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# The Nigerian Music Industry: Challenges, Prospects and Possibilities

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# The Nigerian Music Industry: Challenges, Prospects and Possibilities

Wale Adedeji

PhD, Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the status of the Nigerian music industry through the paradigm of its music promotion, marketing, and distributing structure. Using ethnographic and bibliographic sources, the study traces the history of the Nigerian recording industry which nose-dived from the late 1980s with the exit of major label operations like Sony, Polygrams and EMI due to political and economic factors and recognised the impetus given the music scene through the resilience and creativity of the new hip hop generation who now have to contend with myriads of challenges among which is piracy and copyrights issues. While highlighting some of these challenges, the paper presents an array of possibilities as well as recommendations and concludes that with proper structuring and intervention, the Nigerian music industry can be a major player within the global music scene, and be a viable revenue earner for the country aside from crude oil.

**Keywords:** Popular music, The music industry, Nigeria, Piracy, Copyright issues.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has a very vibrant popular music scene that has come to reflect her cultural richness, and over the years this has translated into international recognition. With her huge population of over 150 million, the country offers a domestic market large enough to sustain and ensure the commercial success of most artistic endeavours, hence most popular artists fashion their music towards domestic needs. This is reflected in language use where emphasis is laid on the use of regional languages with appropriation of indigenous cum traditional styles of music while subscribing to the use of modern music production and performance technology.

Based on her musical and cultural output, Nigeria has once been described as 'the musical heartbeat of Africa' while being perceived as a stronghold for African popular music (Servant 2003: 5). Frankel, in introducing Nigerian popular music in the *Rough Guide to World Music* asserts 'In terms of cultural output Nigeria is unrivalled in Africa, with hundreds of studios, thousands of performance venues of all sizes and countless artists and performing groups throughout the country' (2006: 288). Modern popular music in Nigeria has strong roots in the existing traditional music practice and culture while its development and modernisation has occurred through needs, contacts, foreign influence, religion, governance system, the economy as well as urbanization among other factors. These amalgamations reflect the dynamic nature of culture coupled with the incorporation of newer ideas, values and lifestyles from the West (Falola and Heaton 2008: 6).

The urban centres (predominantly Lagos) provided an enabling environment for the conglomeration of all these factors resultant of which is the origination and conception of many popular music genres which now have become identity markers for the country. These include ; jùjú, afrobeat, fùjí, gospel, reggae and hip hop among others, producing musical icons of international recognition like Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, King Sunny Ade, Osita Osadebe, Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, Lagbaja! and Femi Kuti. Also the new and younger generation that has taken to hip hop genre like P-square, 2Face Idibia, 9ice, D'banj, Eedris Abdulkareem, Ruggedman as well as the contemporary neo-soul artists like Asa, Nneka and Bez among others.

## 2. THE NIGERIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY: AN OVERVIEW

The Nigerian music industry in the last ten years have witnessed great impetus and its vibrancy has been widely reported within the African continent and beyond. According to the award winning producer/artist ID Cabasa, 'Our music is sounding better and it's up to international standard, likewise in lyrics and content, we are growing in terms of acceptance...[and] in Africa we are the best, [while] in terms of music video we are growing' (Interview 2008). This vibrancy is also reflected in the recognition of works produced by Nigerian artists on the international scene. Femi Kuti won the 'African Artists of the Year' at KORA Music Award in 1999 and has since received three Gammy Award nominations till date. The feat at KORA was repeated by the duo of P Square who won the African Artist of the Year at the 2010 edition in Ouagadougou. 2Face Idibia has been a multiple award winner from MOBO Awards to MTV (MAMA) Awards capping it with Best Selling African Artist at the World Music Awards in 2008 and BET African artist of the year in 2011 (with D'Banj). The 2014 MTV (MAMA) awards also witnessed a lot of recognition for Nigerian acts with Davido capping artiste of the year and best male artiste and Tiwa Savage as best female acts among other Nigerian awardees.

