March, 2014.
- “11.11.14-Hymns and Classical Concert November, 2014
- Great Alliance Concert (Koforidua) March, 2015
- DC @5 Launch Concert March, 2015 Com-MEP Launch Concert June, 2015

Recording: Divine Inspiration vol. one-Mitso Aseye.

Evangelical Activities / Hospital Ministration and Visitation:

Efia Nkwanta Hospital (Takoradi), SDA Hospital (Kwadaso-Kumasi), SDA Hospital (Koforidua), Regional Hospital (Koforidua), Imitation of Christ Campaign with Dr. E.L.

Ewoo, Jubilee Park-Kumasi SCGC of SDA Crusade, Santasi Bible Lecture Series, GNAAS-KNUST Open-Air Music Crusade, at Kintampo.



Figure 18: Divine Chorale

4.3.8 Symphonials



Symphonials, as its name suggests, is a choir of mainly graduates from valley view University, a Seventh Day Adventist institution of higher learning, and other tertiary institutions who are dedicated to the mission of winning souls for Christ through song evangelism. The idea of this great ministry was conceived and organised in November 2005 by Edmund Bobie Ansah with the help of colleagues, Enoch Mintah Amoah, Emmanuel Ayi and Enoch Ayi who were all then students at Valley View University. Since its formation, the group has increased in number and can currently boast of 36 active members. It has over the years worked with many composers including Newlove Annan (Mr.), The Ayi family, Adu Boateng Akwasi (Mr.), James Varrick Armaah, Ohene Adu Nti, Ps. Kwabena Donkor, Francis Agyekum (Ps.), and Emmanuel Owusu (Mr.), among others. Symphonials is ten (10) years old now. It has also performed at various functions. Among such functions are Peace Chorafest on VVU campus, An evening with Rev. Newlove Annan at the National Theatre, Choral Praise organised by Valley View University Choir at the National Theatre, Salt and Light Music Ministries programmes with Harmonious chorale, Nine Lessons and Carol Festival at Royal Richester Hotel, Richlot music ministry concert at Golden Tulip Hotel, House of Joy at National Theatre organised by Ghana National Association of Adventist Students (GNASS) University of Ghana, among others. Presently, the group is based at Valley View University (VVU), the premier Chartered private University in Ghana, *Oyibi* Accra according to the programme brochure of “An Evening with Sam Asare-Bediako” on October 4, 2015, page 13 at the Calvary Baptist Church, Shiashi-Accra.



Figure 19: Symphonials

4.3.9 African Youth Choir



George Awuku Addo Asamoah (Co-Leader)

The choral music concert by George Mensah Essilfie at the Tesano Baptist Church on August 9, 2015 dubbed “*OTOMFO*”, page 6, has it that, the African Youth Choir (AYCGHANA), formerly known as Prophetic Choir is a choral group based in Winneba in the Central Region of Ghana. It was formed on 26th December, 2009. The choir is currently made up and under the leadership and auspices of George Awuku Addo Asamoah, Godfred Sackey, Emmanuel Bonney, Lawrence Ansah, Sandra Ohene Akuamoah, Henrietta Kumi, Francisca Agyare Adjei, Robert Clobus Amissah, Samuel Arko Mensah, Elizabeth Doodoo, Prince Elliot Osam, Rosemary Armah, Hannah Sagoe and several others.

The choir, since its inception, has moved on to be admired by many in and around the country.

The choir is established on the cannons of:

- Ministering in songs to win souls for Christ; Peace Ambassadors for Ghana and beyond and also entertain and sustain the interest of our loving patrons and cherished audience;
- Fostering the integration of the African cultural heritage and creating the sense of belonging amongst the youth of Africa and beyond;
- Celebrating the achievements of leaders in all spheres of life;

The choir won the maiden Choral Peace Competition organized by Friends of Peach, Ghana (FOPG), prior to the 2012 General elections on the 21st of September, 2012. In its relatively short period of existence, the choir has chalked feats in the choral music font in Ghana as the best choral group in the Central Region and second best choir in Ghana, competition organised by the Ghana Tourism Authority in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

The choir was invited as a Guest in ‘Africa Sings 2013’, held from the 2nd to 5th August, 2013 in Lome Togo. The AYC, Ghana hosted and had an exchange programme with a German choral group from Hamburg City called Schall und Rauch Chor (Gospel and Rock Choir) in March 2014. Some of the concerts – 2014 Independence Day Celebration aired live on Adom TV.

The choir’s recent achievement is being the first runners-up in a choral competition organized by the West African Choral Federation in Ivory Coast, July and August, 2014. The choir was also invited to participate in the Africa Sings 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya.



Figure 20: Africa Youth Choir

4.3.10 Accra Youth Choir



Mr Edmund Ellis Ekuful (Founder)

According to the program booklet of the choral music concert by George Mensah Essilfie at the Tesano Baptist Church on August 9, 2015 dubbed “OTOMFO”, page 5, The Accra Youth Choir is a non – denominational choir in Ghana. The choir was formed with 42 members by Mr Edmund Ellis Ekuful and assisted by Mr Francis Mensah – Boako. It was registered under companies code 1963 (Act 179) in Accra on 23rd March 2007 and officially inaugurated on 8th September 2007 by Very Rev. Bart – Plange. The motto of the choir is “WE WORSHIP THROUGH SONGS”.

Aims and objectives

- (a) To propagate the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through song ministrations
- (b) To perform and record songs
- (c) To foster cordial relationship and assistance among its members.
- (d) To attend live ceremonies throughout Ghana and Abroad if privileged

- (e) To organize programmes to support of health activities

Achievements

- Four of Accra Youth Choir members have been invited to join the National Symphony Orchestra.
- The choir is able to come out with a musical album titled “*HWEHWE NYAME*”.

Future plans

- (a) To produce more musical albums to spread the gospel
- (b) To establish a music school to create jobs for those who are interested in music
- (c) To adopt one of the orphanage homes in Ghana



Figure 21: Accra Youth Choir

4.4 The Socio-Economic Impact of Youth Choirs

4.4.1 Employment

Amuah (2013: 108) categorizes how choral music performances have impacted the social lives of Ghanaians and reiterated by quoting Boamahjeh and Ohene-Okantah (2000) who state that:

Music in general education serves a dual purpose. First is to develop the natural responsiveness to music inherent in all individuals; to provide them with the tools for understanding and participating in the music of their own culture and those of others. Secondly, it serves as a foundation for the development of the talents of those who are gifted musically for their own benefit. Such individuals benefit the society, which will be served by them as well as the art of music, which depends on the supply of composers, performers, conductors, scholars and teachers (Boamahjeh & Ohene-Okantah 2000: 3).

Youth choirs often organise or perform at concerts. As part of the concerts, the stage has to be artistically built. This provides job opportunities for set designers who otherwise would have been unemployed. Without these opportunities, some of these talented set designers may not be able to bring their expertise to bear and thus enhance the appearance of the stage. Moreover, the set design sets the tone for the performance. Hence, a poorly set stage could be detrimental to the success of the program/concert.

Employment is also created for sound engineers who record music and mix sound during concerts. Music composed and performed by these choirs need to be preserved in a tangible medium. Thus, the services of sound engineers are sought in order for the recordings to be done. Besides working on the recording of the albums, sound engineers are also employed to manage the sound systems whenever concerts are being held. In this case, other people in

charge of lighting and props are also brought in to assist which has widened the scope of the music industry.

It has also generated prospects for young people to realise their potentials as singers after joining the choir. Many church organists, choir directors, professional singers, conductors and scholars in the field of art music have benefited immensely from this phenomenon. They have become very useful in many churches in Ghana and beyond. Many of them have got the opportunity to pursue academic music education at the various tertiary institutions due to their orientation from the youth choir systems.

The employment opportunities in music are quite enormous to provide a fundamental contribution to the quality of human life. James Armaah, the Executive Director of Harmonious Chorale, Ebenezer Amparbeng, who currently lectures at Center for African Music and Culture of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Eddie Gaisie, and Samuel Dankwa, lead tenor soloists in Ghana are all by-products and beneficiaries of this enterprise. Today they earn their living on what they do as solo performers who train voices of choirs and individuals. In addition, individuals like Ben Adjei of Harmonious Chorale who is on the executive officer and a tenor singer goes beyond ordinarily singing to recording his own album “Great is Thy Faithfulness”.

4.4.2 Education

Amuah (2013:108) recounted that, as part of the activities of the WYC, younger ones who are needy but brilliant are supported on their education with part of the accrued resources. The group has been able to support the said membership to acquire Senior High School Certificates and University degrees. Quansah (2006) in affirmation of activities of junior choirs in Winneba indicates; Winneba Youth Choir alone has within the last 14 years influenced the life of about six hundred (600) people including her members in the catchment area.

