

MUSIC PRODUCTION FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP BENEFITS IN A DIGITAL ECONOMY

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Abstract

Digital economy is taking shape and undermining conventional notions about how businesses are structured; how firms interact, and how consumers obtain services, information, and goods. Music writers or composers can now determine to release the specific genres and styles at any point in time; while live performances can be streamed to audience via digital network service platforms easily anytime, anywhere. Hence, the benefits of music production for entrepreneurship in a digital economy cannot be over-emphasized. On the strength of the above, this paper therefore discusses the benefits of music production for entrepreneurship in a digital economy, with reference to the South Eastern State of Nigeria. The researchers applied bibliographic, ethnographic and musicological methods to elicit information on concepts of music production, music entrepreneurship; benefits and challenges of music production for entrepreneurship, as well as music entrepreneurship education. Thoughts were given to music education and its importance towards preparing graduates for entrepreneurship purposes, creating employment opportunities for music graduates in a digital economy; the curriculum contents and its benefits to music students and, the role of government in providing a flourishing ambience for music artistes' contribution in a digital economy which lives much to be desired. Views in focus include the roles of the academia, music professionals and investors in the entertainment industry for the sustenance of digital economy, as well as recording studios in the South Eastern States and the contributions of music practitioners and musicologists to digital economy in Nigeria. Finally, the researchers played the government seemingly insouciance towards music education and advocates for regular music talk shops/seminars, conferences and in-service training, to be in line with the dynamic requirements for music studies, creativity and performances in a digital economy.

Keywords: Music Production, Entrepreneurship, Digital Economy

Introduction

The introduction of digital technologies in the 1980s, multiplied the strength and confidence of self-determined music producers. Internet is now the main source of spreading produced musicals. Economically, it has salvaged many composers in moving around their own musical works. Music writers can now determine to release the specific genres and styles when desired, while live performances can be streamed to various audiences through digital network service platforms for easy access at anywhere, anytime. To this end, the relevance of music production for entrepreneurship benefits in a digital economy can never be over-emphasized. Music production involves one or more persons. Playing musical instrument and singing could be a sort of organized activities for entertaining

audiences in a traditional or social setting, religious gatherings or in the recording studio via recording the voices only, voices with the accompanied musical instruments or (vice versa) the process going the other way. It could be script writing of musical notes by an art music composer, to form rhythmic pattern, rhymes, melodic and harmonic chords, using languages as lyrical technology. Burgessin Kalu, Ahanotu and Onwuekwe (2020) explained:

Music production as the technological extension of composition and orchestration captures fullness of the a composition, its orchestration, and the formative intentions of the composer(s) to express people(s) beliefs and way of life in line with required digital and scientific or composers. In its precision and inherent ability to capture cultural, individual, environmental, timbre and interpretive subtleties along with those of intonation, timing, intention, and meaning (except where amorphousness is specified), it is superior to written music and oral traditions. Music production is not only representational, but also an art in itself (p. 88).

In concert with the above, music production is not just a studio thing, it now involves script composers who can now write their works with computer, while they make use of music software like: Sibelius, noteworthy, Cubase, and lots more in writing melody line or harmony for voices and score scripting for orchestral and symphonic works. These days, music scripting requires the use of computer system to help quicken the composer's work and enhances clean and distinct print production for easy sighting during teaching and learning periods and for artist live stage performances. George (2015) opines: that due to technological advancements, the role of the musician has changed dramatically in the 20th and 21st centuries. For the composer or songwriter especially, it is becoming increasingly expected for them to have some familiarity with music production. In the same vein, Kirby (2015) also observes: characteristics of modern technologies as processes that can be combined and configured endlessly for fresh purposes: "Technology", "once a means of production, is becoming a chemistry", He adds: "Technological competences can often be as useful and relevant as traditional musical skills when working with digital music (p. 243).

