

MUSIC COMPOSERS' ROLES IN CURBING YOUTH RESTIVENESS IN NIGERIA: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Youth restiveness is a social phenomenon with a negative influence on national development and security. This is because the youths are potentially the greatest investment for a society's sustainable development. The means of curbing youth restiveness has always been a great concern in Nigeria and many other countries of the world. Studies on this issue have been carried out in different ways forming part of the literature review for this work. Through library, internet, observation and interview sources, it was discovered that at various points in time, different programs under different names have been set up by government and non-governmental bodies as a way out. These programs have made some positive impact; in this regard music has also played some vital roles. This paper therefore, reveals some of the efforts made in the past towards solving this problem by government and individual bodies with particular attention to the vital roles Nigerian composers played. It revealed that through music arts, Nigerian composers have the capability of capturing the attention of the youths and making them have focus. In conclusion, the paper suggested various ways Nigerian composers could make more inputs on this issue.

Introduction

One of the greatest assets of any nation is the possession of human resources of which the youths constitute the majority. The

importance of youth in any society cannot be over emphasized because they are the foundation on which every nation is built. They are the engine of growth and development; because, they provide the labour for production of goods and service to take effect. Their lives and character orientation determine the pace at which the growth and development of a nation moves. Expressing the importance of youth in national development, a Sahara report on the Nigeria Youth (n. d.) stated that:

The youth in any society are the engine of growth and development; because, they provide the labour for production of goods and service to take effect. And also, are the critical masses of people, whose action and inaction can develop or destroy the hegemonies of their society. For example, according to the 2006 census, the youthful population constituted over 70% of the population. So, therefore, this quantum of population is great assets for the Nigerian state if harness and utilize in the right direction.

Anasi (2010) also captured this point in a study she carried out on youth restiveness thus:

Youth are the foundation of a society. Their energies, inventiveness character and orientation define the pace of development and security of a nation. Through their creative talents and labour power, a nation makes giant stride in economic development and socio-political attainments. In their dreams and hopes, a nation finds her motivation; on their energies, she builds her vitality and purpose. And because of their dreams and aspirations, future of a nation is assured (p. 2).

According to the above statement, young people are recognized as an important segment of the society with the potentials for establishing

peace and security of a nation. But on the other hand, they can as well destabilize the peace and security of a nation if their mind set and goals are not properly directed. This is confirmed in Anasi (2010) which opined that:

Young people all over the world are a vital and important segment of the society in which they live. A disciplined, focused and law-abiding youth can create a bright future for any nation. Conversely, a lawless, indulgent and violent youth is a threat to a nation's peace and security (p. 1).

Peace is believed to be a predecessor of development. For a meaningful development to take place in a nation there must be peace in such nation. Conversely, if there is absence of peace in a nation according to Anasi (2010), it "means that no meaningful development can take place" (p. 2).

The above expression is better understood looking at the situation of things in Nigeria today. Nigeria as a nation is facing lots of challenges both in national development and security. This situation no doubt is because of lack of peace and security. Studies on these identified youth restiveness as one of the major causes of the lack. Youth restiveness relates to negative attitude of the youths usually marked by violence and disruptive of lawful activities which in most cases is aggravated by factors such as bad governance, lack of humanitarian and social welfare, unemployment, lack of recreational facilities, lack of quality education, inadequate communication and information flow, poverty, injustice, peer motivated of being a student, the jingoistic pursuit of patriotic ideas, idleness, negative indoctrination, religion fundamentalism, inordinate desire for material wealth, to mention but a few. The points raised above may have led to a Sahara Report on Nigerian Youth (n. d) stating that:

Societies are not only recreated through the youthful population, but, youth are often referring to as leaders

of tomorrow. So their mindset and roles is of major important to the development of any society.no nation will experience development when the preponderance of the population that constitutes the largest percentage of the population is idle and ineffective.

Therefore, it is of paramount important that the Nigerian youths need to be molded, motivated and guided to imbibe and develop positive moral values in order to harness their potentials for the achievement of national growth.

