



CHALLENGES OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF THE PERFORMING ARTS INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT: *The creative industries drive the economy. Effectively harnessing their potential can increase the growth and development of nations while boosting cultural heritage. The creative industries in Nigeria have enormous growth potential that requires further exploration. This conceptual paper discusses the challenges of the creative industries in Nigeria, focusing on the performing arts sector. The article examines critical growth areas, challenges, solutions, and recommendations for each highlighted issue. It proposes effective ways for stakeholders in the sector to tackle its challenges and derive economic value. Some recommendations include embracing technology so that the performers find new ways to appeal to their audience, training and retraining performers in the sector, and the government formulating effective policies while also taking care of security challenges in the sector.*

KEYWORDS: Performing arts, creative industries, cultural policy, performance, performing arts sector, Nigerian creative industries.



INTRODUCTION

The creative industries are vital to every economy and hold the potential for nation-building, wealth creation, cultural preservation, and much more. They permeate different aspects of the economy, and if effectively harnessed, they can be economic drivers in any society. Despite encountering obstacles associated with informal business structures, the creative industry in Nigeria has made significant contributions to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while also serving as a major source of employment for millions of individuals (Johnson, 2023). In addition, Nigeria is rich in culture and heritage, and it is endowed with diverse sectors in the creative industries. In furtherance, the nation also has a cultural policy that serves as a tool for promoting national identity and unity and facilitating communication and cooperation among various Nigerian or African cultures (Culturelink, 1996).

The impact of the creative industries is peculiar not only to Nigeria but also to the global economy. Alaoui et al. (2023) observe that African and Latin American countries increasingly recognise the significance of the commercial creative sector and the rapid growth of creative services industries, and how they are increasingly used for soft power in global rivalry. Similarly, Agoralumiere (2009) observes that creative industries have become one of the most dynamic economic sectors on the planet. Developed countries have shown that creative sectors can contribute significantly to economic prosperity.

According to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, DCMS (2001), creative industries are “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.” Based on the DCMS model, the sectors in the creative industries include advertising, architecture, art and antiques market, crafts, design, fashion, film and video, music, performing arts, publishing, software, television and radio, video and computer games (UNCTAD & UNDP, 2008). Furthermore, the characteristics of these sectors, according to Galloway and Dunlop (2006), include creativity, intellectual property, symbolic goods or symbolic meaning, use value, and production methods.

According to Alaoui et al. (2023), creative goods and services promote economic growth, social inclusion, and understanding between people. The creative industry in Nigeria is positioned to experience significant expansion with enhanced business structures, heightened investment, and backing from regulators and policymakers (Johnson, 2023). A study by Nigeria's career platform, Jobberman, found that the creative industry employs 4.2 million people across five industries: media, entertainment and design; tourism and hospitality; as well as beauty and lifestyle; visual arts; and tourism and lifestyle. Nigeria's creative sector, after agriculture, is the country's second-largest employer (Oluwole, 2021). Industry 4.0 gives the creative economy new opportunities. Advancements in 3D printing, AI, AR/VR, blockchain, cloud computing, drones, and IoT are fueling the fourth industrial revolution (UNCTAD, 2022).

Similarly, the performing arts sector in Nigeria holds enormous potential and growth opportunities; yet it also faces numerous challenges. It is a part of the creative industries that embody different segments such as dance, theatre, stand-up comedy, spoken word artistry, acrobatics, and such others. It is an important sector with a vast capacity to reinforce national values, foster job creation, promote cultural tourism, and generate wealth. It is based on live performances, which is one of the major things that sets it apart from other sectors. It is also a



sector that embodies the different qualities of the creative industries in terms of creativity, intellectual property, symbolic goods or symbolic meaning, use value, and production methods (Galloway & Dunlop, 2006).

