

CURBING UNEMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA THROUGH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN MUSIC INDUSTRY

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Introduction

Unemployment is one of the greatest challenges affecting the development of Nigeria as a nation. This is as a result of many graduates that are not gainfully employed either by the government or private sectors after their training in the school. Many graduates depend solely on white collar jobs which are very difficult to get due to population explosion with little job vacancies, improper planning by the government and many other reasons. To worsen the situation, many who are on the job and supposed to be working are being retrenched; most especially in the private sectors due to many competitive challenges they are battling with in running their firms or business. These, therefore, add to the issue of unemployment in .However, not until in recent times, our education curriculum was not geared towards entrepreneurship, where students can learn one trade or work that would make them self-reliant, in addition to theoretical academic experience and paper qualifications. The issue of unemployment has now turned many graduates into “Okada” riders, bus conductors, taxi driver, groundnut sellers, “yahoo” boys and girls, and many other odd jobs as means to survive in society. Many school leavers now engage in many criminal activities due to unemployment; thereby affecting the growth and economic development of Nigeria adversely.

The risk of poverty increases as unemployment rises in tandem with slower rate of economic growth and a consistent urban-rural population migration forcing many youths to the unemployment market. This is seriously posing real danger to our society and to government at all levels saddled with the downside of an army of

A. E. Olabiwonninu & B. A. Amole: *Curbing Unemployment in Nigeria through..* unemployed graduates. Nigeria has been wrestling with youth unemployment right from 1960 when she got independence. The issue of employment has risen steadily as rural-urban drift (driven by perception of farm labour as demanding), pushed many young secondary education graduates to the cities when the country's rickety economy could hardly absorb the better trained university graduates. This situation, however, worsen as bad economic choices worsened the macro-economic situation in the country.

The Concept of Music

Many scholars, philosophers and musicologists have defined music in different ways. The definition varies through regions, history and within society. This is because music may be defined or described according to various criteria which include organization, intent, pleasantness, social construction, perceptual processes and engagement, universal aspects or family resemblances, and through contrasts or negative definition. For instance, Ibekwe (2010) opines that music in African context can be simply described as human intent expressed into action to communicate ideas, portray culture, symbolize event, socialized people, and stimulate emotion and other related functions. He argued further that music is a human behaviour translated into action. Olopade (2018) describes music as one of the verbal arts that enrich the individual in understanding nature around him. He argues that music is such a discipline through which man increases or develops his observation, his feelings and his expression. It is also a medium through which ideas are fixed in the minds of the audience. In other words, music is seen or be described as one of the disciplines that make man becomes a creative person.

Agu (2018) defines music as the expression of man's deepest self'. Ipere (2002) submits that it is only the superior man that can understand music. He adds that music reveals character through six different emotions. Sorrow, satisfaction, joy, anger, pity and love. Ibekwe (2010) quoting Ipere (2002) stresses that music has the power to mould character. To this end, various opinions made by different scholars about music as a concept suggests one cogent fact that every society all over the world has its own unique or peculiar music. This means that various societies are or can be identified with their kind of music. It is then sufficing to say that what is music to a particular society may not be music to another society. This is in line with what Idolor (2012) said that the concept of music as a phenomenon

A. E. Olabiwonninu & B. A. Amole: *Curbing Unemployment in Nigeria through..* varies from one society to another depending on the role it plays, the people's degree of exposure to what constitutes its practice, and the level of its integration with the socio-cultural activities of the people that own it. More so, there are societies where music plays very important role such as the authentication of a core even or rite, and many regular activities in the society that require music services. Succinctly put, however, music can be defined as combination of sounds and rhythm by human beings, which is to be sung or played on instruments with the aim or intent of pleasing the emotions and stimulating the intellect in accordance with the society's theoretical framework. Hence, to be music, sound must be organized and meaningful (Hoffer, 2009).

Unemployment Challenges in Nigeria

Erapl (2020) while enumerating the adverse effect of unemployment on the people in the society harangues that studies have shown that acts of criminality are inter-related with unemployment, adding that there is always a strong proportional relationship between unemployment and crime. The higher the rate of unemployment or joblessness, the higher the rate of crime. He further said that:

In Nigeria, we have observed that majority of those who have been involved in criminal activities belong to those who were either retrenched or unemployed. Since survival is the first law in nature, when people found themselves out of job not because of their fault but because of faulty policies by the government they always look to some fraudulent ways of making ends meet (p.23)

The assertion above indicates that unemployment rate which had risen significantly in the recent times has also brought about higher rate of crimes to our society. Consequently, any nation that continues to favour this would never develop socially, economically and politically.