In the past, various actions have been taken to control the restiveness of the youth. Some examples of such actions include:

- ❖ Sensitization on skill acquisition programme in Rivers State which took off on 6th May 2000 aiming at helping youths in acquiring different skills for self-reliance and national development.
- ❖ The Adolescent Programme (TAP), a pet project of the wife of the former Rivers State Governor, Justice Mary Odili that was set up in 2000. The project was initiated to ethically rehabilitate, morally re-orientate economically empower the adolescent with a view of inculcating leadership and responsive citizenship quality so that they do not become vulnerable to social vices.
- ❖ The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) skill acquisition programme designed to equip youths with vocational skills in various trade.
- ❖ The Schools Agriculture Programme which focuses on the provision of farm inputs to facilitate farming activities in schools, formation of students into farming clubs, and linking

participating schools to credit facilities. Also The Marine Agriculture Development Programme (Cage and Pen Culture) is a fishery training programme for youth in tertiary institution were designed and set up by Lagos State to fight hunger and poverty.

- ❖ Ondo State inclusion of youth in government committees that are involved with young people's issues as reported in National Youth Development Report in 2009.
- ❖ Organization of workshop in 2008 on "Peace Building & Conflict Resolution in the Niger-Delta Region" by the Federal Ministry of Youth Development in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to re-orient the youth by inculcating in them the culture of dialogue and communication in resolving conflict.
- ❖ Talaba Youth Skill Acquisition Programme (TYSAP) organized by the Ministry of Youth Development of Niger State.

Aside the above mentioned activities, the Nigerian music composers have played holistic roles in this direction through their musical works. It is the concern of this paper then, to discuss the contributions of the various music composers in curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria.

The Concept of Youth

The term "Youth" according to The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language (2004) is "The state or condition of being young." It is also "The period when one is young; that part of life between childhood and manhood; adolescence" (p. 1460). Sahara Report on the Nigerian Youth (n. d) described the youth as:

...a special group of people with strong stamina and passion for realizing certain set goals and objectives... youth share certain characteristics that distinguish them from other generation. Such characteristics include, impatient for change, zealousness, radicalism, rebellions, curiosity, hard work, ego and ambition etc.youth are the engine and actualizes of national development, if their mindsets are channels in the right direction.

Youths are the ware house and pillar of a nation in that, they possess every quality needed by any nation to make a positive development especially when those qualities are properly channeled.

Youth Restiveness

Ejumudo (2014) asserts that a standard and generally acceptable definition of the term "youth restiveness" is yet to evolve despite the fact that it has "gained notoriety in usage, particularly in Nigerian parlance and has gradually assumed a global configuration." He further defined youth restiveness as:

...a situation of the inability of the youths to be still or quiet and difficult to control, especially when they are unsatisfied with something. It relates to matters of agitation, neglect, marginalization, and other feelings of dissatisfaction. It can also be viewed as the engagement by youth in agitation for the restoration of their right and dignity or self-seeking and criminal activities (2).

Ogbeifun in Oromareghake, Arisi & Igho (2013:10) came up with another dimension of definition based on the fact that actor's motivation and orientation differs. Youth restiveness in this regard was categorized under three categories thus:

Restiveness based on actor's motivation and interest as youths engaged in genuine agitation for their right and restoration of the dignity of their group or race; youths engaged in self and criminal activities such as kidnapping or hostage taking in exchange for levied ransom; youths seeking revenge for oppressive attitude toward members of the elite class or a manner of responding to a repressive state.

From the above points of view, it could be said that Youth restiveness relates to negative attitude of the youths usually marked by violence and disruptive of lawful activities which in most cases is aggravated by situations perceived as unsatisfied and as such, seek for means of bringing them to satisfaction

Music Composer

The term composer and musician are two words that could be used interchangeably. This does not mean that every musician is a composer. Musician is a general term used to refer to all in the field of music making. These could be a composer, conductor or performer of music and so on. Therefore, a composer as one in the field of music making can also be referred to as a musician in this context.