Live theatre is one of the major segments of this sector, and according to Agbasiere (2020), theatre contributes to sustainable development through the revenue generated by its theatrical activities by fulfilling this vital role for the public. Theatre is a collaborative type of performing art that employs live actors or actresses to portray the experience of a real or imagined event in front of a live audience in a specific location, usually a stage (Mimi & Terver, 2020). Apart from that, theatre and other segments of this sector educate, entertain, and inform the public on different critical national issues. According to Umenyilorah (2014), theatre is known for being aware of the socio-political realities of its time; it functions as a kind of court where societal issues such as economic, social, religious, and political issues are outlined, analysed, and judged.

However, the potential of the Nigerian creative industries can only be fully attained if adequately harnessed. This article aims to examine the state of the creative industries in Nigeria, with the performing arts industry in focus, while exploring its challenges and possible solutions. It opines that creative industries can drive more economic growth if exploited effectively and solutions are provided to its challenges. Research has shown that numerous issues affect the creative industries, hindering their growth and potential. For instance, this sector faces challenges in freedom of association, social discussion, and proper social protection. Digital technologies come with challenges for protecting intellectual property and generating income (Alaoui et al., 2023).

Likewise, the influence of government policy is of significant importance in determining the outcomes of future creative economies. One of the major obstacles impeding the growth of creative economies in Africa is the absence of copyright and intellectual property rights legislation, coupled with inadequate enforcement mechanisms (Experience Africa, n.d.). Akinola (2019) also says Nigeria's creative industries' potential has not been wholly harnessed, even though certain of the industries' component sectors, such as music, cinema, arts, fashion, software, and architecture, are developing. Additionally, Aribido (2019) argues that the Nigerian creative industry continues to face long-standing issues such as inadequate finance, lack of private investment, and poor performance in conveying Nigerian stories.

Therefore, this paper posits that one way to fully realise and enjoy the benefits of the creative industries as a nation is by effectively tackling the challenges they currently face and fully harnessing their potential. It is also important to note that the analysis of the creative industries in this article will focus on the performing arts sector in Nigeria.



REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

History of the Performing Arts Sector

The performing arts sector in Nigeria is significant, and it has made its mark in promoting certain behaviours, highlighting different cultural traditions, and in the area of socio-political advocacy. Akpodiete (2020) says that the term "Nigeria theatre" first appeared in the theatre space in the early 1940s when Nigerian and international audiences understood and enjoyed themes based on Nigerian storylines through plays performed solely in Yoruba. Their projections depicted Nigerian folklore, history, mythology, oral tradition, and liturgical allegory.

Mimi and Terver (2020) state that, in general, live performances of any kind (drama, songs, music, and dance) have played an important role in Nigeria's socio-political and economic activities. Nigeria's theatre industry began 60 years ago at the University of Ibadan. UI founded Nigeria's first Theatre Arts Department (Ojo, 2023).

Nigerian Cultural Policy

The Nigerian cultural policy is an official document of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that has been developed to promote and safeguard the cultural heritage of the Nigerian people (Anyanwu, 2019). One of the set directions of cultural policies includes establishing links between culture and education, and between education and several cultural industries, especially the mass media (Culturelink, 1996).

However, Anyanwu (2019) states that the Cultural Policy falls short in the area of its failure to examine how to communicate with the outside world, especially Nigerians/Africans in the Diaspora. According to Culturelink (1996), the Ministry of Culture and Social Welfare administers and implements cultural policies through its two departments, namely, the Federal Department of Culture, which is in charge of international cultural relations, funding and promoting all national cultural organisations, and developing and carrying out national cultural policy. The National Council for Arts and Culture engages with both public and private groups while promoting and advancing all facets of Nigerian culture. On the other hand, the Ministries of Information and Education are two other federal agencies with a partial role in cultural affairs and policy (Culturelink, 1996).

Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) in Nigeria

The creative industries shape policy and events. They hold significant influence and authority. Creative industries can change investors' perceptions and interactions with a country or region (Alaoui et al., 2023). According to Experience Africa (n.d.), cultural industries are helping Africa, a culturally diverse continent, diversify its economy and boost social, cultural, and political growth. Creative and cultural sectors are needed to meet the needs of a labour market dominated by a growing youth bulge. Research shows that Africa's creative and cultural industries (CCI) create US\$4.2 billion in revenue and expand faster than other sectors (Africa No Filter, 2022).