Oluwagbemi (2010) submits that secondary school graduates account for the vast majority of the unemployed in Nigeria. He further said that between 35% and 50% of this group are estimated to be unemployed; the under employment figure is even worse. Hence, overall, youth unemployment rate in Nigeria starts at an unacceptable level in excess of 30%. More so, unemployment has resulted in low purchasing power, lower consumption, consequent low production in the overall economy, and above all, an increased incidence of socially destructive behaviour

A. E. Olabiwonninu & B. A. Amole: *Curbing Unemployment in Nigeria through..* and many social vices such as armed robbery, wanton violence and agitations as well as white collar crime and fraud. Oluwagbemi (2010) argues further that as the unemployment rate rose further in the 80's, during and after the badly implemented Structure Adjusted Programmes (SAP), another form of crime began. Hence, Nigeria began to experience drug dealing and hired assassinations. Many youths acted as agent to supply drugs to European countries in the 80's, the situation that led to imposition of death penalty at one point by Nigeria. The inability of the politicians to curb the scourge of violence also played right into the hand of unemployed youths who served and still serving as hired thugs to be used during electioneering campaigns and on election days.

The introduction of internet cafes in 1990's in Nigeria also brought about awareness and avenues for many unemployed youths to perpetuate new crime. Cyber cafes internet facilities then became zones of the congregation for unemployed and under-employed youths in the society. The cyber cafes offered respite from the cynicism of unemployment and the shame of idleness. Many youths are armed with the electronic knowledge, engage in fraudulent activities prosecuted online that snared foreigners and gave the country a bad name and image at the international level; most especially among committee of nations. Hence, the situation calls for drastic steps to eradicate or reduce this menace to the barest level considering the social consequences which unemployment has brought or has on economic development of Nigeria.

For Nigeria to develop, it is highly indispensable that our educational programme really focus more on vocational and technical courses. This will expose the school to vocational skills that would make students be less dependent on government jobs after graduated from school. It would also enable them become job creators rather than job seekers and liability to their parents and the society at large. When this is done, it is hoped that the economy of the country will be improved and leads to national development.

Among the subjects that can reduce unemployment and as well enhance national development are Music, Agricultural Science, Fine Arts, Home Economics, Business Studies/Education and many others. There is no doubt that those who

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Employment Opportunities in Music Industry

Reimer (2011) highlights the importance of music as he noted that music performs two major obligations in the society – development of the talents of those who are gifted musically for their own personal benefits and for the benefits of the society which will be served by them. Secondly, to develop the aesthetic sensitivity to music of the people regardless of their individual level of music talent for their own personal benefit and for the benefit of the society which need an active cultural life. Based on Reimer's (2011) submission, it is therefore, imperative to encourage and development a strong music training industries or avenues for our youths in the society.

Afolabi (2016) while enumerating various areas of specialization in music industry where someone can easily explore and be self-employed mentioned music technology. He opined that in music technology, people are trained in the art of manufacturing musical instruments of various kinds such as wind and string instruments, percussion-drums, keyboard and many other musical instruments (most especially our local/traditional musical instruments). In the aspect of music technology, people are trained in how to repair these musical instruments. No doubt, whoever is able to master or skillful in this aspect can go into production or manufacturing of musical instruments as well as repairing them after training. Some foreign musical instruments are very expensive to buy due to incessant increase in exchange rate, someone can go into manufacturing of these musical instruments locally. This is a very good means of earning one's living and self-employment opportunity for our unemployed youths in society.

Olaniyan (2012) lists various career opportunities in music industry as being producers, manufacturers, managers, recording studio engineers, and music marketers. He pointed out that only trained music practitioners must be re-trained to be able to operate within the system. This means that training has to be very adequate and participants within the music industry in Nigeria are to be given adequate training for them to function and be effective in the music industry in our society. In other words, the music practitioners must ensure that adequate

A. E. Olabiwonninu & B. A. Amole: *Curbing Unemployment in Nigeria through..* provisions are made to ensure all-round development and training of people that will eventually lead to sound musical knowledge are given. When this is carefully done, it is believed that our youth would be able to be job creators at the end of their musical training which also make them to be gainfully employed.