The music scene have also witnessed a rapid increase in terms of international collaborations within the last couple of years ranging from studio to stage as well as business alliance. Notable artists that has graced the Nigerian stage with home-grown artists in the past includes R Kelly, Joe, Beyonce, Nas, 50 Cent, Missy Elliot, Jay-Z, Sean Paul, Akon, Fat Joe, Snoop Dogg, Wyclef Jean, Kirk Franklin and Donny McCulkin among others. <sup>1</sup> However, despite these display of musical vitality, overtly international presence and success there still exists an underpinning argument as to whether there is a music industry in Nigeria that caters for the myriads of its talents and players. And if there is actually an industry it is apparent that it needs a lot in terms of standardization based on the concerns and expressions of its stakeholders.

### *Music industry defined:*

The music industry basically takes care of all aspects of the music business and has different organizations and outfits working together for a common goal which include the artists, composers, managers/talent developers, the media, live music promoters and distributors among others. 'Industry' occurs where there is commercial exploitation of a product or item which often go through the basic chain of production, marketing, distribution and consumption (of the product) that can also include services. The music industry can be situated within this theory as the apparatus coming together for the responsibility and facilitation of music production, commercialisation and consumption in various formats either physical, digital, live or in any other multimedia forms.

According to Wikstrom 2009:49 'the musical industry consists of those companies concerned with developing musical content and personalities which can be communicated across multiple multimedia' while the industry strongly relies on the models of creativity, reproduction, distribution and consumption in order to function (ibid:49). Khaleque-Abdul believes the music industry is a relatively new modern concept denoting the '...non-physical aspect of music... [where] sophisticated communication technology of the modern age is now being used for recreating and preserving all kinds of music... It is in this context that... music as an industry... [was] developed [where] the potential[s] of modern technology can now be fully exploited by persons engaged in the... industry' (2003: 44). Negus situates the music industry as functional within the culture and entertainment industries and encompassing components of professionals working towards commodification of music within the paraphernalia of multimedia like 'recordings, video, films, televisions, magazines, books, and via advertising, product endorsement, and sponsorship over a range of consumer merchandise' (1992: 1).

### *Is there a Nigerian music industry?*

Having known how it ought to be, the Nigerian situation poses many puzzles as it looks almost impossible for an aspiring artist to get a head start in a situation that many industry headliners consider chaotic. To ID Cabasa while looking at the present situation from his economics background: <sup>2</sup>

I don't think we have an industry, for you to have an industry, the industry must be defined, and you must have a structure... a [rallying] point where stakeholders will come together, and there's nothing like that, there is no functional process for an artist... whatever we have [now] is a music scene that is gradually developing to become probably an industry. (Interview, 2008)

This aptly describes the present structure of music making in Lagos where an artist functions in the capacity of all the aforementioned components that made up the music industry. Most music released presently (apart from an artist like Femi Kuti who is on a foreign major label) is being financed and produced independently by the artist, who has his own imprint, directs his own video and takes CDs to radio stations and media houses for promotion by himself which often involves bribing the DJs to get air play. As also observed by Sam Kargbo<sup>3</sup> 'The Music industry is now populated with people who do not have the professionalism and interest to make good musicians or good music. People now run labels when they have no idea about music or the making of music. Anybody that can open a beer parlour or a spare parts shop can now run a record label. It is heart rendering and awfully pathetic' (2006).

Perhaps it looks like a Herculean task to make headway as an aspiring artist in Lagos where there seems to be no platform to start from except one's own wits. However, the award winning rapper Ruggedman, talking out of experience presented the way the 'industry' works in Lagos in 'Hip hop 101' (2007), an introduction in the 'Ruggedy Baba' album offering a lecture to the aspiring artist thus:

Pick out two songs to radio as your first single, for 9ja [Nigeria] a dance track and a slow one for the mingle cut like 200 to 300 copies, if you can, [try and] design a sleeve for it... Drop at least eight copies in each radio station not just in your city, if you can [drop it] around the nation, follow up with SMS and occasional phone calls of course *you go still meet presenters wey go try to play* God, bone them and give only to *those wey feel your music* cos when you blow up they will turn around and use it. Do a lot of interviews; don't let pride get into you... Grease the right thumbs if you can and you have to, I'm being realistic because money plays a part too. (Ruggedman 2007)

Ruggedman's hip hop class presents a typical situation of how the music 'industry' operates in Lagos and not forgetting the need to 'grease a few thumbs', indicating the notion of 'payola'<sup>4</sup> as expressed by K-Lite who obviously is incapacitated by lack of funds. However this formula has worked for Ruggedman as he said at the beginning of the track 'I'm teaching from experience... [that's] how it worked for me though' and has somehow become the 'normal route' in the music making process for artists who like Ruggedman did not meet any standard procedure.