In Nigeria, cultural industries bring new civilisational and technological standards easily accepted by all (Culturelink, 1996). Johnson (2023) says that the creative sector in Nigeria is seeing notable progress in technology, leading to a transformation in content creation,



production, and distribution. Likewise, the demand for creative content in Nigeria is driven by urbanisation and the increasing youth population.

Coker (2023) says the culture and creative sectors may spur global economic recovery. This is seen in the recent rise in demand for sector products and the growing number of fresh and compelling offerings in the sector. There is a need to reconsider policy outlay and develop new ways to boost the sector's capacities. According to Alakwe (2017), the growth of the conceptualisation of cultural and creative industries has facilitated the inclusion of industry sectors previously not recognised as creative. The rise of the internet and new media has been identified as a crucial driving force in the creative economy.

Nigerian authorities and intellectuals have always acknowledged the critical role of culture in politics and economics. Nigeria's post-independence growth has made it abundantly clear that cultural practices and values must be integrated into all aspects of life (Culturelink, 1996). Alaoui et al. (2023) assert that creative industries are increasingly recognised as crucial to Africa's economic growth, as illustrated by international summits and publications like the African Creative Economy Conference and UN Creative Economy Reports. The authors further say that the cultural richness of Africa, home to 15% of the world's population, offers opportunities to utilise its latent creative potential.

Recently, the federal government presented a strategy to expand Nigeria's creative industry through the Ministry of Art, Culture, and Creative Economy. This was announced in an eight-point strategy in a video message to the creative industries and other stakeholders by Hannatu Musawa, Minister of Art, Culture, and Creative Economy (Bello, 2023).

The Performing Arts Sector in Nigeria

Studying performing arts on the continent is a highly valuable area of academic inquiry, characterised by vibrant and ever-changing creative processes that warrant a multidisciplinary approach (Piñón, 2019). In Nigeria, the performing arts industry comprises a distinct category of intellectual property. Performers are integral to the creative value chain because they interpret, translate, and disseminate stories, songs, folklore, and various literary works through performances (Alakwe, 2017).

Ojo (2023) states that Nigeria's theatre sector has long been lauded for its skill and creative economic contributions. It is Africa's most popular movie industry and is worth \$6.4 billion. Mimi and Terver (2020) also note that, in Nigeria, live performances encompassing theatre, music, dance, and songs have been essential to the country's socio-political and economic endeavours.



METHODOLOGY

This paper examines the challenges of the Nigerian performance arts industry by reviewing relevant literature concerning this subject matter.

Analysis and Discussion

Challenges of the Creative Industries in Nigeria

Lack of Funding

The first challenge this article will look at is the lack of funding. This is one of the significant challenges in the creative industries because this sector requires adequate resources to function and thrive. Without funding, running a successful business in this industry is impossible. According to Nigeria's Cultural Policy, investments in cultural infrastructure, such as the construction of theatres and stadiums that host major festivals, support the performing arts to some extent (Culturelink, 1996).

Take, for instance, the process of producing stage plays in the performing arts sector, which includes lots of steps and personnel. Producing such plays without adequate funding to support the production process is impossible. Likewise, if a stand-up comedian is planning a live show, he or she needs money to rent a hall, publicise the show, arrange for refreshments, get other comedians to participate in the show, and the like. A report asked 4500 18–35-year-olds about arts and culture in their society. The research was done in Egypt, Morocco, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. The report found that 85% of respondents believed arts and culture were important, yet few supported it. Seventy-eight percent (78%) spent nothing or “very little” on arts and culture pastimes (Africa No Filter, 2022). Furthermore, the report found that despite the continent's top musicians, visual artists, comedians, authors, filmmakers, fashion designers, and entertainers going global, just 13% of interviewees thought the creative sector was lucrative.

Anyanwu (2019) observes that ignorance or the worry of being unable to pay bills is an issue facing the performing arts and its practitioners. This is because even when the government could intervene in various ways to support culture and its related fields, practitioners are either uninformed about these regulations or merely sceptical about the government's sincerity.