Admissions to schools have been sought for some of its members, school fees of some members have also been paid, others have been sent to learn a trade, in addition, donations have been made to bereaved members and others who were hospitalised or bedridden (Quansah 2006: 100).

In addition to that, professional teachers are engaged to offer tuition in the various academic disciplines in their schools to deepen their academic potentialities, usually an hour or two preceding the usual rehearsal periods. These teachers are paid by the management of the choir. This has made many young ones pursue academic work without much financial stress.

The role of the WYC in shaping its members to develop their capabilities through acquisition of knowledge is real. Since Education seeks to provide knowledge to the benefit of the society (Aboagye 199:1), it became necessary and prudent for the management to support its members

in that regard to enable the beneficiaries become useful citizens in the community apart from the musical training.

Moreover, Ohene-Okantah (2003) suggests that Music represents a unique mode of knowing which requires and fosters particular mental activity. He continues to state that it also represents a unique way for experiencing and understanding life, just like language, Mathematics or Science (Ohene-Okantah 2003:38).

The WYC, through its music, trains the minds of its members using technical exercises, reading and performance of wide range of repertoire. Textual interpretations of the music used and its associated emotional drives were even enough to educate the youth morally, socially and psychologically.

4.4.3 Social Recognition

Some of these choirs have gained great exposures globally. Winneba Youth Choir in July 2000 and November 2001 had the chance of performing with the Bavarian Police Band in Munich and Bamberg in commemoration of the centenary anniversary of the life and works of Guiseppe Verdi in Germany. In November 2002, there was a joint performance with Ron Kenoly, Rodnie Bryant and Rebecca Malopa in Benin, and September 2003, they were in Lagos, Nigeria, to celebrate Dr. Femi Akinkugbe at the invitation of Music Society of Nigeria (MUSON).

Furthermore, they have had the opportunity of hosting Osnabruck Youth Choir of Germany in Ghana (August 2004), National Children's choir of Bahamas (August 2005) and Gordonstoun School Choir from the United Kingdom (March, 2006). The Choir also hosted the first Camp of the "African Children Sing!" initiative of the IFCM, and follow through tour of Seoul and Busan South Korea. This has led to healthy interactions of the choir members not only within Ghana but outside the frontiers of West Africa. (Amuah 2013: 108).

Harmonious Chorale, on the other hand, have had two concerts in the Republic of Togo in January and June 2014 as well as 9,999 voices, a Christmas Carol program organized by the Akwa-Ibom State Government in Nigeria (December 2014).

4.4.4 Revenue/ Income Generation

The increase in sales of youth choir albums leads to corresponding increase in the choir's income; and hence their tax paid as institutions also increase. Government also benefits through taxes levied on music recording devices and equipment used for their work. In addition to this, taxes paid by printing companies will also go up as a result of increased printing jobs. Printers are responsible for printing song sheets / scores, inlays of CDs and music books which these choirs use on a large scale.

One may be familiar with the music folders used by choirs during performances containing a number of song sheets. If, for example, there are ten choirs performing, the number of printed

sheets would be tenfold. Also, fliers and brochures are printed prior to concerts to make the public aware of the upcoming performance.

At the concert, tickets are sold and program sheets are distributed to the audience. These examples give credence to the fact that youth choirs contribute positively to the GDP through the large volumes of printing works done before and during concerts.

4.4.5 Generational consciousness

Time is a multi-layered phenomenon, which if measured by assorted mechanical time-pieces can be linear, but this is not how humans experience it (Mannheim 1993:28, Corsten 1999:256). Personal time is accompanied by social time, which is essentially a socially shared frame for the perception of social development, but can differ from one social group to another. One such group is generation. The concept of generation has many interpretations, yet its basic core links it with time and chronological consciousness (Lovell 2007:8).

Generational consciousness however, is when a group of people become mindful of their place in a distinct group identifiable by their shared interests and values. Social, economic, or political changes can bring awareness to these shared interests and values for similarly-aged people who experience these events together and thereby form a generational consciousness. These types of experiences can impact individuals' development at a young age and enable them to begin making their own interpretations of the world based on personal encounters that set them apart from other generations. By these assertions, the youth of today have become

very mindful of the many things that they can do from the other generations especially from the adults. The youth choir system is one of the interventions that have awakened the consciousness of the youth for identity construction and an avenue for employment through music. It has also created a platform for the youth to express their talents, explore competencies, and build up their hopes for the future. Previously, choirs were formed for only churches and other institutions, but over a decade now, it has become a phenomenon for young men and women in many communities. By joining such groups, the youths are gradually being socialised to having the passion for choral music. It is also not surprising to see a large number of youth trooping to such concerts. Choral concerts have gradually become a tool for social change.

4.5 Contributions and Profile of Some Contemporary Composers to Youth Choirs and Choral Music

4.5.1 George Mensah Essilfie



Figure 22: Picture of George Mensah Essilfie

According to Mrs. Joyce Emma Atta-Quartey, Nee, Essilfie in the program booklet of the choral music concert by George Mensah Essilfie at the Tesano Baptist Church on August 9, 2015 dubbed “OTOMFO”, pages 3-5, George Ebenezer Kwamena Mensah Essilfie is the last of the eight children of Mr Rexford Essilfie and Mrs Isabella Okorba Essilfie both of Winneba. He began his primary education at age four (4) at the Swedru International School. By age ten (10), Mensah had started his secondary School (now Winneba High School).

Mensah was the school organist where both tutors and students were amazed at the dexterity of Mensah’s display at the organ as he made music. Displaying his musical prowess, especially at the piano and in music compositions at that early age, all of Mensah’s siblings and parents were convinced that he should be given all the encouragement and resources he needed to continue his education solely in music instead of having it as a second vocation as in the case of his two brothers Rex and Harvey.

With his focus on developing his knowledge and skills in music into being a professional musician, Mensah proceeded to the National academy of Music (NAM) in Winneba and later completed his Bachelor of Education in Music at the University of Education, Winneba. Mr George Mensah Essilfie selflessly plunged himself into imparting his musical knowledge and skills to both the young and old. He taught music at Ghana Secondary School and Freeman Methodist Junior High (Koforidua) and Ebenezer Methodist Church, Bantama (Kumasi).

Winneba Youth Choir, an award winning choir and known to be the No 1 choral musical group in Ghana was founded in May, 1989 by Mr George Mensah Essilfie and was conducted by Mr John Francis Arthur Yamoah (Paa John). The choir has progressed steadily to the extent that it is now recognised as the most outstanding youth choir in the nation. He became the music director for the Osagyefo Theatre Company in Luton, UK. His songs have been performed at the Verdi Music Festival in Berlin, Germany and used for many national and international competitions.

In 1994, Mensah won the World Peace Prayer Society Songwriting contest organized by World Peace Prayer Society (WPPS) in conjunction with the United Nations (UN). In 1996, under the auspices of the British Council, Ghana, he was invited by the British Choral Institute to attend the Easter Music School for music educators in the UK. Mensah is also an artist. His digital creations with West African symbols were exhibited at the Mc Connell Arts Center in Worthington, Ohio, USA and as part of the Black History month activities received excellent reviews.

Mensah has a postgraduate degree in Church music from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Bexley, Columbus, OH and studied composition with John Carter (John Carter is recognized as one of the most productive and skillful writers in choral composition today). Mensah is currently the Music Director for the Ghana Methodist Church Choirs (GHAMECC) in North America, comprising the USA and Canada. His interest includes West African sacred choral compositions, folk songs, military cadences, holistic and computer music and

computer aided creations with African symbols. Indeed Mensah has a rare multiplicity of musical skills that he has used to produce music that can soothe many distressed soul and we believe it is because the Lord is with him.

4.5.2 Newlove Annan



Figure 23: Picture of Newlove Kojo Annan

Amuah (2010) recounts that Newlove Annan was born on the 20th of March, 1973 in Akim Kukurantumi, Ghana, West Africa. His father, the late Rev. Francis Kwamena Annan, an itinerant Methodist minister, was an ardent lover and “life student” of music. His mother, Mrs. Felicia Annan (nee Turkson), is a native of Agona Nyarkrom but nurtured in Cape Coast. She was a great soprano singer who featured as soloist in the Wesley Methodist Church Choir, Cape Coast. She is indeed responsible for Newlove’s musical prowess. She challenged him to play the many tunes she had learned as chorister and was actually the first person to imbue in

Newlove the idea of composing his own pieces when she discussed great composers such as Ephraim Amu and Bessa Simons with him.