Describing this appalling situation music consultant/artist manager Efe Omorogbe painted the picture of a present day artist in Lagos thus:

What we have now is a lot of artists with indie [independent] labels run by their cousins, and their mothers, and their girlfriends, and their brothers and their grandmothers and all of that. And the entire business plan in somebody's laptop, he carries it in his bag and hop to his car, and that is the entire business office, no over-heads, no staff, no training, no experience, no expertise, you know, they might have one or two consultants, a PR consultant who doubles as a publicist. They want to record; they hire a producer who works with them...we don't have a proper recording label structure where the company hires producers, where producers sit down and craft music, where you have a proper publishing company, where song writers and composers get some kind of funding and payment for works they've done and whoever runs the publishing outfits starts working with record labels to get materials out for new talents, for old talents, for people to interpret and record and release...we don't have all these kind of specialised structure. (Interview 2009)

While the industry looks as if it is booming due to the number of artists coming out daily with their videos on MTV and other media outlets, the implication for this straight-jacketed 'hustle-based' type of music business practice is the proliferation of mediocrity in music where every artist wants to do the style of music that is 'reigning' irrespective of their talent and ability, since there is no exposure to professional advice, while the marketers or distributors who are merely traders now determine the type of music that artists put out and on a larger scale. Retrospectively, the corporate sector that depends on music and artists to drive their campaigns now exploit the artists who, being naive, believe they are getting a fair deal. The more corrupt and dis-organised the music industry is the more it is to the advantage of the corporate sector.

#### **Exit of major recording labels:**

With a clearer picture of what obtains at present it is important to examine how the structure collapsed by digging into the past, as the past is often the key to unlocking the fortunes of the future. What could have gone wrong in a city that once had a world class studio built by the famous Ginger Baker in Ikeja.<sup>5</sup> Basically now the major problem the industry is facing is lack of proper business structure and government regulation and interest in the sector as obtainable in places like the United Kingdom and America where an artist can be properly mentored through the expertise of a record label that harnesses all other workforce within the industry for the mainstreaming of their act.

This type of structure has helped the development of many well-known Nigerian artists of international repute. In the 1970s for example 'the Nigerian recording industry was... dominated by three Lagos-based multi-national recording companies... These companies were Philips, which later became Phonogram, and then Polygram... EMI... and Decca which eventually became Afrodisia' (Okoroji 2009: 17). The 1980s and beyond also witnessed investment into music by local investors like Chief GAD Tabansi's Tabansi Records, Haruna Ishola's Phonodisk, Roger All Stars (RAS) Records in eastern Nigeria while 'CBS Records which had previously been distributed in Nigeria by EMI set up offices in Ikeja [Lagos]...' (ibid: 22).

The above is a picture of what obtains in the music industry that produced artists like Fela, Sonny Okosuns and Onyeka Onwenu (EMI), I. K. Dairo and Ebenezer Obey (Decca), Sir Shina Peters, Adewale Ayuba, and Majek Fashek (CBS Records which became Sony Music), Ras Kimono, Blackky, Orizt Williki, Evi Enda, Mandators, and Femi Kuti (Polygram Records). These were just samples amongst myriads of artists that went through the proper structure from the 1970s to the early 1990s when the structure collapsed. The system of governance/policy in Nigeria coupled with the economic situation contributed in no small measure to the exit of major labels and the incapacitation of indigenous but functioning ones in the 1990s. The Nigerianization policy of the government affected the multinationals while piracy that set in from the 1970s came to signal the end of a proper and structured music industry.