A music composer according to Ukpong (2006) is simply "a creator who seeks to transform the society through music art." (p. 98). Okafor in Ibekwe (n. d.) asserted that:

A musician is a keeper of public conscience and as a man who has his hands on the social control lever, he guides the society; drawing, of course, from the collective wisdom and pool of knowledge and proverbs of his people. He foresees events like any poet, for a poet can point the way to come, even though the people following may not see it for the time being. (p. 162).

Onwuekwe (2007) opined that "The composer is one who puts down sounds systematically to produce music." She added that "The composer bears a lot of things in mind before and during his composition. He first of all bears in mind the audience for which the music is to be composed." (p. 28). Nwamara (2016:18) simply puts it as "one who creates or "manufactures" music. ... basically skilled and is vast in the handling of musical notations, musical elements and orchestration."

From the forgoing, it could be deduced that a music composer in this context is one who through his/her musical work (s) has the ability of molding, motivating and guiding the lives and character orientation of the individual persons in the society to imbibe and develop positive moral values for the societal transformation and growth.

Thus, the contributions of the Nigerian music composers towards curbing youth restiveness could be discussed under the following sub-headings:

Nigerian Music Composers' Roles in Curbing Youth Restiveness

- Music composer as an information communicator;
- Music composer as a motivator;
- Music composer as an educator;
- Music Composer as a Watch-dog;
- Music composer as a character molder;
- Music composer as a job provider;
- Music composer as a promoter of peace and unity;
- Music composer as potential builder;
- Music composer as poverty eradicator.

Music Composer as an Information Communicator

One of the notable causes of youth restiveness in Nigeria is inadequate communication and information flow. The youths need to have access to information that will enable them know their right in the society to avoid being misled. Anasi (2010) affirmed that "Nigeria youths as leaders of the future need to have access to wide range of information which will help reposition them to take their rightful place in the comity of nations" (p. 4). Music composition is a perfect medium through which messages are better communicated irrespective of the nature of the messages. Ibekwe (n.d.) had earlier expressed that:

Music offers a perfect medium through which messages are communicated; even a message that is considered implicating, dangerous, hurting or abusive is conveyed through music without minding the consequences and provided it is aimed at bettering the condition of the oppressed (p. 168).

If the youths have the knowledge that they are future leaders, they will avoid being used as thugs to destroy lives and properties. This is expressed in the music of Nneka (titled Niger Delta) where he described the methods of kidnapping and burning of oil installations by the MEND as a 'blunder'. The music as taken from Oikelome (2010) read:

...the youths take to the street
Just to show off their anger
I ask a question
Is this gonna take us higher?
...The MEND is just another major blunder
Left with no choice but to grab the power
Kidnapping just to get paid higher
Claiming it's for the peeps
Just to get their pains lighter
Who is to blame?

The country turning darker
Democracy couldn't make it any better
It's time for a change
People of Niger Delta.

Timaya's music "Yankulu ya" according to Oikelome (2010) is also in line with the description above. In it, Timaya sensitized the youths that the consequences of killing and kidnapping are hatred and disunity among them. He advised them "to stop the killing and kidnapping ...and engage in meaningful business ventures." The excerpt below is the music:

...The way we dey today
We got to dey love one another e
We got to dey use our head
Before we dey kill one another e
...make una use una head eh
Nigeria people are one eh
... The way we be today my brother
We got to dey love one another eh
We no need kidnapping eh
I don tell una finish eh
We no need to dey fight eh
Make una use una headi eh
...Nigeria people are one
...make una stop to dey kill
My brother make una wise eh.