Educational Background

Newlove describes his ability to write music, up to the time he entered the University of Ghana, Legon, as mostly self-taught. He was a shy person and would do everything to prevent his music teachers at Achimota from knowing that he knew anything more than what they expected from any ordinary student. But by the time he was at the Senior High School level he could no longer hide his musical prowess as he had to choose Music as one of his subjects. In 1996, he gained admission to the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, where he was offered a three year course leading to the award of General Diploma in Music.

By the time he re-gained admission to pursue an undergraduate course, (BA Music/Religion), he had composed well over a 100 songs, that were being sung by about two thirds of the thousands of choirs in Ghana and the neighboring Togo and Ivory Coast. Like his father, Newlove received the call into the ordained ministry in 2002 while an undergraduate student at Legon. In August of 2003 he was admitted at the Gammon Theological Seminary of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta GA, USA. After four years of intensive education he received a dual degree in Theology, Liturgics and Pastoral Care (M.Div./MA).

Choirmastership/Directorship Experience

Newlove as a youth served as the organist to about eight churches his father pastored. He was first made official choirmaster at age thirteen when, during his Achimota days, he used to

accompany the then Methodist Chaplain of that school in his outside school churches, the Methodist Church in Abelemkpe, a suburb of Accra. Newlove held numerous positions in church music circles, such as Choir Director of The Bethel Methodist Church, Ayigya, Kumasi; The Good Shepherd Methodist Church, Bubuashie, Accra; Bethany Methodist Church, Dzorwulu, Accra; and the St. John Methodist Church in New Achimota. He was also the technical director and advisor to the Winneba Youth Choir until his departure from Ghana in 2003.

In 1998, Newlove founded the Methodist Evangel Choir, an exceptional choir formed out of a desire to evangelise through hymn recordings. In this group, he worked with renowned ministers such as Most Rev. Prof. Emeritus Kwesi A. Dickson, who served as an advisor, and the Rt. Rev. J.K Atto-Brown, who narrated the stories behind the hymns. The Methodist Evangel Choir under Newlove's leadership sang at important functions such as the state re-burial service for the Ghanaian politicians who were brutally executed in 1979 during the military uprising. One of his popular classical works, "They that wait upon the Lord," which was specially written for the occasion and dedicated to the honour of the then president of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency John A. Kuffour.

While at the University of Ghana, Legon, he accompanied the Choir of the Department of Music of the School of Performing Arts in most of its major programmes and commitments, such as various matriculations and congregations that involved the entire university community. He is one of the few musicians in Ghana who has been commissioned by groups,

such as the Winneba Youth Choir and the Jesus and Mary Choir of New Achimota, to write songs for recording albums, featuring him and honouring him as a composer.

He was the composer of the special song rendered by the ITC Chorus under the baton of the world acclaimed Church Musician Prof. Melva W. Costen at the United States Conference of the World Council of Churches held in Atlanta GA in 2005. Newlove has received several awards and titles both in Ghana and the United States. On graduation from the seminary he was given the Walter H. McKelvey, Minister of Christian Worship and Liturgics Award for excellence in the area of church music. He is also a fellow of the United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts. He is the third Black 42 African whose compositions are included in a United Methodist Hymnal. He is also the recipient of the St. Paul's Good News in Song Award from the Hanson Place Central United Methodist Church, New York; as well as editor-at-large with the New Ventures Department of the United Methodist Publishing House that is responsible for recommending and editing musical works and prayers to be included in Worship.

Works

He has over forty hymn tunes metered and sung to strophic hymns. He has also written short chorales and non-extensive choral works meant to convey precise messages. They are often sung in churches during ordinary times on the liturgical calendar. Examples are Yesu Di M'akyi (Jesus defends me) and Okyeso Nyame (The Providing God) which are Highlife tunes or danceable songs which are accompanied with drumming and dancing. These types of songs

are meant not only to educate but also to entertain. *Ene Ne Da* (This is the Day) There is Harmony in My Heart (Arranged) Joy Like a River (Arranged). Songs tailored after the Baroque/Classical vein includes They that Wait Upon the Lord, We Praise You, Lord and Come We that Love the Lord. Newlove has a lot of excellent arrangements aimed at resurrecting old tunes.

He has made arrangements of songs of different styles or genres of music ranging from the traditional Ebibindwom to local worship and praise songs, and examples of these are Kwesi Baiden's *Nyame Ye* (God is Good) and *M'akoma Ahye Ma* (My Heart is Filled Up) In these endeavours he fuses Mozart, Bach, Ghanaian Pentecostal Songs and his own creativity which he labels Co-existence. Further to these, he has also written songs to portray his African identity; songs which create new styles of combining drums and idioms from different parts of Africa with Western harmonies. One of such songs is Chinnada Bue, a nonsensical vocal text which he invented and interprets in the music to mean Justice for all. This song was performed by the World acclaimed Fisk Jubilee Singers led by Paul Kwami at the National Theatre in 2007. Newlove has also written more extensive choral works/anthems. Among these are *Mobo Dawur* (I Would Tell it to the World) *Y'ahyia Wo Din Mu*, (We have Gathered in Thy Name) and *Abofo Rekyin Hen Ho* (Angels are hovering around us).

He also has songs for special occasions such as Christmas, Easter, Funerals and general church services such as *Momma Yenke Bethlehem* (Let's Go to Bethlehem), *Afehyiapa 1&2* (Happy New Year) and *Anyansafo No* (The Wise Men) for which he has an orchestral accompaniment.

Another of his works is *Dza Onyew Nnam* (He that accompanies us) for the Mass of Bishop Dadson, a Eucharistic service song of eight pieces after the different stations of the institution of the communion service.

Newlove Annan is a versatile musician, composer, and multi-instrumentalist. He has contributed immensely to the Church's musical life in Africa and in the United States. He seeks to look for ways to make music more and more of an aid to worship. His interests include Theology, music in Christian Education, using music in reaching a sacred clinical (Amuah 2010: 40-43).

4.5.3 Sam Kwaku Asare – Bediako



Figure 24: Picture of Sam Asare Bediako

According to the program brochure of “An Evening with Sam Asare-Bediako” on October 4, 2015, page 5 at the Calvary Baptist Church, Shiashi-Accra, Sam Kweku Asare-Bediako is a composer, pianist and an organist born to Christian and Rose Asare – Bediako at Asante Mampong.

Greatly encouraged by his grandparents, Pastor J. K. and Mrs Mary Boatemaa Amoah. He started his first music lessons at age five (5), and by age seven (7) was playing simple hymns. These include Ghanaian church anthems, hi life / Agbadza, short, social coronation and educational songs in mostly Ghanaian languages such as Ewe, Ga, Sefwi, Akan, Dagomba as well as English languages.

Some of his popular church anthems are *Beso Hwe, Nyame wo Yafai Yi, Aseda, Aman Mehwe, Bue Mani, Nhira, W’adwuma, Sore Hyeren, Dwen Woho, Dede, Mame Soro Nyansa Ne Ahooden, Yede Y’aseda ma Wo’a, Agya Y’ahyia Mu*. He also composed some short church anthems, hi life / agbadza and Gabada namely *Sanku Ndwom, Mayen Oddo, Aseda Nkoaa, Mentumi Mfa Wo Ntoto Bribiara Ho, Wo Ne Gye Fo, Atipa, Hyira Me, Hyeren, Dzidzo le Afeto Lafeme (Ewe), Wo Mii Ya Nwei (Ga), Enze (Sefwi), Jesus Reba*.

He has written eight Masses, five in Twi and three in English. Some of his patriotic songs include *Wo Nso Yebi, Oman Ghana Beye Yie, Som Ghana Som Pa, Fa W’akoma Nyinaa Do Wo Man, Ghanaman Montie, Na Aden, Ghana @ 50*, etc.

4.5.4 Ebenezer Allotey



Figure 25: Picture of Ebenezer Allotey

From <http://www.africanchorus.org/tyc/#Founder>, Ebenezer Allotey was trained at the then National Academy of Music Winneba, Ghana's erstwhile conservatory for many of Ghana's notable music educators. He founded the Tema Youth Choir in 2001 with the mission to develop the choral arts and to instill disciplined music education among Ghanaian youth. Since then the choir has transformed itself into a phenomenon at home and in the international choral community, and preferred performing ensemble for visiting Heads of States, the Diplomatic Community in Ghana and other distinguished events. The choir has several CDs to its credit, including their hit album, *NYHIRA* which was sponsored by the Honorable French Ambassador to Ghana, H.E. Pierre Jacquemot.