According to Mike Wells, the West African regional director of EMI in 1978:

EMI head office instructions were simple: disinvest as fast as possible. The main problem for all of us was the continual lack of royalty remittances. Moreover the government Nigerianization policies were making life hard for foreign business. (Quoted in Servant 2003: 34)

The exit of Polygram Records from Lagos in 1989 marked the end of the major labels' operations in Nigeria. According to Femi Kuti who was once signed to the label 'they sold Polygram to Premier. And immediately they left music went down right to the end' (quoted in Servant 2003: 34).

This was the state of the industry that young artists entered in the early 1990s. They met no structure on the ground and most successful acts were already in self-exile in the trend of 'brain drain', but there was still a need to diffuse their creative energy and voice their concern about the kind of world they live in. So 'devoid of big record labels and incredibly starved for big finances and the latest recording facilities, young men and women all over the country have independently evolved a booming local music industry. With small but effective amplification equipment and personal PCs loaded with the latest recording software... young artists are able to independently cut a complete album' (Ugor 2009: 66).

It should however be noted that music-making in this new age goes beyond cutting an album or getting your music heard as it is becoming a whole digital, multimedia and entertainment fiesta around the world, in which case the Nigerian artist seems to be losing out due to lack of structured organization, making investment in the business from outside the country akin to financial suicide to a would-be investor. While the young generation of artists that came in with hip hop culture in the 1990s could be credited for revitalizing the music scene with their resilience and do-it-yourself attitude, it looks as if the existing formula cannot cope and catch up with the trend of music on a global level, which is now a technological and digital-driven entertainment industry. Therefore there arises a need for re-assessment, re-organization and re-structuring of whatever scene there is musically.

### **The Challenges:**

The major challenge that the industry is facing stemmed from the exit of the major labels, which marked the collapse of the structure for artists. This collapse can be linked to the decline in the economy which also created piracy and abuse of intellectual property. Piracy has not allowed those that remained to be properly remunerated and it is stifling the artists as well. To Omorogbe, the situation on the ground will remain if the atmosphere is not conducive for a record label as it is the label that forms the skeleton of the recording industry:

Once you make it difficult for the record label which is the primary unit of the music industry to survive... [the result would be what obtains now]. It is the record label that aggregates all the other factors together, they give the artists a platform, the producers they hire, the song writers, publishing people they contract and deal with, they do the PR, they do the packaging they do the marketing, they do the promotion, they are the ones who hire the photographers to do photo shoot for the album, they are the ones who hire the video directors, scriptwriters, dancers and what have you. If you make it difficult for the record label to survive what you have is what we have now, utter chaos! (Interview, 2009)

It is indeed clear now that the major challenge is piracy as it is the only cancer eating deep into the entertainment industry where dearth of proper labels have been observed. Now we have a proliferation of amateurs as the industry is unattractive to big time investment because at present 'the importance of the [music] industry in the least developed countries is made more difficult by its informal and unquantified nature the availability of sales data reflects the interest of international recording music business, which continues to see these countries [like Nigeria] as potential consumers and not producers' (Kozul-Wright 2003: 12).

Perhaps in what looks like a third world syndrome Henry Stobart (2010) observed a similar situation in Bolivia studying effects of piracy, where he observed that the country 'provides a striking case study given the almost complete collapse of its large-scale and long established national record industry and exodus of trans-national labels due to effects of piracy' (p.30). The challenges and problems associated with the Nigerian music industry can be grouped under three categories discussed below followed by an attempt to look at some possibilities for the future growth and development of the industry.

### 1. Copyright issue and the informal music marketing system:

Piracy has been described as the 'insidious animal activity that threatens musicians' livelihoods, musical creativity and production of culture' (Stobart 2010: 29). Piracy I believe exists everywhere there is a musical activity and commodification, though at different levels, but in Nigeria it is practiced with impunity and utter openness. Linking this with intellectual property issues Omorogbe also agreed that piracy is the major problem the industry is facing:

Piracy in the sense of bootlegging of physical copies, piracy in the broadcast medium where people exploit your work commercially without paying for the use of such materials, piracy at the level of corporate organizations exploiting your music commercially or using same to drive advert campaign and not paying the right owners, has made it difficult for legit [imate] business people to survive (Interview, 2009).

