

MUSIC CAREER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Over the years past in Nigeria, less attention has been paid on education for self-reliance. Instead the orientation of graduates has always been to find a white-collar job. The oil boom era worsened the situation when most Nigerians enjoyed maximum wealth with less effort and less consideration about the need for preservation, teacher preparation, manpower and technological know-how that will guarantee day to day development of the nation. It is believed that a vocationally oriented programme is highly desired to salvage the situation as far as the Nigerian situation is concerned. This paper therefore addresses the genesis of music education its progression into formal learning, its relationship with national development, the careers in music industry that are expected to enhance national development, examining the attendant problems associated with the actualization of music graduates becoming self-reliant. The paper exposes all the job opportunities available in music industry which ranges from song writing through a number of careers to the ordinary music marketers in the street. The paper concludes by stating that music education comprises of the total activities which are planned organized and develop to benefit the Nigerian Youth in their effort to participate in the economy of Nigeria. It recommends that music education curricular in the higher education should be redirected to address the manpower needs of the nation. Calls on various stakeholders in music industry to back up the issue of making music more vocational and job oriented through students' exposure to SIWESS programme. It goes without saying that adequate funding should be made available to the institutions offering music education.

The Concept of Music

Music is one of the profound human achievements. It is a universal sound, which can create emotions and express Feeling, Spectrum; Dictionary (1977:142) has defined music as "the art or skill of arranging sounds or combination of sound to produce special effect. It is sound thus produced; with symbols representing these sounds or notes on a score". International Encyclopedia of social sciences (1972:566) sees music as "an expression of inner life, an expression of thought and feeling in an aesthetic form through technique of composition, according to rules of certain musical style". These two definitions point to two major concepts – 'arranging sounds to produce special effects', 'the expression of thoughts and feelings in an aesthetic form', which presuppose that one who engages in music has some especial capability to affect people by way of sound production. Encyclopedia Britannica (1943: 662) brings out yet another aspect of music. It defines music as "an art that in one guise or

the permeated every human society; it is a protean art; it lends itself easily to other arts in alliance with words as in song and with physical movement as in dance”.

Indeed music is a phenomenon usually understood and referred to vocal and instrumental sounds produced in the society. In fact, the meaning of music cannot be precise because it has metamorphosed or undergone changes and shifting conditions to reflect the evolution of new interest, ideas and attitude in relation to sound.

Music in Nigerian Culture

In the traditional African Society, the child learns about the culture and norms of his people through the peer groups, age grades and imitations of the adult. Traditional institutions in the tribal West Africa was not on an instructional basis but on the principle of slow absorption of musical experience and active participation rather than formal teaching. Music education generally for an immediate into the society and preparation for adulthood. Fafunwa1974: 39 have this to say about traditional education.

Children learnt by doing, that is to say children and adolescence were engaged in participatory education through rituals, ceremonies, initiation, recitation and demonstration- recreational subjects included wrestling, dancing, drumming acrobatic display racing etc while intellectual training included the study of local history, legends, the environment, poetry, reasoning, riddles, proverbs, story telling, story, relays to mention a few.

This shows that education in the traditional sense was an integral experience. The art of music making an integral part of culture, was transmitted to the young generation through learning by doing. There was no school of music. Children simply became musicians through oral imitation of the master musicians in their society. Because music affects both the performer and the audience it grew into a profession. The musician was recognized by the local culture to constitute a watchdog of society morality as the musical texts emanated from the interest and happenings in the society. It was beneficial to the performer because he derived fame from it in addition to earning a living.

The beginning of formal music education started with the missionaries who used music to derive their aims of converting Nigeria into Christianity. However, emphasis was on singing and the rudiments of the music, which enhanced the full participation in the mass. Hence Okafor (1988: 36) states:

Christianity through its schools and churches introduced melodies, stage singing congregational singing, the organ / harmonium and group singing very different from the traditional call and response which the western keyboard instrument cannot accurately reproduce. Attempts to transpose some passages for the keyboard led to distortion.