Music Composer as a Motivator

The youths sometimes need someone to motivate them to act bravely without violence for the good of the society in which they live. Fela Anikulapo Kuti, a progenitor of Afrobeat is one of the music composers who took a bold step through his musical compositions to

voice out most of the evil deeds of the Nigerian government without being violent. Although Fela was jailed severally by the Nigerian government because of his compositions but he did not take to violence rather, he maintained his stance. Examples of Fela's music that portrayed this point are his "Zombie" in which he condemned the brutality of the Nigerian Solders through the command of the Nigerian Government which eventually took him to jail. Also, in his "Sorrow, Tears and Blood" which he composed after serving in the prison, Fela described the destruction that took place as the armed forces were searching for him to take him to prison and in the later part of this music, he reprimanded our people for being afraid to stand out for their right. Below is the excerpt of the compositions:

ZOMBIE

Musical notation for the song "ZOMBIE" in 4/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Zom-bie oh zom-bie, Zom-bie oh zom-bie Zom-bie oh zom-bie, zom-bie oh zom-bie. Zom-bie no go go_ un-less you tell am_ to go. Zom-bie oh zom-bie".

SORROW, TEARS AND BLOOD

Musical notation for the song "SORROW, TEARS AND BLOOD" in 4/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Eh- ya!_ eve - ry bo-dy run run run Eh- ya!_ Eve - ry bo-dy scat - ter scat-ter_ Eh- ya!_ some_ peo-ple lost some bread".

Nelly Uchendu's compositions "Be a True Nigerian and Make a New Nigeria," according to Ibekwe (n. d). are other musical works through

which the composer motivated the youth to be patriotic, to love the country and to avoid being avaricious in order to make Nigeria great. Below are the excerpts of the compositions:

BE A TRUE NIGERIAN

Be a true Nigerian today
If we love our Country
We will make a greater progress
All those things we talk about
Will one day be forgotten
Only you can make a great Nigeria
Come let us make a great Nigeria
Sacrifice to build a great Nigeria

MAKE A NEW NIGERIA

Be a true Nigerian today, do everything right
Always be patriotic
You will see you too can make Nigeria great
Don't be avaricious, don't ever mislead
We must contribute now to the growth of our country
With good sanitation and excellent behavior
Let us be proud now to make Nigeria great (pp. 167-168).

Music Composer as an Educator

Nigerian composers have also educated the youths through their musical works and sensitizing them to know the implications of their restiveness both on themselves and on the society. The music of Nneka and Timaya above are good examples on this point. Also, Agu's composition "Udo Amaka" is another song that could be used to educate the youths to always seek for peace and unity. Again, the various anthems (national, states and schools) and some marching songs that are usually sung in various schools are means of educating

and inculcating moral values in these anthems and songs to the students who are also parts of the youths. Below are some examples of the music:

UDO AMAKA

U - do__ oh u - do, u - do a - ma - ka__ oh. U - do__ oh u - do,
 7
 u - do a - ma - ka__ oh. u - do__ oh u - do u - do bu e - z'i - fe

NIGERIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM

A - rise O com - pa - triots Ni - ge - ria's call o - bey

FIVE MAGIC WORDS

There are five ma-gicwords, there are five ma-gicwords, there are five ma-gicword that I know
 9
 __Please, Ex -cuse me, Sor -ry, Thank you and the last onePlease par-don me.

Music Composer as a Watch-dog

Nigerian composers have played the role of a watch-dog through their music to create awareness of the goings-on in the society. Composer as a watch-dog according to Onuora-Oguno (2010) is

"refers to one that guard against loss, waste, theft or undesirable practice." (p. 157). Okafor in Ibekwe (n. d) buttress this in the work "The Role of Music and Musicians in Promoting Social Stability in the Country" stating that:

A musician shares a role of keeping a watchful eye on the goings-on in the society. He is therefore, a social critic and guides his people according to the prevailing norms. He foresees and he reflects. He has his hands on the social control lever. What it implies is that musicians are the society's spokes-men, the defender of the defenseless and pointers to social order. (p. 169).