Tony Okoroji traces the roots of piracy in the Nigerian music industry which he termed a 'cancer' to the 1980s with the introduction of cassette technology:

The cassette tape was quietly taking over the major carrier of music, [but] the music industry in Nigeria was slow to notice this development. There was virtually no established facility for the production of legitimate music cassettes. Yet there was a huge demand for them. While the industry ultimately reacted, the pirates had moved in long before... [and a] pirate version of every successful release on vinyl appeared in the market sometimes even before the official release of a record. (Okoroji 2009: 23).

This tradition continued with the introduction of optical technology for music dissemination in the 1990s which made piracy even easier and copying faster and more accessible as long as you can afford a computer and blank CD-R coupled with appropriate software. Piracy in Nigeria in recent years has risen steadily and peaked at 95 percent level (records and music) in 2006 resulting in an estimated loss of \$119.0 million US in the music and allied industries, therefore placing the country under the 'watch list' according to the I.I.P.A reports of 2007.<sup>6</sup>

The proliferation of piracy and abuse of intellectual property rights had roots in the void created by the exit of major labels that used to have accredited agents and networks for music distribution. What has come to be known in Nigeria today as 'music marketers' came into being to fill the void of what should be a proper distribution channel for recorded works, and now have their business concern situated within the famous 'Alaba international market' Ojoo Lagos. These 'marketers' were formerly electronics and electrical parts dealers who sourced their wares from China and Singapore, explaining how they rapidly got into the CD replication process while the heart of piracy operation in Nigeria still remains the Alaba market. According to one of Nigeria's popular hip hop artist Baba Dee:

[The industry presently]...have a lot of people, some making music, and some stealing music, [and] some trying to sell it. We have the Nigerian spirit, doggedness, aggressive push, we once had a structure... and proper distributing channel, but when the economy in Nigeria took a pinch on everybody the structure disappeared giving rise to marketers filling the space, and when the structure comes [back] they will rightly take their leave. (Interview, 2008)

The effect of piracy is also evident in popular music genres like juju, as the dearth in recorded format of this genre has been ascribed to piracy where it is foolhardy to spend fortune in taking session men (which is a basic requirement of the

genre as opposed to programmed music) to the studio only for your music to be pirated without re-couping your investment. This scenario has not been encouraging making most juju artists to resort into performing at social engagements other than wasting money doing studio recording (Wright, interview 2009). As it is now, the Nigerian artist stands 'between the devil and the deep blue sea', as Alaba market which is the heartland of piracy is still the only outlet he needs to deal with to get his music on the retailers' shelf, leaving the artist no choice or negotiation power where the marketers hold all the aces.

This frustration was also expressed by Slam (Udoka Oguamanam), a recording artist who asserted:

The distribution level in Nigeria is on zero level. Because of piracy, a marketer tells you how much he is going to buy your album and you don't have a choice but to sell it to him because if you decide to handle it on your own, pirates will deal with you and you may end up not getting a dime. They tell you how they want to handle your work, which is not supposed to be so and so we are at their mercies. Most of the musical and entertainment organisation that are supposed to fight for us are not doing anything. A musician that is a citizen of this country is not supposed to pay a TV station or radio for his songs to be aired but some of us want our songs to be aired to get signing deal to recover what we have spent. (Quoted in Meze 2009).

The issues of piracy, copyright and intellectual property abuse are all intertwined and deeply rooted in the present distribution system that favours Alaba market while the artists and all associated with the entertainment industry keep losing money. The way artists are losing money from physical piracy is the same way they lose revenue from media houses, telecom companies and public places that use music in Nigeria without proper licensing.

## **2. Lack of official government policy and enforcement:**

The Nigerian government is yet to have any efficient official policy or proper way of enforcing policies to protect the intellectual rights of artists. This might not be unconnected with the fact that the government is yet to see the viability of the music and entertainment industry as a sustainable sector for revenue generation. The I.I.P.A. (2007: 351) observed that 'there is little enforcement activity in Nigeria, and cooperation between government agencies to implement and enforce the law, including law enforcement, is sparse and erratic'. There exists the Nigerian Copyright Council (N.C.C.) but the sale of pirated CDs, DVDs and VCDs is still going on unabated while Alaba market remains untouchable.