Funding helps to fuel the creative industries to succeed; similarly, there cannot be a successful live performance or show without adequate funding. The causes of this challenge may include issues around wrong perceptions about the sectors, particularly in a sector like the performing arts, and lack of stakeholder interests in the sector, such as government and institutions that are capable of providing funding. Another cause here can be a lack of patronage, which means that professionals cannot pull back funds to invest in their businesses. Another cause of this challenge is the presence of the informal sectors in this industry. According to Akinola (2019), poor funding and lack of access to finance are issues in Nigeria's creative industries, mainly because most operators are small and medium-sized firms primarily operating in the informal sector. Additionally, according to Experience Africa (n.d.), censorship and an abundance of bureaucratic processes impede the progress and growth of creative and cultural sectors.

This challenge implies that many creative ideas would not be birthed, and the potentials of the industries, such as providing jobs, generating wealth, and building the economy, will not be



actualised. Joffe (2013) says there is an ineffective partnership between creative industries and the government regarding a lack of industry support mechanisms, investment opportunities, or export incentives. To combat this challenge, this article proposes that practitioners devise unique and innovative ways to get people to pay for their tickets to generate more funds to be ploughed into the business. Similarly, practitioners in the performing arts sector must find ways to generate more income, e.g., by repackaging and selling past shows to those unable to attend the live shows.

In addition, there is a need for more government initiatives to tackle the issue of funding in the creative industries. For instance, the African Development Bank, in collaboration with Nigeria and several investors, has allocated a substantial sum of \$618 million to provide financial support for Nigeria's tech and creative startups (Orufa, 2023). Furthermore, there is a need for more sponsorships geared towards funding creative projects. According to Ogundeji (2016), many corporations, the private sector, and those who can afford to support the theatre have demonstrated a lack of interest in sponsoring live theatre. They invest a significant portion of their money in reality, games, and gambling shows because they believe the theatre will either not provide the returns they anticipate or it will be challenging to get their money back.

Insecurity

Since the beginning of time, people from different houses have enjoyed theatrical performances together in everyday settings, and there have even been venues where viewers could see shows in a relatively safe environment (Ogundeji, 2016). The issue of insecurity cannot be overemphasised, even for performers.

Ogundeji (2016) asserts that live theatre is ever-changing, adding psychological immediacy and attraction, whether a piece runs for days or nights. Depending on the show's focus-demanding tone, live theatre might be quiet or vibrant. It is preposterous that these unmatched, naturally occurring educational and therapeutic components are uncommon in Nigeria, which raises security concerns.

One essential requirement for Nigerian performing artists is a conducive environment without harassment. Preserving freedom of expression is paramount (Anyanwu, 2019). Okocha (2023) suggests that Nigeria should improve its infrastructure and security to draw tourists to its tourist attractions. It should create an atmosphere encouraging investment in the creative sector and providing young people with new opportunities for a better future.

Anyanwu (2015) says that outdoor film/cinema event attendees require protection while doing business. Additionally, arts and cultural departments across states should operate mini theatres for live performances and screenings. This can provide a cushioning effect by allowing daytime movie viewing if nightlife is at risk. Anyanwu (2019) notes that the federal, state, and local governments and autonomous communities should all have cultural centres as part of their organisational structures. It is crucial to have a cultural centre in each independent community that the federal and local governments support.

This paper opines that prioritising insecurity issues and creating safe spaces for people to watch theatre at the local, state, and federal levels can help tackle insecurity in this sector.



The Informal Sector

Alaoui et al. (2023) opine that most African creative and cultural industries operate in the informal sector. The authors emphasise that cultural and creative industries in Africa employ the most 15–29-year-olds (20% of total employment). Although there is a high demand for these positions, most workers still have poor working conditions, and the informal economy is prevalent in this area.