4.5.5 James Varrick Armaah



Figure 26: Picture of James V. Armaah

James Varrick Armaah was born on 27th March 1984 in Winneba, into a musical family. His father a choir master of the Winneba A.M.E Zion Cathedral and his mother a chorister. From a very young age, his talent for music was obvious. He was known to memorise all four parts of songs being taught at choir rehearsals. At age seven he started composing for his colleagues at Sunday school. He started playing the church organ when he was eleven.

He was raised in Winneba, acquiring his basic education at the University Practice North Basic School in Winneba. He attended the Winneba Secondary School, as it was known at the time.

James became the principal organist for the Winneba Youth Choir from 2000 to July 2007. He worked with Paa John, the choir's director, to lift the image of WYC. It has since become one of Ghana's leading choirs. He founded Harmonious Chorale after leaving the Winneba Youth Choir. Today, he is wildly popular in Ghanaian contemporary music, and is one of the foremost personalities shaping the face of choral music in the country.

He went on to graduate from the University of Ghana, Legon, with a Diploma in General Music and a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Music and Theater Arts. Currently, he is holding a Master's Certificate in Business Administration (MBA) from the Methodist University College. This inspirational composer, director and organist can boast of many beautiful compositions. These include hymns, anthems and high-life tunes.

James has directed a number of choral groups across the country and beyond. The St. John's Methodist Choir (Tantra Hills), St. Mary's Zion Choir (McCarthy Hill), United Ghana Christian Church Choir (Atlanta Georgia – USA), New Jersey and Queens Ghana Seventh Day Adventist Church Choirs as well as the Ghana Wesley United Methodist Church Choir in Brooklyn – New York are a few of the groups he has directed in his career.

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4.6 Contribution of Some Personalities to Choirs and Choral Music

4.6.1 Dr. Joyce Aryee of Salt and Light Ministries



Figure 27: Picture of Dr. Joyce Aryee

Amuah (2013) narrates that, Salt and Light Ministries (SALM) is a non-denominational and not-for-profit ministry of motivation and encouragement to the body of Christ under the leadership of Dr. Joyce Aryee. It was established in 1998 to provide discipleship. SALM has broadened its mission to become one of Ghana's most prolific organizers and managers of Christian activities. The year 2006 marked a watershed moment for the ministry.

During that year, SALM was appointed by the "Ghana @ 50 Secretariat"² as event managers of the "Festival of Religious Choral Music," which formed part of the activities to mark the country's Golden Jubilee Celebrations. As managers of the festival, SALM planned and organized simultaneous performances of choral concerts in eight regional capitals in the

country under the direction of Joshua A. Amuah, lecturer, Department of Music University of Ghana, Legon. According to Aryee “Salt and Light Music Ministries (SALMM) were launched as an informal ministry to specifically encourage and promote choral music as well as its use in worship in 2008. Prior to the setting up of SALMM, SALM organized periodic choral performances dubbed “Choicest Psalmody”. Amuah (2013) indicates that: SALMM has since its establishment organized seven major musical concerts featuring the works of eight relatively younger choral music composers namely; Yaw Sekyi Baidoo – 10th October, 2008, James Varrick Armaah – 30th January, 2009, Kenn Kafui – 30th April, 2009, James Tsemafo Arthur – 25th September, 2009, Newlove Annan – 12th March, 2010, James Ato Scott Bennin and J. G. Koomson – 25th March, 2011 and George Mensah Essilfie – 4th November, 2011. Due to the huge attendance at the first concert at the British Council Hall in Ghana, the subsequent performances were moved to the Ghana National Theatre. In its effort to create a greater platform for Ghanaian choral groups, SALMM with her choral music consultant in May 2009 held a two-nation choral concert in Accra dubbed; “An Evening Service of Worship and Adoration”. The concert featured the Harmonious Chorale of Ghana and Nigeria’s celebrated Nightingales International Choir. In all these performances, a number of church, industrial and junior/youth choirs were featured. (Amuah, 2013: 245-246).

4.6.2 Emeritus Prof. J.H. Kwabena Nketia



Figure 28: Picture of Emeritus Prof. J.H. Nketiah

The program booklet of the choral music concert by George Mensah Essilfie at the Tesano Baptist Church on August 9, 2015 dubbed “OTOMFO” reveals that, Emeritus Prof. J.H. Kwabena Nketia was born on June 22, 1921 at Mampong Asante. He is a composer, ethnomusicologist, and a writer. He has over 200 publications and more than 80 musical compositions to his credit.

According to the Graphic showbiz Thursday September 25, page 5, the renowned musicologist, Prof Emeritus Kwabena Nketia has called for a massive style change in the composition of choral music to create variety, especially in rhythm. This he said is needed to ensure that all songs do not sound like the works of the legendary composer, Ephraim Amu and other notable composers.

Prof Nketia congratulated the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) on their efforts to rekindle public interest in choral and folkloric music through nationwide competitions to select the best groups to contest in a national event leading to the international choral festival slated for March 2014.

He is always invited to choral events as a special guest; and his contribution and comments regarding his compositions motivate the choirs to perform better. He also inspires composers to write songs using elements from their traditions (folklore). He has a lot of choral works which are performed by youth choirs.

4.7 Contribution of the Media and Some Institutions to Choirs and Choral Music in Ghana

4.7.1 Radio and Television Stations

Amuah (2013) reiterates that, the story about the performances of choral music in Ghana would be incomplete without acknowledging the contributions of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), Ghana Television (GTV) and other private radio stations that have sprung up in the nation over the last two decades. In the 80s and the 90s the GBC and the GTV had numerous slots for choral music on their programmes.

Among the slots that were devoted fully or partially to choral music were “Campus Melodies” a radio programme that was devoted exclusively to school and college choirs, “Choral Stars” a

programme which was devoted to industrial and institutional choral groups and “With Heart and Voice” also a radio programme devoted to church choirs.

On the television, these programmes featured choral music such as “Music Makers and Talents” which was devoted to corporate individuals who intended to showcase their virtuosity in the field of choral music and “Songs of Praise” which was assigned to Church choirs to feature only hymn singing and was patronised to a large extent, only by the Methodist Church choirs. Due to the proliferation of private radio stations in the country since the last two decades, most of the slots that were originally assigned to choral music performances have been taken off to give way to programmes that would generate income for the stations. With the advent of the national F.M radio stations in all the regional capitals, there were duplications of the programmes that existed with the GBC.

Other private radio stations like “Oman F.M”-Madina, “Hitz F.M”- Abelemkpe, “Radio Peace”-Winneba and “Choice F.M”- Airport Residential Area, who initially imitated the programme outline of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) in their operations, all in the quest to promote choral music, have gone their own way. Currently the only choral music programmes featured by the National Broadcaster (GBC) are “With Heart and Voice” and “Philharmonic Pearls” (Amuah 2013:244).

4.7.2 Ghana Tourism Authority

Reports from the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) indicate that, for the past four years, the Ghana Tourism Authority has organised various regional, national and international concerts and musical contests, thus helping to revive choral music. By this process, interest in choral music is rekindled and international choral music enthusiast is encouraged to include Ghana on their circuits, thereby stimulate tours into the country. In an interview with one of the organisers Madam Abigail Kweysi, the authority organised a national choral music contest in 2012 dubbed ‘Africa Sing aloud,’ a festival which was opened to Ghanaian choirs only, for regional and national competitions when Mr. Julius Debra, was the Chairman for the National Planning Committee.

Another one was organised on August 22- November, 2013 to select choirs for ‘Africa Sing Aloud’ choral festival on 29th & 30th March 2014 under the theme: **“celebrating cultures through choral music”**. Through their initiative, there has been a tremendous revival of choral music and the generation of public interest in that type of music. These choral activities keep the youth away from engaging in social vices. Monies won from these competitions go a long way to support the groups and its members financially, thus reducing dependence on their parents. The festival provides a variety of entertainment for tourists as they learn about Ghanaian culture through choral music.

In conclusion, according to the Graphic Showbiz August (26-28, 2013:2) lovers of choral music in this country must be smiling broadly in recent times at the various efforts to revive

and generate more public interest in that type of music. The origins of ensembles of singers, generally referred to as choirs, date back to thousands of years. We have had our own glorious days in the past when works by the likes of Ephraim Amu, Ishmael Adams and Pappoe Thompson were regularly performed on radio, in churches and in the communities. Apart from churches, it has persisted in our schools, colleges and even work places. It can, however be boldly stated that it seriously lagged behind other forms of music in terms of media exposure and general appreciation.