The N.C.C. launched the STRAP (Strategy Against Piracy) in 2005 which is supposed to be the effective anti-piracy campaign organ of the commission. One of the components of STRAP is enforcement which the agency hopes to realise 'in accordance with the powers of the Commission under the Copyright Act through Anti-piracy raids. Destruction and seizure of pirated works. Arrest and prosecution of offenders' (STRAP 2009). But despite this agenda the author (2009) noticed piracy in full gear at Alaba market where business is booming as usual with display of pirated products in the open. Part of STRAP policy also requires licensing for optical disc manufacturers:

The regulations require all persons involved in the manufacture of optical discs or the production parts; or importation and exportation of optical discs, production parts, raw material, or manufacturing equipment to be registered by the Commission before engaging in such activities. A production licence is renewable annually, while a separate licence is required in respect of each exportation or importation of optical discs, production parts, raw material or equipment. Persons carrying on the business of commercial optical discs duplication, namely, the recording of copyrighted materials owned by others onto recordable optical discs are also required to register with the Commission.<sup>7</sup>

It is interesting to know that Lagos is gradually becoming a hub for piracy network and production in the West Africa sub region as reported by I.I.P.A.:

There are... reported 15 optical disc plants that have been in operation in Nigeria, some of which have migrated to Nigeria from Asia and operate to supply Central and West Africa. IIPA is aware of at least 52 production lines capable of producing at least 182 million discs per year. Many of the plants are not licensed to produce any kind of copyright content. Two of these plants (Akina and Nasinma) were raided in June and July 2004, and were raided again in 2006. However, to date there has been no outcome with respect to actions against these plants. This massive over-capacity, plus pirate imports, results in pirate production not only for domestic consumption but also for export (or 'take out' as it is called, as people come from all over West Africa to buy pirated discs from the Alaba International Market in Lagos). Pirated product from Nigeria has been found in Algeria, Senegal, Ghana, Zambia and South Africa. (I.I.P.A.

2007: 350-351)

The above trend of events and the increasing growth of piracy and the plants where these discs are being manufactured without proper licensing points to the fact that the efforts of government agencies are inadequate and that a drastic measure is needed to curb and prosecute the perpetrators of these acts in accordance to the law.

### 3. Lack of proper understanding of the music industry by artists:

Music practitioners not understanding the intricacies of the music business is a dangerous trend that might hinder the growth of the industry and even destroy any structure that the stake holders are trying to build. Inadequate awareness of issues leads to display of unprofessionalism which make some artists even engage pirates as an avenue of publicity and marketing at times. Lack of awareness about copyright and intellectual property has led many artists to commit blunders they end up regretting. Typical in this line is the trend of some artists selling their master tapes to marketers outright at Alaba for an agreed fixed sum and ending up regretting after finding out their work made huge sales.

### 3. PROSPECTS AND POSSIBILITIES

The Nigerian music industry offers a great potential and can yield millions of Naira in terms of revenue for the government and its players if given the right boost and steered in the right direction. It should be acknowledged that great activism has been going on of late by industry stakeholders to try and build a proper structure where people can be adequately remunerated and also attract investors both locally and internationally. Among some recent moves are the efforts of Efe Omoregbe through the 'Coalition of Nigeria Music Industry' which included five major associations within the sector that have been engaged in series of activities to sensitize the public and the government on copyright issues. They have organized a series of rallies in Lagos and also instituted 'No Music Day' for 1<sup>st</sup> September yearly so people can be aware of piracy and its effects on the Nigerian culture industries.<sup>8</sup>

Great deals of effort have also been exerted through 'Copyright Society of Nigeria' (COSON), an association that has been approved by the government to officially act on behalf of artists for licensing and royalties collection. Through its director (Tony Okoroji), the body has been very active sensitising the public towards the dangers of piracy to the economy and the entertainment industry while also pressing for policy change towards copyrights enforcement and punishment for piracy propagators. The most recent move has been a call on government by COSON to shut down Alaba market explaining the fact that:

[COSON]...do not have anything against the people doing legitimate business at Alaba International market but the good people have been tarnished by the criminals in their midst and the market association continues to protect them. While young Nigerian musicians and actors are working day and night to produce great works, these criminals are busy reaping where they did not sow. This wicked act must be stopped to encourage the creativity of our youths who are doing the nation proud (Okoroji quoted in Alonge 2012).