The above definitions clarify the fact that music educators need to have personal or individual appraisal of self on the impact of modern technology to the musicologist, academic environment and to the society in general. Also, to ask ourselves if the interest and enthusiastic spirit with which many started with is yet there. Otherwise there is the need to brace up to this unending music education and its harmonic alignment with digital system of information and communication technology. Again, the need to ask, if one sees it as a fulltime career or part time participation since the musicologist undergoes his training to become a music and entertainment producer. The issue to battle with all the time is choice of area of production, but there shall always be a compulsory decision to make; if one wants to be a script music producer, a studio music producer, or rather choose to be an "on stage music producer"; that is, a performer or become all the three. However, it has become imperative that, the musicologist of today should primarily focus on perfecting the artistic and ethical aspect, and also understand the economic, administrative, and entrepreneurship facet of music production. Usherwood (2015: 5) specifically points out that:

As digital technology continues to be a major force in the music industry, they also have new expectations, opportunities, and issues to consider. It is necessary then for musicians to be entrepreneurially inclined and business-minded in order to productively and successfully navigate through the current realities of this ever changing industry. It is

important for musicians to realize their artistic strengths, broaden their musical scope, and explore audience possibilities.

Digitalization in the music industry did not only change the concept of the music business but basically reshaped its value-added network. Digital innovations are transforming the music industry with the entrepreneurial rush and increasing new projects attributed with extensive advancements in audience reach and online visibility measured through capitalization and media impacts, etc.

Though digitalized music in Mp3, WhatsApp, YouTube, Xender, etc. created the way for unlawfully downloading of music; however, producers concentrated on the sale of single tracks instead of full music albums. It brought illegal copying and transferring of music over the Internet, albeit, it increasingly acts as a substitute for sales, though it reduces the inflow of capital to the industry, as finances that would have otherwise be used for the discovery and the development of new artists were lost. Nevertheless, the benefits of digitalized music education and production outweighs losses.

Concept of Music Production

Production can be seen as the act of bringing something out for use or consideration. Supporting this assertion, the Chambers Dictionary sees production as the act of producing or process of being produced. Music production therefore, as earlier cited above is the technological extension of composition and orchestration. It is a great outlet that offers you a lot of opportunities to get your foot in the door of music industry. You work with people of like-minds and instructors with whom you can collaborate, and most importantly it is a lot of fun. Music producers, as discussed here, are rarely involved in manufacturing; typically delivering a final mix or master of the music in the prevailing professional format. Music production is thus a less ambiguous term because it references the thing we produce, irrespective of its ultimate encoding as grooves on a cylinder or disc, pits and land on a CD, or ones and zeros in a digital file. Nonetheless, the producers as discussed here record music mostly for distribution to consumers and also for film, television, electronic games, commercials, and more. Dissemination and monetization through multiple channels are now common.

It is noteworthy that no two producers or production teams have identical skill sets or ways of working, but commonalities do exist. There are many useful criteria for classifying producers. Among them are current success, musical genre, training, studio ownership, price, location, and methodologies. On these bases, you could select someone who recently had a big hit, a heavy metal producer, an engineer/producer, a studio owner, someone who works at cheaper rates, or a person who programs everything using a digital audio workstation and synthesizers. A modest budget may make studio ownership imperative, but not just any studio owner will do. Similarly, if prior success is crucial (as it often is—major labels value hits) and becomes the initial filter, functionality will still need to be the ultimate criterion for a successful outcome. Identifying producers by background or training—engineer/producer, songwriter/producer, musician/producer, and so on—omits other critical considerations. Engineer/producers often discontinue engineering and contribute to arrangements, song doctoring, and performance coaching. Likewise, songwriter/producers nowadays often engineer and do not always insist on writing the material they produce.

Furthermore, these classifications may not apply to the person of the producer exclusively but rather to the techniques he or she applies to a particular production. As described earlier, some producers

have bi- or poly-functionality and can switch roles from project to project. Moreover, a producer can be a team or an individual, hence the use of the term "production team" when it is clear that two or more are formal partners. It is worth noting that established production teams generally interact with each other and the artists differently than individuals, who co-produce with the artists in what is, frequently, an ad hoc working relationship.

Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has been the focus of different disciplines such as economics, sociology, finance, history, psychology and anthropology, each of which works with its own terms. The concept of entrepreneurship, according to Carton, Hofer, & Meek (1998) is derived from the French word, *entreprendre* which means, "undertake". While Shane & Venkataraman (2000) defined entrepreneurship as the use of opportunities for the discovery, evaluation and promotion of goods and services, forms of organization, markets, processes and raw materials that were not previously available, Parker (2004) took this further by stating that entrepreneurs drive change drawing on abilities such as leadership, motivation, solving crises and taking risks. Finally, Garud, Jain, & Tuertscher (2014) touched on personal and psychological characteristics, emphasizing that individuals exhibit certain behaviours based on their needs such as establishing close relationships, obtaining power and achieving success. To Chambers Dictionary, 10th Edition, an entrepreneur is "a person who undertakes an enterprise especially a commercial one often at a personal financial risk". The managing proprietor of a firm who supplies the capital bears the risk of production and is the controller of a day-to-day management and marketing; so also is a contractor or employer, an organizer of a musical or other entertainment outfit.

Furthermore, Barker and Pepler (2017) defined entrepreneurship as "the ability to imagine and identify opportunity, combined with the skills to creatively build something of sustaining value, for a central and necessary part of the lives of artists, the development of organizations, and the future of music ensembles" (p. 2). Barker and Pepler (2017) further described entrepreneurship as "a management process and unique entrepreneurial "recipe" informs the decisions made throughout the management process" (p. 50). In another view about entrepreneurship, Ojeifo (2012) stated that:

Entrepreneurship is generally viewed as a process of creating something new. Doing this involves a lot of time and effort devoted to ensure the tasks at hand and the resultant effects include monetary and personal satisfaction as well as independence. Entrepreneurship involves creation process, conscious devotion of time and effort; it involves risk and has some rewards (p. 79).

In a clearer point, based on the above report, entrepreneurship is usually a procedure of establishing new ideas. To achieve such, one has to be committed to such project; though financial benefits could be amongst the consequential outcome, it also includes formation procedure, realization of commitment and time endeavour to justify the menace attached to it. Gray (2017) implied that entrepreneurship is a way of taking an approach towards discovering and pursuing opportunities, solving problems, not constrained by the present that find application in diverse context and institutions, new and old; public and private work places (p. 27). However, Kruger (2004) insisted that selecting an appropriate basis for defining and understanding entrepreneurship creates a challenge for academic researchers and writers due to the fact that a number of schools of thought exist that view the notion of entrepreneurship from fundamentally different perspectives (p. 13). In concert

with the above comments, the researchers opine that entrepreneurship is an unvarying procedure with variations of an exceptional collection that involves a personal tactic during setting up and developing a positive attitude while working in every situation. In other words, entrepreneurship is the ability of an individual or group to take a bold and confidence decision to embark on business venture, being ready to bear the risk outcome in either profit or loss result. The entrepreneur is the sole owner of such investment, and chief executive in charge, in most instances, takes the decision, gives instructions to every other person working in the establishment or company.

Benefits and Challenges of Music Production

The music industry has undergone a marked transformation in recent years. With advent of digital age, the music business has evolved significantly, giving rise to a diverse array of professions that play crucial roles in the creation, distribution, and promotions of music. These include, but not limited to: Musicians/Songwriters and Composers, who are the heart of music industry themselves; as they craft the soul-swirling lyrics and melodies that resonate with audiences worldwide. They are the very hub of the industry. They earn their income primarily from record sales, streaming, live performances, and songwriting royalties and publishing, making them the driving force behind the economic success of the industry. Others include managers and agents, record labels and distributors, event planners and promoters, etc whose synergy create a thriving ecosystem that drive the growth of music industry. Furthermore, the way that many great musicians have set themselves apart is by using their educational status to their advantage. As they learned and listen more and more, they were able to find something about their styles that they could draw upon to make sure no one ever confused them with anyone else. Engaging in music production avails you of many opportunities and benefits. It allows you to gain the knowledge and experience you need to be formidable in the music production business. Working with people who have been in the industry for much longer than you, will allow you to take advantage of their wisdom and experience. You will be opening yourself up to a whole world of information that can enrich and broaden your musical career in ways that you did not even know were possible. Successful producers can generate a great deal of income from the sales and use of their productions.

According to Burgess (2013), "a good producer can make millions". "Ideally you want to have several albums that go on selling forever." Although this is true, it takes a very big hit or several substantial successes to make millions as a non-writing producer.