Example of such musical works on this point is that titled "Government of Crooks" according to Oikelome (2010) through which Fela Anikulapo Kuti championed the message of the Niger Delta. The music read thus in pidgin:

All of us know our country
Plenty plenty oil e dey.
Plenty things wey dey for Africa.
Petroleum is one of them.
All the places that get the oil O.
Now pollution dey for the place O.
All the farm don soak with oil
All the villages don catch disease

Through the work, Fela was able to communicate and create the sense of patriotism that reinforced the will of many other musicians and various groups from Niger Delta and beyond to attend to the problems of militancy and deprivation in Niger Delta.

Another musician who created awareness of the goings-on in the society is Timaya, one of the prominent musicians of Bayelsa state in Niger Delta. The excerpt below is an example of the music in pidgin (Oikelome 2010):

Well e bin happen for Bayelsa oh
Nineten Ninety nene oh
Ten thousand soldiers for road iyo
Ask them where them dey go
Them say them dey go Bayelsa oh
Which place for Bayelsa oh
One village they call Odi oh
Na im them enter our village
And rape our girls
And make us homeless oh {chai}
Them kill our mama iyo
Them kill our papa iyo
Them kill our brothers
Them kill our sisters
And make us homeless oh...
I say government them bad oh (p. 92).

The awareness created by these musicians resulted that attention were given to some of the problems that brought about youth restiveness which actually helped to calm the youths of Niger Delta.

Music Composer as a Character Molder

Listening to certain musical compositions by the youths helped them to re-direct their life styles for good. For example, at the time Patty Obasi composed the song "Nwa Mamiwota" was a time when many young girls lived as if they own their lives as well as the world. As a consequence of their wayward live, some of them get into trouble and they seek for solution through various violence means. With this music, Patty was able to get some of them back into living good lives. Also, in the same line is Nelly Uchendu's music "Waka About" in which she advised young girls never to marry a "waka about." Waka about in this context could be men with violent attitude such as armed robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, trouble shutting etc, who can never remain at a place or a peaceful environment. Through this music, Nelly

Uchendu created the awareness in men that marriage could become a difficult issue for them if they do not re-direct their way of life. Below is the excerpt of the two compositions:

NWA MAMIWOTA

A - gbo-gho tu - le o - ny'i - ge fee I si n'i -

bu nwa_ ma-mi - wo - ta o kwe-si - ri k'i - ma-ra_ o-ny'i - ge fee

WAKA ABOUT

If you want to_ marry a hus-band nev-er you mar-ry a wa-ka a - bout

if you mar-ry a wa-ka a-bout oh na so so trou-ble, trou- ble,_ trou-ble

Music Composer as a Job Provider

Nigerian composers have also addressed the issue of unemployment among the Nigerian youths through their musical works. In this direction, several youths have engaged themselves in the business of performing the composed songs through dancing as market or business promoters. Also, some have involved themselves in selling musical work like DVD and CD. This is confirmed in Ibekwe (n. d) who observed that:

...music and musicians have provided a very big relief and succor to many who engage themselves in one aspect of music business or the other for their livelihood. Many young boys and girls have become

amateur musicians just to make both ends meet; some are involved in the sale of musical works. Even many of the school leavers have taken the dancing as market or business promoter instead of staying idle and causing trouble in society (p. 172).

It is noteworthy to mention that Prof. Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara, a Nigerian composer and a Professor in the Department of Music in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka plays an outstanding role as regard creation of job for the youths. He does this by co-opting the students into performances of music compositions of various kinds to keep them busy and help them earn some amount of money for their upkeep.

Music Composer as a Promoter of Peace and Unity

Another important role played by the Nigerian musician is that of propagation of message of peace and unity among restive youths through music compositions. Oikelome (2010) pointed out how Nneka in his composition appealed to the warring youths of the Niger Delta region "to stop the war and violence and embrace the methods employed by Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jnr." The music read:

Stop the violence in the Niger Delta
Remember there's a law called karma
Sins of the Fathers was very popular
Nollywood made a great flick, I admire
But for real, our kids don't have to suffer
For mistakes we made
When we taught we was stronger
Violence aint gonna make it any better
Stick to the ways of King Martin Luther
Civil disobedience might
Make thing clearer
Gandhi used it in India

And King in America
Didn't do much
But the future was certainly brighter
Speak for the masses
Cos we all brothers
Mess the government who be making things tougher
Just live your life
And keep chasing that paper
I speak my mind
Aint got time for any haters
It's time for a change
People of Niger Delta (p.93).