Against this backdrop I will enumerate possible actions that still needed to be put in place to complement these efforts towards creating a functional and well regulated music industry (which is in no way exhaustive):

**Financial intervention:** Intervention of financial institutions in Nigeria through investment in the industry to give it a boost the same way some ailing banks were saved through the central bank's intervention in Nigeria. No industry can survive without funding and the music industry is not an exception.

**Policy formulation and enforcement:** Official government policy about copyrights and strict enforcement of the same to deter pirates. This will be associated with proper training being given to the law enforcement sector in order to have a proper grasp of the intricacies and interpretation of copyrights law.

**Piracy awareness and public education:** It is pertinent to create awareness and ensure public education about piracy and copyrights issue. This can come in terms of seminars and workshop and most importantly incorporating it within the school curriculum in tertiary institutions for courses like computer science, law, mass communication, and all creative arts courses.

**The issue of proper distribution network:** Distribution is a very important aspect for any viable industry and where this is lacking it is certain that the survival of that industry is shaky. A proper distribution network is crucial in the Nigerian

entertainment industry whereby all labels/artists are required by proper regulation to subscribe to with an accreditation of distributors through government regulation and policy. This can also be complimented with the development, issuance and enforcement of hologram and barcode system of tracking for CDs which will deter piracy.

**Creating music database:** In order for the country to be taken seriously within the global music economy it is necessary to have a music database/chart system through music distributors and media partners. This will go a long way in opening international markets for artists whereby an artists' worth in terms of record sales can be accessed and assessed officially devoid of estimation, assumption or projection.

**The issue of royalties:** Establishing a proper avenue for collecting artists' royalties as done in developed countries. This will ensure proper remuneration for artists and go a long way in sustaining the home-grown music economy.

**The role of music trade unions:** Harnessing the potential of the musicians' trade unions towards artist development by collaborating with experts in music to give training/seminars to artists from time to time. Most of the industry's informants see this as a positive move.

**Facilitating e-commerce and digital music business:** There is a need for exploration and development of digital music distribution in consonance with the global trend. This is imperative as the music industry is becoming digital and for Nigeria to be compliant with the digital age, there is a need to explore the possibility of this avenue. However, cognizance should be taken of issues associated with the intricacies of e-commerce in Nigeria which bothers on online safety and curbing internet fraud. This is where government parastatal especially the Central Bank need to come in, as there is no way the economy can move forward in Nigeria if the country is unable to function and participate fully in international e-commerce.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Popular music in Nigeria has come a long way, and over the years the vibrancy of this aspect of popular culture has placed the country on the international map. It is however disheartening to note that despite the vibrancy of her artists and the recognition of the potentials it possesses musically, the music industry is still at a developmental stage. This is evidenced among other factors in the fact that country is still grappling with the problem of how to effectively distribute music physically in terms of CDs when the global music industry has moved to another level of maintaining sustainability, where music has gone beyond physical distribution but rather being in the 'cloud' whereby emphasis is placed on digital distribution and the internet (Wikstrom 2009).

However this is not to say that the Nigerian music industry is stagnant or un-progressive, as a critical assessment of the music scene with the present crop of artists presents a case of vitality where they are using their talent, creativity and entrepreneurial exuberance to rise above their challenges where there is a limited and unregulated industry structure to work with. They are able to forge musical ties in Africa and beyond, engaged in artistic collaborations as well as attract international affiliations. Among recent attestation being Kanye West's G.O.O.D Music signing on D'Banj as well as Akon's Convict Records signing on Wiz Kid through E.M.E in Lagos while also billing 2Face Idibia and P-Square on Convict /Citrum African tour. Through the present generation of artists the 'Nigerian urban sound' now dubbed 'Afro hip hop' has been able to invade the international space with positive reviews and accolades signifying what these artists are able to achieve through resilience.