On the other hand, producers are problem-solvers. Productions begin as concepts that will embody disparate elements, known and unknown. The producer's task is to combine these parts and ideas to make a coherent communicative statement. To Burgess (2013), music producers are problem solvers. For instance, "when you have been given the description of something but do not yet have anything that satisfies that description;" He described a problem- solver as "a person perceiving and accepting a goal without an immediate means of reaching the goal. This is what producers do". More so, Burgess observes that:

Apart from artist and auteur producers, most do not face the blank page paralysis that confronts creative artists from time to time—sitting in front of a blank page, canvas, or screen with no immediate thought or inspiration for where to begin (p. 45)..

Producers function like editors or commercial artists such as graphic designers—they rarely create on a whim. Typically, there are clients, a target audience, an artistic sub-discipline, and a conceptual brief. To be successful, the work has to meet the practical requirements while achieving a high level of “aural communication. The term “production”, like “graphic design”, means both the process and the result.

A primary challenge for producers is meeting the demands of the commissioning entity or entities that will, in turn, satisfy the wants of a substantial audience. Fine artistes may choose to starve in order to follow their artistic muse, but it is notable that much of what we consider great art was commissioned, created under patronage, or made for commercial purposes. These artistes had to wrestle with the creative challenges of the work and satisfy clients, donors, or a broad audience to survive. A producer has to mollify many interests, while resolving technical, creative, financial, commercial, and interpersonal problems. Finally, no matter how strong your contract and how high your royalty rate (within the range of longstanding major label rates), unless your recordings are consistently selling at gold or platinum levels, royalty income generated for a producer will be modest. Unknown producers rarely get large advances or high royalty rates. Without hits or an established reputation in a niche, it can be difficult to make a living as a producer.

In the same vein, Fox (2004) observed that some artistes are hard of hearing due to standing in front of live amplification for too many years, and you only hope they have the wisdom to defer to those who can hear. When faced with this problem, Fox states, “I do an A/B session with the artiste’s favorite records so that they (and I) can get a relative sense of how our work is sounding”. In fact, being at loggerheads with the artistes is a big concern and challenge to most producers. “Or worse still, members of the band, being at loggerheads with each other.” He also further stated that:

Though I had never seen a situation where the bands have completely broken down, but have seen disagreements where one person gets very upset. You just have to take the time to makes them feel their concerns are being listened to. Then, they will back down from their stance (p. 30).

Some of the recording music studios in the South Eastern States visited by the researchers include Smooth Groove Productions at No. 4 Aba Road, Umuahia, Abia State; Rhythm & Beats at No. 17 Nnamdi Azikiwe Avenue, Onitsha, Anambra State; Melody Makers at No. 12 Ogoja Road, Ebonyi State; Enugu Music Hub at No. 34 Ogui Road, Enugu State; Rave Studios at No 12 Wetheral Road, Owerri, Imo State. The above listed music studios range of services include Recording Studio Services, Concerts, Conferences, Crusades, Rallies, Birthdays, Music Production, Entertainment during events and Music Recording services. Their production costs vary widely based on factors such as the specific services offered, the studio’s reputation, and the location.

Entrepreneurship Education

One of the keys that help to drive any economy is entrepreneurship, jobs are created through small business owners who later develop courage for entrepreneurship venture. Entrepreneurs do have confidence in themselves, they have time of their own; make self-decision for the progress of the business. Entrepreneurship contributes to reducing unemployment in the economy; successful entrepreneurs are figures for emulation by small scale artisans, skilled and craft individuals who do not have the courage to lunch out to start up a business. Entrepreneurship education informs,

educates, liberates the mind of youths and individuals who dependent on government and other private sector or individual for employment. By teaching entrepreneurship skills, the content of learning activities if well achieved, would spur learners to discovery of their innate abilities and create opportunities for entrepreneurship endeavour. The economy grows if youths and graduates embrace entrepreneurial ideas and engage themselves in skillful work, crime and other social vices would reduce to a reasonable degree. Entrepreneurship education stimulates the economy from such an unexpected dimension, there are neglected areas, skills and trade that could systematically stimulate the economy, but if people are not educated or informed about it, such aspect stays stagnated in terms of business and economic gains; music production is one of such area. Narrowing the above concepts down to music graduates, Onuora-Oguno (2015: 28) affirmed: "By honing the entrepreneurial skill of the Nigerian Musician, he will emerge with a cogent business plan applicable to many different ventures within the music industry." According to him, entrepreneurship turns out to be an essential skill for today's musicians and even more so for music of tomorrow. Digital technologies have simply become part of our lifestyle and one that empowers music producers to "go do it yourself" rather than work for others. He enumerated the following groups as the beneficiaries of entrepreneurship to music:

1. Performers wishing to treat their musical ventures in a professional business manner.
2. Song writers who wish to act as their own publishers.
3. Those interested in creating music production companies.
4. Those interested in music merchandising and others.