The informal sector in the creative industries poses a challenge to the sector, as they are mostly undocumented and not formally acknowledged. According to Joffe (2013), much of the commercial activity in Africa's cultural and creative economy is unregulated and untaxed, making it impossible to measure. A large amount of cultural and creative commercial production occurs in the informal sector. Skavronska (2020) says that the informal sector is not properly registered and thus not included in official economic statistics. For instance, in the performing arts sector, the informal sector thrives due to some of the unstructured segments of the sector, such as spoken word artistry, comedy, dance, and many more. According to Ernst and Young, E.Y. (2015), in 2013, informal CCI sales in emerging markets were estimated to be worth US\$33 billion, with 1.2 million employment created. The informal economy's largest jobs are the performing arts, which provide unofficial music and theatre performances that are typically free for audiences. Oluwole (2021) says the interaction of creativity, technology, and economics allows the country to create jobs, boost income, and increase export earnings. However, because the government invests little in the industry and operations within it are primarily unstructured, according to employers in the sector, this potential has not been fully realised. The implication is that the revenue generated from such informal sources does not improve the sector as they are not formally recognised. According to Skavronska (2020), the informal sector harms the creative industries since it disrupts distribution networks, producers (artists, musicians) accept unpaid work, and many operate outside government regulation. One of the ways to combat this challenge is to make it easy for practitioners in the informal sector to become formally recognised and documented. This can be done by how less bureaucratic the requirements can be, offering support to these people, which can be in terms of sponsorships, funding, and education.

Poor Business Management

Another challenge of the creative industries is the issue of poor business management. This is one crucial challenge because, as creatives, most practitioners in a sector like performing arts do not consider their businesses as a “business.” Hence, they do not effectively manage their business activities in the way that should be done with a proper business. Bujor and Avasilcai (2015) note that an entrepreneur uses his or her creativity, ideas, and enthusiasm to achieve economic operations in the creative industries. This person is very similar to the stereotypical entrepreneur regarding the ideas governing such a business and the tools utilised to achieve it. However, this paper believes the challenge comes when the professional does not see the need to educate him or herself in business management. Closely related to this issue is the issue of not having proper business managers; in the theatre business, for instance, managers can help with the entrepreneurial aspect of performances and shows. In addition, a professional like a dancer might not see him or herself as a business owner, and the entrepreneurship aspect of the business might not be as sharpened as the creative side of it.



According to Bujor and Avasilcai (2015), the problems that a creative entrepreneur must face include building and maintaining a business solely based on creative activities, as well as challenges that are common to small businesses, such as finding a market for their activities, attracting this market to grow the demand for their business, attracting capable people, and financial analytic challenges. One of the possible causes of this issue is that most professionals do not see the need to get trained or hire the right people to handle the business aspects of things; therefore, they neglect it. While some understand the importance, they do not have the required training, help, or resources to manage that aspect effectively. One significant consequence of this is that it can lead to a lack of proper funds management, leading to a waste of resources. Another consequence here is that professionals may not easily spot opportunities to make more money if they are not attentive to the aspect of business management. Therefore, one of the solutions that professionals can adopt here is investing in themselves and going through the proper training needed for business management, with a way to keep advancing in this area after training. They can hire a business manager solely for these purposes. Also, practitioners need to be more entrepreneurial-minded so that they begin to see and easily spot business opportunities in their sector.

Perception of the Creative Industries

Next, it is essential to discuss the perception of the creative industries. Inaccurate perceptions of sectors in the creative industries, like the performing arts sector, for instance, can go a long way in how the sector is being accepted by stakeholders such as the public, government, and institutions, locally and internationally. For instance, if a parent does not regard the performing arts sector as a “serious” sector, they might prevent their children from pursuing a career in such a sector. Likewise, such perceptions can infiltrate systems and institutions, thereby preventing the players from making decisions supporting the sector.

Aloh (2013) observes that, in the past, creative art and entertainment were regarded as frivolous business endeavours. Parents, friends, and acquaintances of entertainers thought of them as social outcasts. On the other hand, the industry's growth is helping dispel the misconception. However, this paper believes this is still a massive challenge in the industry, even after so many years. One of the possible causes of this problem emanates from the lack of knowledge about a sector like performing arts from the basic levels, such as primary and secondary schools. Alaoui et al. (2023) say that less developed countries should recognise creative industries as more than merely economic areas with future potential but also essential soft-power tools for conveying values.