Music Career for National Development

The teaching of music in mission schools increased the musical ability of the individual, as it became the mainstream for teaching theory, appreciation, history and literature in music. It became imperative to include singing in the preprimary and primary levels of education to act as a foundation for the teaching and learning of serious music knowledge. With the establishment of secondary and teacher training colleges, music was taught as one of the core courses as it helped them to begin to build interest in music as a profession.

Today, we have departments of music at the tertiary institutions producing music graduates who function as music teachers and music journalist in the society.

Concept of National Development

A nation by the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English 6th Edition "is a community of people considered as a group with the same language, culture, and history, who live in a particular area under one government". It is a community who live within a geographical boundaries bound together by a common cultural norms and values. Nigeria as a nation is made up of thirty- six states and a federal capital territory under a central government and who share common political ideology, socioeconomic principles and multi religious life.

Development on the other hand means the gradual growth of something so that in the process of time, it becomes more advanced, strong and fulfilled. It is an achievement of excellence, which is determined by the quality of input and the process, which transforms input into output. National development is a state of achieving stronger and more advanced industrial, technological knowhow leading to a situation where greater population of the country is gainfully employed under entrepreneurial system or self-reliance. National development is a move towards maturity of factors of production, social well being of the populous, dynamic economic policy, military discipline, and scientific and technological breakthrough. It also involves material, mental, psychological, physical well-being of individuals in the society, institutional and organizational innovation.

Among the objectives of education as contained in the National Policy on Education in Nigeria is the emphasis on self reliance, social mobilization of domestic resources, the transformation of the structure of rural production, the development of potentialities and the acquisition of music skill in various curriculum innovation and initiation in the school system. Idolor, in one of his conference papers titled "Music scholarship in universities and the relevance of the relevance of the Industrial Training Scheme in Nigeria". Said,

"Music curricula in Nigerian Universities have been restructured to guarantee the relevance of the graduates in the labour markets. The issues of standard arising from the quality of curriculum, staffing equipment and infrastructure has also been the concern of the Federal Ministry of Education that the National

University Commission (NUC) established in 1987 had to draw minimum standard for the institution.”

In that paper he also said that the federal government also instructed that instructions must endeavour to relate education to work to enhance productivity. That theoretical knowledge of the subject matters must therefore be complemented with skill for practical work. In view of the foregoing, the tertiary institutions are redirecting their programmes in line with professionally- directed curricula, which address applied specialization in performance, directing and conducting, music business, music production and composition.

Effects of Music on the Society

A cultureless society according to Red field produces hopeless people and consequently means non-music culture and so such culture is dead and frustrated- Red field (1928). Nigeria has a culture and music is an integral part of the culture. The importance of music in Nigeria offers the most fundamental means through which artistic, aesthetic and creative genius bare their talents to the public. Philosophical, religious and social behaviour of the people are easily expressed and perpetuated through music.

All mankind seeks for beauty in art as instinctively and as persistently as he searches for truth, justice, love and faith. These facts are indispensable facts for a good life as they are among the greatest spiritual achievements of man the creations of his own imagination, the language of his inner- most thought and emotions as well as the major capacities and blessing with which man has been endowed by God. Music being the bedrock and inexhaustible channel, through which man derive all these, stands a good position in man’s life making it rich and meaningful. This is important for a stable and comfortable state for human further development and fulfillment.

Music is a vital part of living, an indispensable means of arousing a desired emotional state as well as expressing or enhancing the emotion, which are for outward expression like dancing.

Note how infectiously the restless, syncopated rhymes, the spicy harmonies and often times imaginative instrumental effect of some popular music orchestration seem to reflect the feverish tempo of our every day life. This is music of a sophisticated urban culture breathing an air of gaiety and movement awakening in the listener an almost irresistible physical response to its tempo in good body movement.

This is why listening to matching band spontaneously arouses similar effect because of the powerful rhythmic work. Because every Nigerian has developed his own interest and individual taste and appreciation of music Radio stations supply some form of music tagged “Music while you work” to sustain the workers zeal and interest in their jobs.