Some personalities and their outfits have, in recent years, been in the forefront of the crusade to keep choral music rolling. Some personalities like Diana Reindorf, Dr. Joyce Aryee and an entity like the Salt and Light Music Ministries can be mentioned for their sustained efforts to promote choral music. Further on, the paper indicated that the emergence and progress of the Winneba Youth Choir, no doubt, influenced the formation of similar choirs in other localities like Tema, Cape Coast and Dansoman. MTN sponsored a concert of choral music earlier this year and the Ghana Tourism Authority also deserves commendation for the ongoing regional events to select talents to represent Ghana at the international choral music festival. Admittedly, choral music has never died out completely in Ghana. It is gaining its popularity and acceptance again by the general populace and urges all those supporting it to keep up the good work.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The preceding chapters in this research have discussed the development and contributions of youth choirs in Ghana. Its emergence and popularity has contributed enormously as well as imparted positively to the socio-economic of the music industry. The sudden emergence of advanced technology for recording, music distribution and the dramatic innovations in musical forms, practices and styles have become possible for music artists to quickly gain global recognition and influence.

5.1 Summary

The foregoing chapters in this research have discussed the youth choirs' organization as a religious and social institution in Choral Music industry. Any Christian who knows our past would know that music has played a central and contentious role throughout church history. There is no reason to believe the disagreements will stop any time soon. Being aware of the changes and movements of the past, however, should encourage us to be more humble about our own preferences and more open to other practices and styles of music used to worship God and point people to Christ.

The study looked at youth choir system as a phenomenon in our musical culture which has minimized the attempt of compulsorily migrating members of junior choirs into the adult choir against their will and the untoward attitudes of the adult which disperses the youth from the church choirs into a singing group or a youth choir outside the church. Moreover, the money

and fame aspect of the institution which is as a result of the activities of some impatient and unprofessional young nomadic musicians were some revelations contributing to the proliferation of the youth choirs in Ghana.

The study also revealed that, conflicts situations at workplaces which cannot be underestimated due to human interactions and inter-relations precipitates malfunction of power, role conflict and ambiguity, technology, individual recognition (identity), ownership rights, financial among others fuels the breakaways. These and many others have brought about the rapid spread of the development of this new paradigm across the length and breadth of the country.

Chapter two discussed the origin of the youth choir in Ghana. It was discovered that the La youngster's choir was one of the earliest youth choirs ever formed during the 1940s in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This youth choir concept became silent after the late "50s" perhaps due to the lack of interest of the then youth, management, conflicts and ownership right up until the late 80s, when the Ebenezer Methodist Church in Winneba as well as the Wesley Methodist Church Kumasi among others started a juvenile choir dubbed "Methodist Junior Choir". The economic boom of the industry caught the eyes of many youth all around the country, hence facilitated its spread by the interested people in some communities.

The motivational and benefit factors regarding their manifest functions soar around the use of that platform as classroom for learning songs and other things regarding the management and

directing. The acquired knowledge and experience are then transported into running their private choir to satisfy their desires. This serves as their latent functional reason which is highly predominant amongst the unprofessional musicians.

It was also observed that naturally, people resist change because of the fear of the unknown. Individuals usually comply with group norms and codes and support the group attitudes and activities. In the spirit of solidarity, some people choose to follow or take side with some untoward actions of friends who are punished by the authority over a breach of the rules and regulations of the choir. A classic example of this was cited at what happened in the then Ebenezer Methodist Junior Choir, Winneba when the leader of the group was suspended and had some members following him which resulted in the creation of a new group; the Winneba Youth Choir outside the church.

Other factors perpetuating the breakaways included low the rate of learning, type of repertoire, success/failures of concerts/performances as well as loss of faith in the leadership. The time to leave and become independent, lack of clear direction of the choir, displacement of the manifest/latent vision of the choir, loss of interest in the choir, unequal distribution of funds, lack of motivation among others were discovered.

Chapter three examined their performance practices and styles which is a major and the ultimate goal of all the youth choirs in Ghana. The choirs achieve their uniqueness in their several ways of behaviours. Performance practices/styles are the key issues in stylistic

criticism. It was discovered that recruitment of members into the various youth choirs in Ghana is done by either a personal invitation or poaching and all the youth choirs go through a lot of vigorous activities during their rehearsals times.

In the course of the study, two major methods of teaching songs employed by the directors or the leaders were identified. The rote learning way which is used mostly when there are inadequate music scores and to very simple tunes and the other approach which is the adequate use of the music scores where the singers go through the music or the tonic solfa of the song before the text is taken.

The study again discovered the various ways conducting and accompaniment are done in certain youth choirs in Ghana. Currently, perhaps for lack of competent assistants, they play as well as conduct at the same time to achieve their goals in the performance. Some also use three to five keyboards properly orchestrated to accompany the choir aid to produce the sound of the orchestra with all the effects.

Undoubtedly, good costume enhances performance and every performance requires a particular type of costume to wear. Most of the choirs have different types of attires for every event. These uniforms give them an identity as a choir or a group as well as define the groups in terms of how organised and worthy they are.

Performance practices and styles in relation to how they sing and sound when singing among the choirs, is achieved through their style of instrumental organisation, costume, their general management and the type fame and name that they have couched for themselves. This is seen

in the areas of instrumentations and the use of microphones. The general repertoire of the youth choirs in Ghana spans across all the genres and can be grouped under three different categories namely the church year, variety and genres.

It is imperative to know that whenever two or more choirs gather in a place for a musical event, it becomes very competitive. It was also revealed in the study that, choirs coming together for a musical event induce competition and just like conflict having its positive side which induce change, innovation and development, these competitions also urge the various choirs on to learn and prepare very well for any concert or music performance.

In chapter four, the organisational structure, profiles of some selected youth choirs and their contributions were extensively discussed. This structure is developed to establish how an organization operates and assists an organization in obtaining its goals to allow for future growth. The choirs moreover have contributed immensely to the contemporary choral music and their socio-economic impacts in Ghana (employment, education, and tourism) and contribution of some personalities, composers and the media.

5.2 Conclusions

This study has discussed the development and contribution of youth choirs in Ghana. It has revealed the motivation of the formation of Youth Choirs, power and conflict management in relation to their interactions, inter-relations and conditions. It was discovered that conflict can sometimes perform useful role in society or groups, but whatever forms it takes, it sharpens the sense of group boundaries and contributes to unity and a feeling of group identity. One

negative characteristic of it is to breed confusion within the groups resulting in the breakaway to joining or forming new groups, hence the upsurge of the youth choirs in Ghana. It also discovered that choirs coming together for a musical event induce competition and brings about change, innovation and development. In addition, lacked proper management and structures coupled with inefficient leadership competencies saw many choirs fell off and remained in extinct.

Undoubtedly, money which is a basic necessity of life and fame cannot be ruled out regarding the motivation and formation of the choirs. It forms the underpinning intent upon which the basic idea strides. The usage of technology and theatrical effects enhances performances and identity construction and thus, the youth choirs, if properly organised and managed, will help to alleviate poverty among the youth and the socio-economic impacts in Ghana regarding employment, education, and tourism.

Indeed the *ars nova* period, during the feudal system era which brought about new freedom and wide experimentation with new musical styles and forms that challenged the accepted rules of music of earlier periods, and consequently, allowed musicians and fans to travel more widely to perform or listen contribute to the development of this new paradigm. Amplification permitted small choirs and concerts to be heard by those with the least expensive tickets, and the inexpensive reproduction and transmission or broadcast of music gave rich and poor alike nearly equal access to high-quality music performances. The conflict situations which saw the breakaways of some people from one choir and also became evident that conflict does not

always denote negative tendencies but bring about several reformations to any human institution.

As Herbert Spencer believed that living organisms grow and develop, so are the proliferation of the youth choirs with their varieties and practices and styles. The youth choir concept has transformed a lot of sullen school kids and youth into beaming angels and divas ready to take on the world of music.

5.3 Recommendations

This thesis provides information on the development youth choirs in Ghana with the particular emphases on some selected youth choirs in Accra including the Harmonious chorale, African youth choir, the Wesleyan Symphonic choir, Vocal Essence and Tema youth choir as a case study.

Researchers have often focused on the structural analysis of music much to the neglect of performance practices and style. Attempts should be made at the analysis of performances as an alternative to the conventional way of musical analysis. This is because performances offer the opportunity for the performer and their audience to interact and actively partake in the music. As part of the study, certain facts have been established and serve as a guide for consideration and consumption for all those who would want to explore into this industry.