This challenge implies that the sector will become less recognised, making it more difficult to promote their services, such as live performances, comedy shows, spoken word performances, and the like. According to African Business (2014), Africa is mostly absent from the global market of ideas, values, and aesthetics due to its underinvestment in the creative and cultural industries. As a solution, this article recommends intentional brand image management for a sector like the performing arts so that investors, for instance, will be encouraged to invest. In addition, there is a need for more sensitisation from the primary and grassroots levels so that stakeholders like parents can correctly perceive the sector. The lack of branding in this sector is a considerable drawback locally and internationally. Stears Business (2020) advises that our culture and tourism ministry should work with the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the country's embassies to promote these Nigerian stories and narratives that the rest of the world is already



aware of. For instance, organisations, like the National Troupe of Nigeria, promote performing arts talent discovery and development while producing national aspirations-focused shows. It also reminds Nigerians and the world of our rich arts and culture (Njemanze, 2023). Nigeria's creative industries, including movies, music, performance, and visual arts, are among the world's largest and most popular. It is the best place to consider new ways to link tourism to culture and the creative industries (Coker, 2023).

Inadequate Marketing

Another vital challenge to discuss is inadequate marketing. It is not enough to have outstanding content or products; professionals in the creative industries must find ways to get the right people to know about them and pay for them, helping generate more revenue and sales. In a sector like the performing arts sector, some practitioners struggle with publicity, even though it is how people learn about their shows and performances. Mimi and Terver (2020) state that poor publicity can be an issue; for instance, strategic avenues for publicity must be taken with the right message to not discourage patronage. While some practitioners in this sector might be aware of the gap creating this challenge, it might not be evident to all.

One possible cause of this is that some practitioners are not innovative enough to develop contemporary ways to get people to notice what they are offering. In addition, some are not willing to explore other methods, such as collaboration with other practitioners and players like ticketing agencies. Another cause of this challenge can be a lack of training in the business area, as mentioned above, to open the eyes of professionals to see new ways of doing things. There is also the challenge of other things vying for the target audience's attention. For instance, professionals in the performing arts sector compete with a similar audience for film, music, and other creative industries sectors. If a particular sector is more well-funded than the others, they are more likely to spend more money on marketing and sales than the others. This also brings the issue of lack of funding for marketing and sales to the fore. One way to overcome this challenge is by encouraging practitioners to educate themselves and find ways to appeal to the audience in a different and contemporary way. Nwankwo (2018) explains that while the government strives to create an enabling environment for creative industries to thrive through policy articulation and implementation, entrepreneurs in the sector must explore new frontiers, such as those provided by new production and distribution methods made possible by digital technologies.

Low Patronage

Low patronage is another challenge that most practitioners in the creative industries face, especially for a sector like the performing arts. Low turnouts to live theatre shows, for instance, can affect the revenue generated in the business and prevent them from being able to reinvest back into the business. Mimi and Terver (2020) emphasise that the theatre halls should never lack performances. Some of the causes of low patronage in this sector can be the lack of adequate brand awareness, the presence of multiple choices, and economic factors such as inflation. Nwankwo (2018) suggests that African countries stake their claim to the creative industries, taking the best of what exists elsewhere and adapting it to their local settings. According to Mimi and Terver (2020), the government also plays a role in the fall of live theatre attendance. This means that because few people in positions of power are interested in the arts and performances in the area, their support is not as focused on raising the standards of live



theatre performances. This challenge will also exclude Africa from the global marketplace of ideas.

Thus, to solve this problem, this paper suggests that practitioners speak with their audience as often as possible so they know how to serve them better and understand their pain points. Recently, the Creative Economy Practice at CcHUB established the Creative Vibrancy Index for Africa (CVIA or the Index) to rate African cities by supporting arts, culture, and creative industries. Creative economy, enabling environment, and cultural vibrancy are the Index's three pillars (Okorie, 2023).