All these groups of entrepreneurs will be taught how to go about establishing their businesses.

Music Entrepreneurship Education

Music entrepreneurship education should include all academic activities involving those course contents that help the teacher impact knowledge to the learners, prepare them towards being self-reliance and proficient in skills acquisition, educate them on modern music business acumen, integrate all that should make music students achieve success in their professional career and personal goal attainment after graduation. Music entrepreneurship education can also be defined as a transfer of strategies to applying ideas like: ethical competences, creative abilities, confidence in risk taking to venture in a committed music investment with economic implication, being business minded, having the zeal to exhibit musical knowledge and skills, encouragement to achieve being self-employed after graduation; based on already acquired training, using well-organized curriculum contents that should be relevant to music student in a digital economy. There is need to explore music production skills as one of the many core economic and vibrant areas that will enhance effective music entrepreneurship education, to reduce unemployment of music graduates and practitioners.

In support to the above, Gray (2017) believe that's pedagogic framework built to integrate essential concepts in entrepreneurship within the context of existing music curricula has the potential to better define arts entrepreneurship and its intended learning outcomes for music students" (p. 41). The above statement means; there should be educational structure to incorporate important aspect of skills acquisition for self-employment into the current music curriculum to produce an acceptable document to guide and direct a part way for performing and creative aspect of music production for music students. Abiogu, Mbaji, & Adeogun (2015) implied that apparently, music education is a strategy for achieving much public good and through direct programs and advocacy, institutions can

promote music as an intervention to improve youth's successful employment outcomes and strengthen self-development of communities (p. 120). To the above, Gray (2017) further explained that:

Music entrepreneurship curricula can foster student goals by teaching skills and developing knowledge in areas that are specifically relevant to individual professional goals as well as through the teaching of self-regulatory habits and a presentation of the current arts context (p. 43).

The above assertion reveals that teaching any aspect of skills acquisition and entrepreneurship in a creative and performing arts courses by one who is not artistically minded in such area is an aberration; he may not be able to influence the students in their specialized area requirements due to lack of experience in creative and performing arts business complexity. However, Usherwood (2015: 5) opines that:

Students should be encouraged to acquire the career development and entrepreneurial techniques necessary to advance themselves according to their area of specialization and their own career objectives." However, most music departments, programs, and schools still lack fundamental music business or entrepreneurial initiatives.

Unfortunately, there seem to be great lacunae in the curriculum content vis-a-sis the views expressed above. More so, the government inability to provide the needed facilities for effective teaching and learning towards acquiring entrepreneurial skills leaves much to be desired, especially as observed in all the tertiary institutions in the South Eastern Geo-political zone of the country. Usherwood's view is also in agreement with the above discussion. Nigerian music students should be groomed to have confidence in their area of interest and professional fields of endeavours. Departments of music are expected to focus more on music production business, it has the influence to create and enhance effective entrepreneurship opportunities in a digital economy. Gray (2017: 42) noted that "context - specific characteristics" can inform the "types of entrepreneurial activities as well as the associated skills that a student will need to master". Again, Usherwood (2015) specifically pointed out that:

As digital technology continues to be a major force in the music industry they also have, new expectations, opportunities, and issues to consider. It is necessary then for musicians to be entrepreneurially inclined and business-minded in order to productively and successfully navigate through the current realities of this ever changing industry. It is important for musicians to realize their artistic strengths, broaden their musical scope, and explore audience possibilities (p. 5).