Finally, it is evident that for many choir directors getting people to sign up is not the problem but getting them to stick with their commitment. Choirs that are loosely organised, that do not have a clear mandate and purpose, that lack an enthusiastic and creative director, often fade away before Christmas, hence in an agreement with Brent Assink (1989) from <http://www.reformedworship.org/author/brent-assink>, his advice on the care and feeding of the church choir, I recommend some of his strategic tips on choir management to choir directors and choirs leaders:

Establish a consistent time and style of rehearsal

The main function of the church choir is to lead God's people in praise and worship. However, many choir members may judge the worth of their participation not only by their contribution to worship, but also by the content and value of rehearsals. As a result, it is critical that you establish a consistent style of rehearsing.

Select your repertoire with care

Selecting music is in many ways the most creative and rewarding part of leading a choir. It is also among the most challenging. It is important to know the abilities of your choir and to test and expand those abilities with a range of repertoire. Overloading your choir with too much difficult music can be just as demoralising as singing the simplest hymn arrangements week after week.

Expect a great deal from your choir

Challenge your choir both through the repertoire you select and the role you design for them. Provide them with a tentative schedule of what and when they will be singing. Try to give them a sense of their ability to contribute to worship in both special and regular services through carefully selected hymns and anthems.

Recognize that your choir members are volunteers

Service as a choir member involves a major time commitment, so be sure to offer your choir as much encouragement as possible. Pass on meaningful comments made by members of the congregation, thereby letting the choir know that it is having a positive impact on the congregation's spiritual life.

Offer choir members time off

Because so many people are already too busy in today's society, the "seasonal choir" approach and time off for choir members is important.

Be prepared

Choir members are apt to give more of themselves in rehearsals if you walk in knowing what you are going to rehearse, what you want by the end of the rehearsal, and how you are going to achieve it. It should be obvious that you have carefully considered the choir's schedule, repertoire, and overall role in the life of the church. In addition, be prepared for unforeseen

circumstances. Always make sure you have several easy anthems in our folders in reserve so that even with reduced numbers we can take part in the service.

Set high standards

Do all you can to see that the choir consistently sings at its possible best. If you relax, everyone else will too, and the choir's sense of accomplishment and contribution will suffer. If necessary, postpone an ill-prepared anthem. Participation in vibrant and enthusiastic chorale events can be an extraordinarily rewarding and spiritually enriching experience.

Certain attributes of a great choir member to the success of a good standing choir:

- ✓ A great choir member **loves the Lord and loves to sing.**
- ✓ A great choir member is **faithful**
- ✓ A great choir member is **prompt.**
- ✓ A great choir member **gets along well with others.**
- ✓ A great choir member **cooperates well with group efforts.**
- ✓ A great choir member is **committed to learning the music well.**
- ✓ A great choir member is **committed to prayer.**
- ✓ A great choir member is **expressive and effective in communicating.**
- ✓ A great choir member is **diligent in the rehearsal process**
- ✓ A great choir member is **accountable.**

Due to the socio-economic implication of the youth choir industry, it is worthwhile for every community to form one to help engage some of the youth and others. This will help to unearth and develop the potentialities of the youth for employment.

Some basic things to consider when forming a choir

- Find a choir director
- Arrange for help and supervision
- Find an accompanist
- Find singers
- Have a plan
- Select good but quickly learnable material for the first year
- Organize the choir
- Morale boosting is a must
- Continue to prepare
- Be creative
- Get employed to run the choir
- Make the choir self-financing
- Seek funding and grants

Work toward improving your music knowledge even if you are not a trained musician. Continue to improve your music reading skills and vocal techniques, through the help of your

director and/or by attending local, regional, or national church music events. Attend the annual church choir conferences for more exposure. These will help improve your musicianship, introduce you to new music, connect you with other church musicians, and inspire you to return to your home parish with renewed dedication. (Brent Assink, 1989)



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Regional Distribution of Youth Choirs

REGION	NAMES OF CHOIRS
Greater Accra	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accra Youth Choir 2006 by Edmund Ellis Akufu 2. Adehyeman Sacred Choral 3. Adehyie Youth Choir 2013 by Ebenezer Sackey 4. African Glorious Chorale 5. Belcanto Chorus 6. Bi-Tonic Singers 2000 by Margaret Ferguson and John Francis Annan 7. Celestial City Choir 8. Celestial Evangel Choir 9. Chorale Ambassadors 2011 by Emmanuel Abban. His praise Our Delight 10. Christ Philharmonic Choir 2011 by Confidence Ashiaman 11. Dansoman Youth Choir 12. Divine Favour Choir 13. Euphonic Chorale 14. Euphonic Chorale (DYC) 15. Evangel Choir 16. Glorious Philharmonic Choir 17. Golf City Choir 18. Gramophone Choir 19. Harmonious Chorale 2009 by James Varrick Armaah 20. Joyful Harp Chorale 2011 by Six Gentlemen: Bonney, Adai, 21. Korle Bu Youth Choir 22. Lapaz Community Choir by Benjamin Amakye Boateng 23. Lashibi Community Choir 24. Living Choir 25. Med Chorale

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Music Ministry Chorale 27. One Voice Choir 28. Orthodox Choir 29. Remission Choir 30. Royal Harmonic Youth Choir 31. Royal Sparrow Choir 32. Sakumono Youth Choir 33. Suncity Inspirational Choir 34. Susan Owusu Chorale 35. Tema Inspirational Choir 36. Tema Philharmonic Choir 37. Tema Youth Choir 2000 by Ebenezer Allotey 38. Teshie Youth Choir 39. The Symphonials 40. Vivace Symphonials 41. Vocal Essence Chorale 42. Voice of Youth Chorale 43. Wesleyan Symphonic Choir 2006 by Ernest Evans Acquah 44. Young Chorale by George Edzie Ashanti
<p>Central Region</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Winneba Youth Choir 1989 by George Mensah Essilfie 2. Africa Youth Choir 2013 by Formerly The Prophetic Voices Choir 3. Ajumako Enyan Essiam Youth Choir by Ato Quanor 4. Ajumako Youth Choir 5. Cape Coast Youth Choir 2002 by Nana Awuku 6. Mass Demonstrational Choir 7. Oguaa Youth Choir 2001 by C. B. Wilson 8. Passionate Choir 9. Prophetic Choir 10. Windy Voices 11. Royal Chorale

	12. Heralds Youth Choir
Ashanti Region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amemreso Youth Choir 2. Asanteman Youth Choir 3. Asanteman Choral Group 4. Bantama Youth Choir 5. Celestial City Choir 6. Divine Chorale 7. Otumfuo Youth Choir 8. Sanctuary Youth Choir 9. Asokore Youth Choir 10. Holy City Choir Western
Brong Ahafo Region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tanokrom Philharmonic Choir 2. The Phil-harmonic Choir 3. Tanoso Youth Choir 4. Western Forties Choir 5. Adehyemma Sacred Group
Volta Region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Melodies Voices of Volta Choir 2. Unity Choir Group 3. Akatyi Anyiheme Youth Choir 4. Voices of Democracy 5. Akatwi Central Choir
Upper East Region	OLA Choir
Upper West Region	St. Anthony Basic School Choir
Northern Region	-

Appendix 1I

SAMPLE I: Ghana Police Church Youth Choir Constitution And Bye - Laws drawn

From The Association Of The Methodist Church Choirs- Ghana (GHAMECC).

The name of the Choir shall be “Ghana Police Church Youth Choir” (hereinafter referred to as “The Youth Choir”).

1. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be voluntary and open to literate male and female members of Ghana Police Church and shall be between the ages of twelve (12) and forty five (45) years.

2. ADMISSION

- i. Admission shall be by written application;
- ii. The prospective applicant will be expected to appear before the Choir Executive Council to prove his or her eligibility;

3. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- i. An applicant shall, on admission, serve a period of three months’ probation or less depending on his/her performance.
- ii. At the end of the probationary period, the new member will be tested in chanting, rendition of hymns and songs by the Director/Choirmaster or Organist, after which he/she will be permitted to robe if successful.
- iii. If an entrant still under probation proves beyond any reasonable doubt that his/her performance is good, the Director/Choirmaster will use his discretion to test him/her and upon successful audition, allow him/her to robe.

4. MANAGEMENT

The general management of the Choir shall be vested in the Choir Executive Council as stated in the Regulations and Bye-Laws.

5. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS AND TENURE OF OFFICE

- i. With the Exception of the Director/Choirmaster, the Organist and their assistants who are appointed by the Chaplain in consultation with the Session and the Choir.
- ii. All other officers shall be elected at a general meeting by a simple majority.
- iii. Part Leaders and their Assistants shall be appointed by the Director/Choirmaster in consultation with the Organist.
- iv. The tenure of office for all elected officers shall be a term of two (2) years. An Officer shall not be eligible for re-election to the same office after a second term.

6. DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

- i. The Director/ Choirmaster
 - (i) The Director/Choirmaster shall be the principal leader and shall teach the Choir in music and administer its affairs.
 - (ii) He must have a good knowledge of music, and his musicianship should not be confined to teaching and directing the Choir; he should himself have a good singing voice and the ability to sing properly. A rich and resonant leading voice coming from the Director/Choirmaster adds stature to his own personality as a singing instructor and also inspires the Choir. His ability to sing well will help to correct individual faults in singing and thereby raise the image of the Choir.

(iii) The Director/Choirmaster should be able to plan the work of the Choir in such a way that it can give a special performance from time to time. He should have a large repertoire from which to choose and should be willing to conduct research into various types of sacred music, both indigenous and foreign. He should also be competent in the art of conducting.

ii. **ASSISTANT CHOIRMASTER/ORGANIST**

(i) The Organist shall be responsible for the entire choral accompaniment and efficient performance of the Choir.

(ii) He shall assist the Director in the teaching of music and administer the Choir in his absence

iii. **PRECENTOR**

(i) The Precentor shall be responsible for the overall maintenance of discipline.

(ii) He/She shall have control over the Curator and see to the proper performance of his duties;

(iii) He/She shall bring to the notice of the Director/Choirmaster persistent cases of indiscipline;

(iv) In view of the importance of his office, the Precentor shall be a member of the Choir for a minimum of three (3) years prior to his election.

(v) He/She shall, when consulted, give sympathetic hearing to the spiritual and physical needs of such persons and make appropriate recommendations to the Executive Council for remedies.

iv. **SECRETARY:**

(i) The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings and handle all correspondence of the Choir.

(ii) He/she shall also act as a liaison Officer between the Choir and its outside publics.

(iii) He/She shall in consultation with the Director/Choirmaster convene all meetings.

v. **ASSISTANT SECRETARY:**

The Assistant Secretary shall assist the Secretary in the discharge of his/her duties and also keep the Master Roll Book

vi. **FINANCIAL SECRETARY:**

(i) The Financial Secretary shall record all monies received/paid out.

(ii) He/She shall issue receipt for monies received by the Choir;

(iii) He/she shall prepare any statement of bills to the Treasurer for payment;

(iv) He/she shall present the income and expenditure returns quarterly to the Choir Executive Council.

vii. **TREASURER:**

(i) The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of the Choir's funds.

(ii) Every amount paid out shall be authorized by the Choir Executive Council.

(iii) He/she shall keep an imprest to be determined by the Choir Executive Council.

viii. **CURATOR**

(i) The Curator shall be responsible to the Precentor;

(ii) He/She shall be in direct charge of the Vestry and all the properties of the Choir;

(iii) He/She shall ensure that the robes, hymn books, leaflets, etc. are systematically arranged in their respective places in the Vestry;

(iv) He/She shall be the last person to leave the meeting place to ensure that all the windows and doors are properly locked and that any article left behind is kept safely;

ix. **ASSISTANT CURATOR:**

He/She shall assist the Curator in discharge of his/her duties.

x. **PART LEADERS:**

(i) There shall be a principal leader and an assistant for each of the four (4) parts, and it shall be the responsibility of the Part Leaders to maintain order and discipline in their various sections, both at practices and at Church services

(K) PRAYER SECRETARY

1. He/she shall lead the Choir in prayers before and after services.

(ii) He/She shall also be responsible for the spiritual development of the Choir.

xi. **WELFARE OFFICER**

(i) He/She shall ensure that sick and bereaved members are promptly visited and comforted

(ii) He/She shall ensure the Choir's proper participation, on invitation, to social functions such as marriages, out-doorings, funerals and other activities.

(iii) He/She shall arrange for transportation for Choir's outings.

xii. **CHOIR MOTHER (HONORARY OFFICE)**

She shall be the mother, counselor and advisor of the Choir on general issues among all Choristers and also see to their proper dressing at all times.

xiii. **PATRONS**

(i) There shall be Patrons of the Choir.

(ii) Patrons shall be members of the Ghana Police Church or any of the denominations within the Christian Council of Ghana who show interest in the activities of the Choir.

(iii) Nominations of Patrons shall be made by members and approved by the Executive Council.

(iv) Patrons shall be "Ex Officio" members of the choir, in advisory capacity.

(v) They shall assist the Choir Spiritually, financially, materially and socially.

(vi) They shall meet periodically to assess the Choir's performance in general and offer corrective suggestions.

(vii) They shall co-ordinate with the Choir Executive Council on issues affecting the running of the Choir.

(viii) They shall be encouraged to participate in programmes of the Choir.

(ix) They shall be entitled to all privileges and benefits as enshrined in the Choir's Regulations.

7. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

(i) There shall be a Choir Executive Council, Which shall be constituted by all the officers of the Choir with the Director/Choirmaster as its Chairman.

(ii) The Choir Executive Council shall meet once every month. Nevertheless, the Choirmaster may call other meetings, whenever necessary.

8. GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHOIR

General meetings shall be held quarterly, the last of which shall be the annual general meeting at which accounts, elections and general performance of the Choir during the year shall be discussed.

Voting at all general meetings shall be by simple majority.

9. CHOIR PRACTICE

- i. There shall be two (2) Choir practices in the week and such days shall be selected as local conditions may permit;
- ii. The duration of Choir practices shall not exceed one and half (1½) hours 5.00 p.m.-6.30 p.m.;
- iii. In exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Director/Choirmaster, additional practice days and time shall be added;
- iv. The last Choir practice day shall be solely used to prepare for Sunday services

10. ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICE

- i. Any chorister who intends to be absent from Choir practice or Sunday service must inform his/her Part Leader and appropriate action taken;
- ii. Any chorister who fails to attend Choir practices regularly or Sunday services for one (1) month shall be required to explain his/her conduct;
- iii. Any chorister who stays away from Choir practices and Church Services for three (3) consecutive months or more without seeking permission shall be presumed to have deserted the Choir and shall forfeit any benefit due him/her.
- iv. Any chorister who stays away from Choir practices and Church Services for one (1) year shall be accepted into the Choir as a new member and would have to go through the process of serving a probationary period of three (3) months;
- v. Choristers who go to school shall formally seek permission to be away and are expected to return to the Choir during vacations;

- vi. Any chorister who absents himself/herself from Choir practice without permission in one week shall not be eligible to robe on Sunday
- vii. Any chorister who absents himself/herself from Choir practice without permission for a month shall not be eligible to robe the very week he/she attends Choir practice.
- viii. Every chorister must avail himself/herself of the means of Grace of the Church, i.e., Church services, Sacrament, etc.;
- ix. Every Chorister shall be at the Vestry, at least, fifteen (15) minutes before the commencement of service;
- x. Every chorister is duty bound to join the procession at the start of the Church service, except where permission has been granted not to process or recess.
- xi. No Chorister shall robe to join the Choir at the stalls after the singing of the introit.

11. DRESS CODE

i. Director /Choirmasters/Organists

He may dress like any other male chorister; in simple WHITE LONG SLEEVES SHIRT, He may choose to wear a SUIT AND A GOWN TO CONFORM TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE QUALIFICATION AWARDED COLLEGE. A BLACK BOW OR FLYING TIE MAY BE WORN OVER A PAIR OF BLACK SHOES. No Organist shall put on the gown whilst in political suit or shirt without a coat or jacket and NO ORGANIST SHALL PLAY THE ORGAN AT A CHURCH FUNCTION OR CONDUCT THE CHOIR WITHOUT THE GOWN.

ii. **Male Choristers**

Male choristers are to wear WHITE LONG SLEEVES SHIRT over DARK COLOURED TROUSERS not in contrast with the robes. BLACK FLYING or BOW TIE, BLACK SHOES AND SOCKS to match the colour of the Trousers is recommended.

iii. **Lady Choristers**

Personal dress should not show beneath the robes. It should be turned up or drawn up and pinned. Sleeves should be rolled up.

(i) **Hair-do/Hairstyle**

The hairdo/hairstyle must be portable and free style. Long hairs must be held up with grips/pins except where the hair is natural grey hair, no female chorister shall be allowed to robe with a multi-coloured or bleached hair.