Lack of Local Context

Another fact about the creative industries is that if these creative products are developed outside of the context of the local community it serves, then it has not done much in fulfilling the needs of that community. The lack of community involvement in some sectors, like the performing arts sector, poses a great challenge to this sector. For instance, a stage play about a local community cannot be successfully produced without involving people in those communities who can give contextual input in the production. Also, if such a sector does not feed on local knowledge, it will not contribute to global knowledge and further the African narrative. For instance, one of the potentials of the performing arts sector is its ability to shape culture. However, if it is passing an inaccurate message, it has not fulfilled its purpose. Edum (2015) believes that performance is a collaborative effort to bring into existence a new product that retains the imprints of the different elements that have been fused in the new entity.

A consequence of this is that it could affect local patronage of those shows in a sector like the performing arts. Also, it would not have been able to effectively drive home its message for that show or live performance. A solution here is for practitioners to find ways to get local people involved in the products. For instance, dancers can visit villages and towns where specific dances originated to gain more insights into the dance. In the same way, production managers for live theatre can involve one or two practitioners in the host communities. The challenges in the creative industries will not overcome themselves except individuals and private organisations, and not only the government, find a way to ensure they improve this sector. Agoralumiere (2009) confirms this by saying that while the government has a role to play, the private sector is still in charge of expanding the creative economy. If the creative economy is to be sustainable, it must be driven by private initiatives.

Ineffective Use of Technology

The ineffective use of technology is another challenge to be addressed in the creative industries. If practitioners in the creative industries do not fully harness technology, then exploring the potential of this industry will be impossible. This is because technology helps to combat some challenges the sector is currently facing, such as reaching a large audience with their craft or even evolving with the yearning needs of the audience. Orufa (2023) notes that Nigeria has one of the biggest creative industries in Africa, but the industry is beset by a lack of suitable technology and infrastructure, which limits access and quality, hinders connectivity and mobility, and raises costs and risks. The author further explains that although there are plans to address this; some include constructing cutting-edge facilities to produce, distribute, consume, and export creative goods and services, and in addition, provision of studios, theatres, galleries, museums, libraries, hubs, and networks.



For instance, in the performance industry, some practitioners are already finding ways to stay innovative using technology so they do not miss out on their ideal audience. Okikiolu (2021) notes that advances in mobile and internet penetration are already demonstrating valuable potential, such as how creative industries were able to use technology to innovate in the aftermath of the pandemic in an attempt to stay relevant and sustain development. Therefore, there is room for more improvement in this area so that Nigeria's creative industry can compete on a larger scale. Some of the reasons why practitioners in the performance industry have not fully harnessed technology, for instance, can be from issues such as not being knowledgeable about the different possibilities that exist and not seeing a need to educate oneself in this area. Johnson (2023) says that by embracing emerging trends and capitalising on the opportunities they present, creative professionals in Nigeria have the potential to broaden their influence, interact with a worldwide audience, and maintain a leading position in industry innovation.

This challenge can also bring about the issue of piracy. According to Orufa (2023), the inadequate protection of intellectual property rights is one of the major issues confronting Nigeria's creative industry. Nigeria struggles to protect creatives and their works, especially in the film, music, and content creation industries, even though intellectual property is the main product of all operations across many sectors. Joffe (2013) observes that the creative economy is increasingly requiring a mix of cross-disciplinary collaboration between industry-specific skills, such as artistic skills and competencies related to the use and adaptation of ICTs, and knowledge of how to commercialise creative ideas, business skills and a racial mix.

Aribido (2019) says that Nigeria's creative industry has a lot to contribute to the digital economy of the future. Because content will be the digital economy's backbone, it will be provided by the creative industry. Nwafuru (2021) also observes that Nigeria can learn from other African countries that are using technology to liberalise their business environments and position itself as the continent's innovation and technology hub. Therefore, practitioners in this sector need to glean what is happening in the global scene with the interplay of technology and the creative industries and find ways to domesticate them in Nigeria or develop something better.