Perhaps it is evident that musical talent and creativity is not what is lacking in Nigeria and Africa in general. And while it is a positive development to see Nigerian artist being able to earn money internationally through music as exemplified above, they represent an infinitesimal level compared to the number of artists present in the country that does not have such opportunities, therefore making it imperative to have a policy and atmosphere that will make the home-grown music industry sustainable. Most importantly there is a need for a change of orientation or mindset towards the culture industries in terms of getting the attention it deserves. Here it is imperative for the government to have an attitudinal change in terms of policy and investment in the music sector as it is 'apparent that no industry can survive without government sponsorship' (Khaleque 2003:45), less the music industry.

In this dispensation that the government is harnessing its potentials towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) geared towards a sustainable economy, there is a need to think in-wards and have a re-think about the music

industry. As a matter of fact if the music industry is properly managed and regulated, with the support of the government through financial intervention, investment and enforcement of copyrights law, the industry has the potential for generating huge revenue for the country. Music with its associated forms in terms of tourism and festival promotions in the long run can help sustain and stabilize the economy that is now heavily dependent on the ever fluctuating crude oil and its market. As also corroborated by Kargbo (2006) 'the authorities [need] to realize that music is...a multibillion dollar business. Apart from oil, and perhaps the movie industry, there is no other industry or sector that has the potential of earning easy but well earned money for this country [other] than music'.

#### NOTES

1. Some of the notable studio collaborations include 'King of My Country (Remix)' – Sound Sultan featuring Wyclef Jean (2009), 'Shorty' - Shank featuring Akon (2009), 'So Te (Remix)'- The Pulse featuring Busta Rhymes (2010), 'Flex' - 2face Idibia featuring R Kelly (2008) and 'Hands across the World' (2010) R Kelly in One 8 project for Sony Music featuring 2face Idibia and other African artists, 'Chop My Money (Remix) P-Square featuring Akon and May D (2012).
2. As an Economics graduate ID Cabasa has worked in the banking sector before to going into full-time music production.
3. Sam Kagbo has worked as a journalist in Lagos for many years and presently is the C.E.O. of SKP Productions an entertainment/record outfit that shot the award winning group X-Projects to fame.
4. According to the P.M.A.N. draft bill (2002) 'payola is a term describing secret payment to and acceptance by broadcasting station personnel (usually disc jockeys, record librarians, or programme managers and directors) of money, service, or other valuable consideration in return for their broadcast use of a particular record or song. This practice that has succeeded in slowing down the growth of the Nigerian music industry over the decades. Constant demand by radio and TV presenters and producers for financial gratification from musicians has been a tremendous barrier to the development of Nigerian music... The struggling Nigerian musician has to add this financial burden to his or her already excruciating list of expenses ... all in the quest of introducing his or her music to the public.' (Quoted in Servant 2003: 44).
5. Internationally recognized drummer who did a lot of collaborations and recordings with Fela Anikulapo-Kuti in Lagos in the 1970s. According to Okoroji (2009), he set up a 16 ARC studio in Ikeja which was later acquired by Phonogram in the early 1980s.
6. This is International Intellectual Property Alliance, while the special report on Nigeria can be retrieved from: <http://www.iipa.com/rbc/2007/2007SPEC301NIGERIA.pdf> Accessed 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2010.
7. See 'Optics Disc Plant Regulation' Retrieved from: [http://www.nigcopyright.org/Docs/OPTICAL\\_DISCS\\_REGULATIONS.pdf](http://www.nigcopyright.org/Docs/OPTICAL_DISCS_REGULATIONS.pdf) Accessed 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010.
8. The 2010 edition has been adjudged as most successful so far which indicated the willingness of media houses to participate and hopefully follow suit in paying royalties to artists for air play as against the present 'payola' that

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**AUTHOR PROFILE**

Wale Adedeji is a performing artiste and scholar. He studied Theatre Arts at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and obtained his PhD from the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom where he conducted research on Nigerian popular music. His articles have appeared on both local and international journals while his chapter "African Popular Culture and the Path of Consciousness: Hip-hop and the Culture of Resistance in Nigeria" appeared in the edited volume *African Youth Cultures in a Globalized World Challenges, Agency and Resistance* published by Ashgate in August, 2015. He currently teaches Performing and Film Arts at Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin, Nigeria.