Music Career for National Development

Music teaching and performance arouse and boast the spirit of friendliness, sense of belonging and togetherness among the people. In this direction ulich (1945: 7) says,

“In their emotion, men are united whereas the inevitable difference of intellect separates men from one another”. “The magic power of music in social integration, group solidarity, mutual interpersonal relationship, understanding, love for all, high degree of social cohesion and good network of binding people and soul together cannot be over emphasized”(Nketia 1982: 13).

National development cannot take place in a crises environment. Dancing and singing are deep rooted in human impulses, and very close to the life of folk members. Hence each tribal group in Nigeria develops their own musical idiom and style. While this consolidates the unity among members of a community and because music cuts across tribal boundaries through the music rhymes and idioms, other tribal groups buy and enjoy all music together. This is a panacea to national crises and a step towards position development.

Music making through public performances builds in man self-confidence, and self-discipline. It boots one’s personality and integrity and makes one a famous figure in the society.

The implications of the use of music in psychotherapy, geriatrics and advertising, testify to a faith in its power to effect human behaviour. The Encyclopedia Britannica 1943 as quoted in Efed (2002:31) it has observed the copious publication and recording of music through radio, Firm, television and musical theartre, which have effectively, internationalize music in its most significant form. This undoubtedly offers numerous job opportunities for national development. As most academic and non-academic musician have attained international repute.

Career in Music

Since individuals and families exist and operate within the large society, their own well being do have direct implications for the well being of the nation. The standard of living of family units is therefore an indispensable variable where the usefulness of music to a nation building can be identified. Apart from the psychological needs of music to the nation, music provides manpower needs of the nation. By manpower, we mean workers, people working in different spheres of the national economy. These workers range from highly skilled to the unskilled workers. Music contributes to the national manpower need of Nigeria in several ways. Just as there is wide variety music like classical, folk, jazz, pop, etc there are also a variety of job options in the music industry. Besides becoming a performer (vocal or instrumental) or a teacher, one can be a composer/ songwriter, music journalist, disc jockeys, video jockey, music therapist. Artist manager/PR etc are in the music industry. The contributions of the above in the industry can better be imagined.

Career Options

Today with music getting into the league of big business, there are a list of careers one choose from in the music industry.

Music Composers/ Songwriters: Those with a flair for writing and an inborn talent in music can take up the career as a music composer. A composer creates and writes music, and may combine it with lyrics to give a new song. Musicians in this field create music or lyrics alone or create both together. Composers are required to write music creatively based on their knowledge of sound, understanding of various musical styles and tastes of the audience to which it has to be presented. There is a separate category known as jingle writers who specialize in writing music for radio and television commercials. Composers/song writers can create music for film, television/ radio jingles, folk songs and for albums. Musicians who are interested in this area are often required to know about the business aspect of song writing such as copyrights, networking, publishing, contacts, performing rights etc. music composers often work with advertising firms, productions houses, recording companies, music publishing firms, firms television, radio etc. jingle writers get in through contacts in firms and production houses, contacts with directors/ producers help to get in firm/ television companies. Example of music composers include staff of Universities, Colleges of Education, Military Band among others

Singers / Performers: Performing artists may work alone or in a group with or without musical instrument. One could be a classical or pop artiste or an instrumental musician. Performance career differs widely and depends a great deal upon the instrument played and the performance medium. A high standard of musical and technical skill is required and expected from performers in all areas.

Producers: producers bring together the various elements of recording and work to present them as an artistic whole. They book the studio, hire musicians and engineers, oversee the production of the recorded music and control the recording budget. They have the final say on the development of their material.

Artist / Music Management: This is considered as one of the emerging options. Artist management is the planning, organization and negotiating of an artist career. They work in the business area of music and deal with the tough, unpleasant stuff behind the scenes. The work involves meeting with radio and television producers and getting airtime for their performers negotiating with recording companies and programme sponsors etc. They can work for a particular producer or band as well as in an production management firm, performing organization, and touring music group etc.