(ii) **Ear-rings and Neck/Ankle Chains or Bangles**

Ear-rings shall be uniform or otherwise it shall be flat, round/ ball in gold-plated or white in colour not beyond half ($\frac{1}{2}$) mm in diameter and shall be fixed to the ear but NOT HANGING. NO NECK OR ANKLE CHAINS shall be worn. NO BANGLES of any kind whatsoever shall also be worn. FANCIFUL RINGS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

(iii) **Make-Up**

No make-up as well as EYE SHADOWS, LIPSTICKS, ROSY CHEEKS, or NAIL POLISH OF ANY COLOUR shall be applied whilst in robes.

(iv) Shoes

A pair of full black shoes is prescribed. OPEN-TOE SANDALS or SLIPPERS are not acceptable.

(v) Bags

No bags shall hang over the robes at the shoulder. A portable handbag or purse could be secured at the ambit through the sleeves, if necessary to hold a few essentials.

12. FUNDS

- i. A Savings Bank Account shall be opened with the Ecobank bank
- ii. There shall also be a Current Account to facilitate easy withdrawals;
- iii. An imprest, determined by the Choir Executive Council, shall be kept by the Treasurer;
- iv. Withdrawals from the Bank shall only be made on the authority of the Choir Executive council;
- v. The signatories for the purpose of all transactions with the Bank shall be either
 1. The Chaplain General or an Associate Chaplain and
 2. Any one (1) of the following officers of the choir; the Director/Choirmaster, Financial Secretary or the Treasurer.

13. ACCOUNTS

- i. The financial year of the Choir shall commence on the first of January and end 31st December.

- ii. A financial report shall be submitted quarterly by the Financial Secretary to the Choir Executive Council for its consideration. A yearly Financial Report shall be submitted for adoption at the Annual General Meeting of the Choir

14. AUDITING OF ACCOUNTS

The Accounts of the Choir shall be audited half (½) yearly or when specifically requested by the Auditors to be appointed by the Session

15. INVENTORY

An inventory of all properties in the care of the Curator shall be recorded in an Inventory Book and kept in the Vestry and shall be checked half (½) yearly by the Director/Choirmaster, who shall submit an Inventory Report to the Choir Executive Council.

16. CHOIR PROPERTIES

- i. No property of the Choir (robe, hymnbook, etc.) shall be taken home or to any function unless with the approval of the Director in consultation with the Curator and the Precentor;
- ii. No chorister shall wear or tamper with any robe which is the personal property of a fellow chorister unless authorized by the owner;
- iii. Hymnbooks, leaflets, etc. shall not be carelessly handled or placed about in the Vestry; the Curator shall pile them together for shelving. Similarly, all robes shall be hung on the pegs provided for the purpose.

17. VISITATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

The Choir, on anniversaries, shall make presentation to outstanding choristers.

18. WEDDINGS

- i. A disturbance fee shall be charged by the Choir for weddings and other functions not within the general requirements of the Church for which application for such service of the Choir shall be made;
- ii. Where one of the couple is a member of the Choir, no fee shall be charged for attendance at a wedding service;
- iii. A suitable presentation shall be made to any member of the Choir at the time of wedlock, provided such a chorister shall have shown keen interest in the Choir and he/she is financial.

19. SICKNESS

- i. A chorister who falls sick, shall arrange to have the Part Leader informed;
- ii. If a chorister is admitted at the hospital or is seriously sick at home, the Choir shall visit the said chorister and present some provisions or fruits.

20. BEREAVEMENTS

- i. Permission shall be sought from Session for the Choir to attend all funerals;
- ii. If a parent of a chorister dies, the Choir shall attend the funeral of the deceased;
- iii. If the spouse of a chorister dies, the Choir shall attend the funeral;
- iv. Where a child of a chorister dies, all the members of the Choir shall go and sympathize with the bereaved chorister up till the time of burial;
- v. When a chorister dies, the Choir shall visit the bereaved family and console them through prayers, hymns and scripture;
- vi. The Choir shall put red puppy bands on their robes every subsequent Sunday till the deceased chorister is buried;

- vii. No matter the distance, the Choir is encouraged to attend the burial and funeral of the deceased chorister in full;
- viii. The Choir shall present a tribute;
- ix. Where the Choir is unable to attend the burial and funeral in full due to distance and financial constraints, a sizeable delegation shall represent the Choir with a donation;
- x. A service of songs shall be held on one of the Choir practice days in the week preceding the burial of the deceased chorister. The entire member Choirs of the Association dressed in the Association's T-Shirt shall attend. The service shall not exceed two hours and shall be conducted by a Reverend Minister.
- xi. The Choir shall inform the family of the part the Choir would play in the funeral;
- xii. A donation shall be presented to the appropriate person or persons as custom demands, but the donation to be presented shall depend on whether the chorister is financial or not.

21. DISOBEDIENCE

It shall be a serious offence for a chorister to refuse to abide by any order issued out by the Director/Choirmaster or an accredited representative, either directly or indirectly and such offender shall be summoned to appear before the Choir Executive Council to show cause why he/she should not be suspended or dismissed.

FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF DOUBT, THE CHOIR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SHALL HAVE AUTHORITY TO SUSPEND A CHORISTER WHO MISBEHAVES FOR UP TO THREE MONTHS, BUT WHERE STIFFER PUNISHMENT IS REQUIRED, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND SESSION SHALL HAVE THE FINAL SAY.

22. DISCIPLINE

- i. It shall be an offence to talk or converse at Choir practices and Church services;
- ii. No humming of tune shall take place whilst the organ is being played;
- iii. No chorister shall quarrel or use indecent language either within or outside the Choir;
- iv. There shall be perfect silence in the stalls and every chorister is duty bound to be in the mood for prayers and perfect reverence.
- v. There shall be no chewing of gum, either at Choir practice, Church service or at the Vestry before service commences;
- vi. All insubordination shall be dealt with as a breach of discipline and shall attract long suspension or dismissal, depending on the degree of the offence.

23. PROCEDURE AS TO DISCIPLINE

- i. In all matters of discipline, the final authority shall be the Session;
- ii. Where a chorister misbehaves in a way that deserves suspension and/or dismissal, the Choir Executive Council shall, in the first instance, suspend the chorister concerned for up to three months and a formal report made to the Session, whilst investigations are conducted into the matter within two (2) months;

- iii. At the end of the investigations, an emergency meeting of the Choir Executive Council shall be convened to look at the report and a recommendation based on the report submitted to Session for a final decision to be taken on the matter;
- iv. However, where it becomes expedient to recall the suspended chorister before the expiration of the suspension period, the Choir Executive Council shall recall the chorister concerned, without prejudice to the report of the investigations to be submitted later.

24. DISMISSALS/RESIGNATIONS

- i. Any chorister who fails to comply with the rules and regulations of the Choir shall lose his/her membership on the recommendation of the Choir Executive Council;

25. INTOXICATION AND/OR DRUNKENNESS

- i. It shall be a serious offence on the part of any chorister to attend Choir practice and Church service drunk or smelling of alcohol;
- ii. Such a chorister shall be turned away by the Part Leader from Choir practice or be made to disrobe and a report made to the Precentor who shall warn the chorister to desist from drinking;
- iii. A report of such behaviour shall be reported to the Choir Executive Council for the chorister to be suspended.
- iv. A further incidence of drunkenness shall entitle the Choir Executive Council to expel the chorister and Session informed.

26. IMMORAL ACTS

- i. A male chorister (either married or single) found to be flirting with any female chorister shall be suspended indefinitely by Session on the recommendation of the Choir Executive Council.
- ii. However, any chorister who is desirous to choose a life partner within the Choir is advised to do so through the proper channel;
- iii. The decision to either dismiss or suspend the said chorister indefinitely shall be taken by the Choir Executive Council on the receipt of the report of investigation, and Session informed for the necessary action to be taken;
- iv. An Executive member who is suspended shall lose his position on the Choir Executive Council

27. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHORISTERS

- i. The Choir shall institute a 'Choir Re-Dedication Service' on the 2nd Saturday of January every year in full choir robes. The Service shall be conducted by a Reverend Minister appointed for the purpose.
- ii. The Choir shall, from time to time, also organize Spiritual Retreats to enhance the spiritual growth of choristers and cater for their special spiritual needs.

28. MONTHLY DUES

An amount shall be deducted from the monthly transport subsidy as dues

29. DISCRETIONARY POWERS

The Choir Executive Council shall deliberate and decide on all matters, which are not stipulated in these rules as they arise from time to time, without prejudice.

These Bye-Laws may be repealed or amended by a majority vote of not less than three quarters of members in good standing at a General Meeting.

30. ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This Bye Laws has been accepted as binding by the Ghana Police Church Youth Choir at a General Meeting held on:.....