Based on the above, Both Gray (2017) and Usherwood (2015) seem to be saying that the level of technology and innovative advancement of now will determine the student's interest to develop his or her individual skills, based on content and specific objective, to be able to measure up with the emergence and continuous influence of modern digital technologies, the evolving digital musical appliances and unending new methods of music creation/production, distribution, and appreciation. Kirby (2015: 372) added that: "Technology provides the tools with which people and institutions augment their abilities to communicate, and changes in communication technology profoundly destabilize and create new opportunities in art and culture". In a similar response, Gray (2017: 39) discussed that music entrepreneurship classes can be suffused throughout music curricula:

"Course offerings in music entrepreneurship exercise skills unique to the career experiences of music performers, educators, and researchers. Ideally, a fully suffused

music entrepreneurship program would include several course offerings that expose students to a gamut of skills and content in a variety of learning environments.

The views of Kirby and Gray are in tandem with the previous discussion, they are saying that an organized guideline of personal or individual skills and abilities acquired in creative environment will help to steer the musician's entrepreneurial development. They stressed that the perception of entrepreneurship as ways of thinking and procedure that leads to creative development for entrepreneurship program, enhances the teaching and learning of exact skills, and students' response. The teaching and learning of the music entrepreneurship procedure would help students to develop in their knowledge and skills as they advance in studies. Barker and Pepler (2017: 3) responded:

Like social entrepreneurs, music entrepreneurs learn to combine the passion for creativity and problem solving with business discipline, innovation, and production within a larger context. They are aware that the act of music making takes place within a framework of relationships. They improve systems of music making, come up with new ways to solve problems, and explore ways of changing organizations, ensembles, community, and society for the better. They have the ability to be visionaries and realists simultaneously and are passionate about transforming an idea into reality... The entrepreneur is able to think boldly, question assumptions, and challenge the status quo.

The above assertions by Barker and Pepler clarify that individuals who are music business owners become skillful to merge the enthusiasm for inventiveness as an entrepreneur who proffers solutions to bring about improvements in a wider scope of framework for improved environment and larger scope of the society. Their view in the area of creativity and entrepreneurship development and accomplishment within the immediate environment, suggest the "creation of fresh thoughts and novel ideas for economic empowerment and sustenance of music graduates". Gray (2017) in his emphasis on music entrepreneurship observed that its curriculum content and materials should focus at developing the following set of concrete and abstract skills, characteristics and abilities:

- (1) The capacity to think creatively, strategically, analytically, and reflectively
- (2) Confidence in one's abilities
- (3) Collaboration and Communication skills
- (4) An understanding of the current artistic context
- (5) Entrepreneurial opportunity recognition and risk assessment
- (6) An understanding of personal passion and vision
- (7) Musical disciplinary knowledge, technical skill, and expression (p. 22).

Gray reveals that in an effort to develop an entrepreneurship curriculum that includes a holistic approach to arts and entrepreneurship learning, the curriculum also aims to develop core entrepreneurial skill sets, such as project planning, assessment, ideation, marketing, and networking. Music entrepreneurship education is expected to involve impacting techniques, skills and knowledge necessary into the learners, inspiring their individual or group intention(s) to starting up a new business, be it self-employed, small, medium or large scale. Teaching and equipping them with skills so they can be self-confidence individuals, private or group entrepreneurs. Also analyzing them, making decisions and acting upon them, educating the students on possible sources of providing required financial, human and material resources geared towards an implementation for profit making and a successful career in music entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

Digital technologies have changed methods of music education and production in Nigeria and beyond; and the impacts, feelings and relevance of digital economy is currently at the front burner in every facet of life globally. Therefore, in a way of summering/concluding this paper, the researchers opine that efforts should be geared towards inculcating the benefits of the modern contents of digital and technological aspects of music education as contained in this paper to the music students. The music educators/scholars are expected to be equipped with the basic entrepreneurial acumen in music and other digital economy around the world. Fresh thoughts and novel ideas are required in reviewing music curriculum contents, to embrace relevant skills and abilities so that musicians can strive to thrive in their music business and entrepreneurship career for a worthwhile impact in a digital economy. Furthermore, the government's seemingly apathy towards music education in preference for science leaves much to be desired, since it is believed that the "arts (music) pre-date science; the humanities is the mother of science", hence the need to create more awareness for entertainment industry and most importantly, music education. These can be done through regular music workshop, seminars, conferences, and in-service trainings to be in line with the dynamic requirements for music production and creative performances in a digital economy.

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