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Music journalist: They review performances and recordings, conduct interview with performers for various publications and write reviews. They give news and updates on new releases and performers. Some may work as music critics also. This is one of the options available in the music field for freelancing. They can also work for newspapers, magazines and websites.

Music Educator Or teacher: Teachers can open music schools and also conduct private classes. Music teacher is often in demand in schools, colleges, universities and institutional set-ups. Their main job is to instill an interest and enthusiasm for music the students.

Music Therapist: Music therapist is a unique breed of musician counselors, with specialized training in the use of rhythm and melody to improve psychological and emotional well-being. Emotional stability and insight are essential for competent therapists. They must have the ability to explore, interpret and develop the creative use of sound. Music therapists provide therapeutic programs to people of all age groups with psychiatric disorders, mental retardation and developmental disabilities, speech – hearing impairments, physical disabilities and neurological impairments. A career in music therapy offers challenge, opportunity, and distinctive rewards to those interested in working with people of all ages with various disabilities. Music therapists are employed in psychiatric hospitals, community mental health agencies, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes and residences for the mentally disabled. They can also do private practice.

Musicologist: With good knowledge of music, an aptitude for research and excellent communication skills, one can work as a musicologist in research institutes.

Video jockeys (v J s) & Disc jockeys (DJs): with the advent of various music channels video jockeying is becoming an exciting career option for the music – mad generation. Their job includes introducing a music video, conducting interviews with artistes and music personalities. No specific educational background is required for VJs / DJs except some personal attitudes. However, background in mass communication, visual communication or the performing arts comes in handy.

Music Librarian: Colleges and public libraries offer opportunities for trained music specialists with knowledge of library and research techniques. Some opportunities of music librarians also exist in radio, television, and motion picture for effecting national development (NPE 1981). Music in the school of Arts and social science has a bearing with vocational music school considering the above career options. Vocational education is of vital importance to the entire

educational system and national development. Olowu (1998) observes that this type of education has evolved in keeping with the changing employment needs of different nations as they pass through various stages of their social economic and political development.

Problems

With so many jobs in the music industry, Nigeria has not been able utilize the opportunities because of the following problems:

1. Inadequate infrastructural facilities- most institutions of higher learning which are into proper training of the youth, are handicapped because of dearth of appropriate facilities especially the electronic organs, video, recording equipment and studio.
2. Low level of technology. Nigerian composers still compose music with the obsolete methods. Nigeria needs good training in composing, computer analysts, studio managers, music journalists, and operators of sophisticated equipment in the music industry.

Conclusion

It is observed that the hue and cry of Nigeria for a self reliant nation is better achieved in the music industry. Music education consists of the total activities which is planned, organized and developed in favour of the preparation of youth for responsible economic participation in the country, especially to meet the demand for professionalism, privatization and self employment which enhance speedy national development.

Looking at music as a vocational programme the curricula of institutions of higher education should be redirected to address the man-power needs of the country. Self-reliance is a powerful force in that direction. In view of the several career opportunities open to students at graduation, students should be exposed to the job experiences in the music industry. This is done through Students Industrial work experience scheme participation. The Department of Music, Delta State University, Abraka is commended and their recommendation is for full participation in the SIWES which other institutions should uphold.

This implies better funding of the institution to implement this laudable idea. Parents and indeed the general public should encourage their children to engage in any of the careers in the music industry to enable them contribute their quota to the overall development of the country.

In search for better alternative to the scarce white collar job and in view of social and technological advancement especially in the area of computer and Networking, musicians, Musicological Society of Nigeria (MSN), Nigeria Association of Music Educators (NAME) should give backing to the issue of making music more of vocational and job oriented through students exposure to SIWES programmes in all institutions.

Recommendation

The establishment of Music departments is capital intensive and governments should provide adequate funding of the institutions to enable the institutions procure the electronic media equipment needed for the Departments. The training of man-power as studio manager recordist, video crew, etc should also be provided.

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