Furthermore, another job opportunity music industry can offer to our unemployed youths is having or establishing music bands. Nigerians are great lovers of music; there is hardly any even where music is not employed. At any of social function be it marriage, funerals, birthdays, house-warming, religious settings, business, advertisement and so on, the use of music is highly essentials. There are many notable and academic musicians who have made their careers through music performance both locally and internationally. When youths that are very talented engage in music performance and be committed into it, the sky is the limit most especially in the aspects of popular music performance. This is very possible when they combine their academic experience with musical talents, they can excel greatly in music industry and most importantly be self-employed.

Moreover, the aspect of music composition is another lucrative job opportunity in music industry where someone can explore and be self-employed. Being a good music composer can be a source of earning a living and thereby reducing unemployment rate in our society and by extension, the nation at large. This is because composition is an indispensable aspect of music performance. A good music composer can be engaged by churches, schools, music recording studios, musicians, individuals to write compositions based on various programmes that are organized or meant for a purpose or for commercial use. If it were to be churches, a composer may be asked to write music for wedding, funeral, service of songs, Christmas carols, Esther programmes, music competitions, music concerts and so on.

Another golden job opportunity in music industry that can also bridge the problem of unemployment in our society is a sound knowledge of music that could lead to one becoming a good advertisement agent. This is because most of the advertisements that are done over the radio and television are done with music. This is probably because music jingles tend to attract people's attention more than mere talking. Through radio and television, commodities are advertised regularly on

A. E. Olabiwonninu & B. A. Amole: *Curbing Unemployment in Nigeria through..* daily basis with the use of music. In addition, radio/ television jingles, signature tunes, political campaign announcements, special information or messages and so on are in most cases done with music. This means that if one is highly knowledgeable and talented in music composition and arrangement (and possibly instrumentation) advertisement is an enviable area that could be exploited successfully as a means of being self-employed and reliance.

Lastly, being a practical music trainer in the aspect of musical instruments could as well be another job opportunity in music industry. Many people that are interested in learning any musical instruments of their choice can engage those who can play and teach them at homes, schools, churches and so on. One can establish a "school" or studio where people can come and learn one or two music instrument at their leisure. By so doing fees are charged and services rendered in learning musical instruments are paid for thereby serves as employment opportunity.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the causes of unemployment, the challenges it pose on Nigerian society, and employment opportunities available in music industry that could reduce the issue of unemployment in Nigeria. It was obvious as mentioned in this discussion that, majority of the crimes that are committed in our society could be as a result of incessant increase in unemployment rate. Consequently, this has to be pruned if Nigeria will develop economically. Several social crimes that are ravaging our society such as armed robbery, kidnapping, assassination, benedictory, political thuggery, drug abuse, smuggling and many other misdeeds will not lead the nation to any meaningful development. Therefore, it is high time we explored numerous job opportunities in music industry that are yet to be fully tapped to make our able unemployed youths gainfully engaged. This, if utilized, will make our society more peaceful and develop economically, socially, and politically.

Recommendations

Having identified various opportunities that music industry can offer in addressing unemployment in our society, it should however, be noted that one of the important aspects of life that people engage in it on daily basis is music. Removing music from activities of man is like soup without salt". Hence, the following recommendations are put forward:

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- Financial institutions and philanthropists in our society should provide soft loan to the young graduates so that they can have the opportunity of establishing their own music band and studio to practice
- Graduates should start music practice business from the little capital available until they reach a high standard. They should not wait for a large capital before they do something reasonable in the field of music.
- Music curriculum planners should make sure that the curriculum is designed in such a way that provisions are made for an all-round development of the students in both theoretical and practical aspects of music.
- Adequate fund should be made available by the government to assist the youths in music industry. This could be in form of soft loans or grants to help them pick up.
- There should be music programmes such as talent hunts to discover and encourage graduates or youth who are musically inclined in order to help develop their potentials to the fullest.
- Courses that would enhance job creation such as music and other vocational courses should be designed and encouraged to be pursued or studied by our undergraduate youths.
- Music technology should be emphasized and encouraged. This aspect will expose our youth to be creative and improve productivity in the act of music making.

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