On the other hand, Kefee another popular musician through his musical work "Alright and Wado" expressed the hope that peace and tranquility will one day return to Niger Delta if the youths can keep positive outlook.

I bring you greetings from my country
Nigeria in Africa
Land of culture and heritage
So ready for this new age
... I have a dream that some day
That under the sun we'll live as one
We'll be our brother keeper yeh,yeh
Niger delta we say wado
...to my people in Niger Delta eh
Praying for peace
I've got good news for innocent prisoners
Crying out for justice
Your day will come
Things are going to get better
I know they will.

Music Composer as Potential Builder

Several musical concerts aimed at bringing out the potentials in some of the youths have been organized. In these concerts, different musical compositions, instrumental as well as vocal are usually performed. The concert often gives youth the opportunity to showcase their talents either as instrumentalist or vocalist. At the end of the concert show, some youths who are outstanding in their performances are usually picked up by some philanthropists who attended the concert and are engaged in meaningful activities. A typical example is that which Oguoma (2010) explained in a work "Owerri Traditional Music performance: A social melting pot for human development." According to Oguoma, the youths are engaged in useful activities through various skills acquired by participating in a music ensemble called 'Abigolo'. She added "Through the skill, the youths...become self-reliant. The youths are gainfully deployed, and their leisure time effectively occupied, so that no room is allowed for such vices and maladies as robbery, kidnapping and duping" (p. 147).

Music Composer as Poverty Eradicator

Poverty is one of the causes of youth restiveness as mentioned earlier. Music composers have helped to an extent to solve the problem of poverty among the youths through their musical work which they perform to promote peoples business and they are being paid for. They also perform jingles composed by musician which they are being paid for during election to get supporter for parties. These are sources of earning money for their up keep

Summary

Youth restiveness, some of the possible cause factors in Nigeria has been discussed. The youth as the necessary group for a nation's development and security has been looked into. The Nigerian composers' roles in curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria through their musical works have also been discussed. From all that was discussed,

it was discovered that Nigerian music composers have been able to some extent control the youth in their restiveness but more efforts need to be made in order to continue checkmating youth restiveness through musical works. To do this, the under listed recommendations are to be considered.

Recommendations

From all that has been said, it could be seen that Nigeria composers are in the fore front to curbing youth restiveness and contributing to national development in Nigeria through their musical compositions in this 21st century when Nigerian politics is experiencing moral decadence. To continue this work, the following suggestions and recommendations will be of great help.

Nigerian system of education should separate music from other combined subject in the curriculum both for primary and secondary schools and make it a compulsory subject so that by learning music theory, the pupils as well as students will begin from their tender age to compose songs that will help to educate the society. They in turn by engaging in music composition will make a better use of their leisure time.

Nigerian government should endeavor to invest more in training of music composers who will create more musical work that are aimed in curbing youth restiveness since it has been observed that music is the best means of communicating to the youths.

More recreational centers should be established in various places in the country where youths are to be entertained by the composers at least once every week. This will help to distract the youths from carrying out violent activities.

Politicians should commission the composers to compose jingles to be used during election and engage the youths to perform them rather than encouraging them into violent actions.

There is the need for composers to create more musical works that would sensitize the youth on the negative consequences of their restiveness both to themselves as well as society at large.

More music students should also be encouraged to delve into the area of composition since this area helps in a greater way to control restive youths.

Conclusion

Information so far has shown that composers have made great contributions in curbing youth restiveness. It would therefore, be of great importance that they are encouraged and supported both by the government and individuals; financially and otherwise. Composers on their part should also put more effort in the production of such musical compositions that could be used for curbing youth restiveness. More works should be done in terms of job creation, poverty eradication, promotion of peace and unity through music.

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