Training and Capacity Development

Another major challenge of the creative industry is training and capacity development. While some individuals might think it is vital to be effectively trained in this sector, it is essential to know that training helps build capacity and infrastructure. The lack of it makes the industry suffer because things are not done as they should. According to Nigeria's Cultural Policy, Nigeria can facilitate formal (university) and informal training programs for cultural initiatives. The demands are substantial; however, the curricula and programs are inadequately tailored to address them (Culturelink, 1996).

For instance, dramatists in the performing arts sector who believe they are naturally gifted for their vocation may not see the need to undergo training. However, training is not only a means to teach people or help them refine their skills; it is also a way of imbibing different traits and knowledge that can benefit their careers. Mimi and Terver (2020) opine that the declining nature of theatre, as opposed to movies, can be attributed to Africans' common idea and mentality that theatrical performers are unserious individuals who only need to dance and sing. However, this paper does not agree with this position due to the success of the industry.



Despite the vibrant and innovative nature of the African arts and culture sector and the apparent need for educational and training opportunities, only a few tertiary-based arts management, cultural entrepreneurial, or cultural policy programs are currently available to arts and cultural practitioners (Joffe, 2013).

Another cause of this challenge can be the wrong notion that most people do not need to undergo training before becoming a part of the creative industries. The implication is that the quality of content that will be produced will be below the standard of what is expected in the industry. In addition, this may affect the audience's interest and further reduce patronage. To combat this challenge, this paper suggests that practitioners in the creative industries begin to see training as an essential aspect of growing their careers. In addition, organisations and NGOs can develop subsidised training offers to appeal to practitioners.

Institutions need to collectively contribute to the Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) introduced by the National Universities Commission (NUC) and factor in the area of performing arts. According to the organisation, it started restructuring the BMAS in 2018 to fulfil its mandate of making higher education in Nigeria more responsive to societal needs. The Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) was introduced to reflect the realities of the twenty-first century in new and existing disciplines and programs within the Nigerian University System (NUC-CCMAS, n.d.).

Mbube et al. (2019) believe that our educational curriculum should be created in a way that promotes and preserves our cultural heritage. Nigerians should be proud of who they are and what they have accomplished. Partnerships are also vital in training and capacity development. Alaoui et al. (2023) suggest that to expand, cultural industries must collaborate with groups producing similar products and processes. Company, scientific, educational, and government networks foster idea exchange and collaboration. Improving the cultural industries' value chain efficiency results in better products and larger audience reach.

This paper also opines that more organisations, like the National Board for Technical Education, need more avenues to teach courses like performing arts.

CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that the challenges in the creative industries in Nigeria are numerous, making the sector operate below expectation, mainly due to the lack of capacity to harness the industry's potential fully. Likewise, the importance of the creative industries cannot be overemphasised; however, the challenges cannot be overlooked. This article has highlighted and analysed some of these challenges, their causes, implications, and possible solutions.

Recommendations

Below are some of the recommendations of this paper:

- Practitioners in the creative industries should develop unique ways to generate more income so that they do not always have to rely on funding or sponsorships from the government or institutions. They can also learn more about achieving this if they are



up-to-date with what the audience wants and constantly use data and insights to serve their audience better.

- In addition, professionals in the creative industries need to educate themselves not just about the creative side of their work but also ensure they are educated on the business side or hire business managers as the need arises.
- Also, the government and industry professionals must work together to build an effective brand image for the creative industries so that the industry is well-positioned locally and internationally.
- The government must also provide a safe and secure enabling environment for the performing arts sector to thrive and gain more patronage.
- Professionals in the creative industries must also find ways to research and adopt innovative marketing strategies rather than sticking to the old ways.
- Professionals must find ways to collaborate with their local communities to produce culturally relevant work.
- They must also constantly find new ways to use technology to speed up their processes, reach more people, and deliver their products and services better.
- Finally, stakeholders need to collaborate with the NUC to develop relevant curricula for the creative industries.

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