Book Symposium: Multi-sided Music Platforms and the Law: Afrocentric perspectives

By:

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The book titled Multi-Sided Music Platforms and the Law: Copyright, Law and Policy in Africa is a timely contribution to literature in this era, with regards to the music boom in Nigeria and other parts of Africa and the existence of music platforms for entertainment as well as commercial purposes. There is a voluminous scholarship in this book on law and multi-sided platforms generally on one hand and copyright law specifically on another. The author focused on the legal and regulatory issues that arise from the use of copyright-protected content by multi-sided platforms in digital advertising.

Comforting to me personally is the fact the book is Afrocentric in perspective and engaged critically the regulatory efforts in the EU and other jurisdictions. Indeed more literatures should focus on issues in Africa from within the environment rather than continually depend on perspectives that do not align with the African environment and practices. Such literatures provide a means

for African countries to solve internal issues as a result of their interaction with other jurisdiction with similar practices. The work is highly commended for the approach adopted in conducting a research which is regarded as useful to Africa.

Chapter one lays the foundation to the book with a comprehensive exploration of the features of multi-sided platforms generally and multi-sided music platforms specifically, music content in this platform and how the platform operates, legal perspectives on multi-sided music platform and related issues in the copyright industry. The foundation laid enables better understanding of the entire content of the book by the reader. Reading the introduction creates an interest in the other chapters of the book. There are limited literatures on this area of copyright law; thus this book is highly enlightening. The interaction of several market participants on multi-sided music platform to generate revenue through different means is described.

The single-sided platforms as they differ from the two sided in the provision of services to customers is engaged in discussion and it is traced to its existence in ancient Greece. The narrower multi-sided music platform focusing on the music content used as one of the free products developed to increase network effects and indirectly attract other customer segment is linked to copyright protection and the Berne Convention of 1979. Law as it relates to these platforms is engaged in discussion in a simplistic manner by using practical examples available on Youtube. The jurisdictional scope limited to Nigeria and South Africa aids precision.

The subsequent chapters look at particular aspects of law as they relate to multi-sided music platforms. The chapters are well written and based on extensive research. The topic covered in chapter two is multi-sided music platforms and key regulatory frameworks. Apart from copyright law, other areas of law explored in other chapters of the book are briefly discussed, while the former is discussed comprehensively. The justification of copyright protection is reviewed even though it does not play a key role in this chapter or the book in entirety. Economic rights related to copyright law have been well established over the years. In some parts of Africa, the reason for the creation of music protected by copyright law does not fall within those reasons or justifications which are regarded as totally Eurocentric.

The reasons or justification for copyright protection from an African perspective should have been explored to know if there is any in existence locally. I am of the perception that Africans are nonchalant about copyright protection of their works and only make music to make money regardless of the existence of copyright law. For this reason, the number of registration or notification of music in Nigeria Copyright Commission (NCC) in comparison to the actual production of music is minimal, less than five figures. Economic rights in monetization of music content was rightly explored with regards to competition and focusing on performing rights and reproduction rights. This aspect is key to the research.

Chapter three in similarity to chapter two is in sync with chapter one were the foundation for all chapters is laid. The author signifies the link by stating that the introductory chapter highlights the processes and copyright terms regarding the music content used in the context of multi-sided music platforms. This chapter's focus is on copyright ownership and infringement regarding the activities on multi-sided music platforms, including copyright terms, exclusive rights, copyright infringement, defences and jurisdictional aspects of a claim for copyright infringement. Copyright infringements and the scope of limitations as well as exceptions framework were examined in both Nigeria and South Africa.

In chapter four, increase in the volume of data provided and collated by platform firms due to the design and implementation of multi-sided music platforms is explored. The use of personal data and privacy protection legal framework regarding such use in South Africa and Nigeria is engaged in discussion using statistics. Provisions on privacy law, access to personal information and enforcement of privacy law were linked to multi-sided music platforms issues in South Africa and Nigeria.

Subsequent to this chapter, competition law infractions is covered in chapter five. This area of law is not often examined in literatures written in Nigeria even though it is a key area in copyright law and other areas of law. Conducts regulated by competition law, copyright terms from a competition law perspective with a focus on *Attrakt v. Google*, copyright and privacy terms and respective competition law perspectives in South Africa and Nigeria are examined. This chapter inquired into specific problems in applying competition

law on platform firms that rely on copyright-protected music content and personal data in the provision of their services to specific customers. The author is able to show competition is affected in the implementation of the copyright and privacy terms related to multi-sided music platforms.

Chapter six focused on the way forward through regulatory and advisory directions. Ways in which South Africa and Nigeria should apply copyright law, privacy law and the complementary legal framework of competition law to regulate the activities of multi-sided music platform is suggested and they include: law reform suggestions with three key possibilities ((a)clarified right of communication to the public and practical enforcement of a clarified right of communication to the public, (b) expanding the scope of limitation and exception and (c) addressing the effects of relative dominance) regulatory cooperation and application of judicial mechanisms.

Overall, this book comprises brilliant chapters from the first to the last which are appropriately linked, making the work interesting and enlightening. The bibliography of literature on multi-sided music platforms and copyright law and other areas of law is useful to the African terrain. The work is essential reading for intellectual property scholars and policy makers, especially those with interest in copyright law and multi-sided music platforms.

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