

# CHAPTER 50

## COLLABORATION AMONG NIGERIA POP-MUSICIANS IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: AN EXPOSITORY STUDY

Opara, Kenneth Anosike & Prof. E.U. Ibekwe

### Abstract

This paper which is an investigation attempts to highlight some of the inherent benefits of collaboration among pop musical artists, the resultant contribution to national development and an illustration of some collaborating artists in the Nigerian music industry. Literature review, oral interview and media sources were used to source information on this study. The findings show that where there is a collaboration among pop music artists, new frontiers are not only discovered and explored each artist is opportune to make greater exploits in their musical career and also gain better exposure than when working alone. It also shows that there are some gains for national development. Extensive research on collaboration, teamwork among musical artists, and favourable government policies are some of the recommendations in this study.

**Keywords.** Collaboration, Pop-musician, Industry, Contribution and Development.

---

### Introduction.

In recent times the Nigerian music industry has witnessed an increase in the number of Pop Musicians. Different genres of pop music such as Highlife, Afro-beat, Gospel, Hip-hop, Disco, Reggae, Dancehall, etc, have seen an increase in the number of young talented Nigerians who have successfully carved out a niche for themselves in the various areas of musical endeavour.

Also among these folds are music producers, sound engineers, DJs, dance choreographers, artist managers, show promoters and other resource persons in the music/entertainment industry. To a large extent, all of these are made possible when two or more musicians collaborate in putting their art together to make good music for public consumption and also bolster the gains of national development.

Music collaboration is when two or more artists come together to produce a musical project. A collaborative partnership can occur at various stages of the creative process. It is one of the most significant creative forces driving music today. As an artist, it is essential to understand the value of music collaboration and the advantages this skill offers. Collaboration develops musical knowledge, opens opportunities, boosts exposure and advances careers in the music industry. In the context of this study, collaboration captures the work done by some pop musicians in the Nigerian music industry. It brings to the fore how a variety of ideas could be put together by different individuals to produce a qualitative, constructive and richer idea in one piece.

To achieve this common goal, a high level of skill is required and contributed by each individual as can be seen in Idamoyibo (2021) thus: "individuals could come with phrases, lines of verse, sentences, proverbs, fragments of the lyrical, rhythmic and melodic idea, etc to develop the music together to a full length"(p.139).In advancing the gains of collaboration, a good number of Nigerian pop musicians have been exposed to the beauty of discovering new frontiers in the music scene both locally and internationally. This, on one hand, has brought about gainful employment and also raised their standard of living in a society where the rate of unemployment is increasingly worrisome and on the other hand has brought about some significant gains in national development.

### **Statement of the Problem.**

Music making is not an easy task which anyone can just decide to do and achieve good results. There have been a lot of individual artists who in an attempt to make music only succeeded in making a few records which fizzled out within a short period. Where this is the case, most artists get discouraged and lose the future of their music career. To escape this type of misfortune, music artists should summon the courage to work closely with other artists in a collaborative manner to remain relevant and consistent in the music scene, for two or more heads are better than one. Therefore, collaboration among Nigerian popular music artists tends to yield some benefits for the artists themselves and also make some contributions to national development.

### **Purpose of the study.**

The purpose of the study is to encourage collaboration among Nigerian pop musicians to reap the gains of cooperative work for the individual in particular and the society in general.

### **Significance of the study.**

The study expects to achieve as follows:

- Create an enabling environment for Nigerian pop music artists to share and harness ideas and skills with each other for improved knowledge, productivity and motivation in the music industry.
- To provide quality in music making.
- To be gainfully employed and achieve an improved standard of living.
- To discover new opportunities and learn new techniques of creativity that could bolster an artiste's career.
- To provide new connections to resource persons and have a broader fan base.

### **Scope of the study.**

This study covers some of the benefits of collaboration among Nigerian pop musicians, their contribution to national development and the illustration of some collaborating Nigerian pop music artists.

### **Methodology.**

The research involves the use of a literature review, oral interviews and media sources to gather information.

### **Theoretical Framework.**

This work will be based on the theory of collaborative creativity as suggested by Keith Sawyer in 1994 which refers to the distribution of creativity across members of a group as they collaborate to solve a shared problem. This is said to be in contrast to the division of labour where each group member is assigned a part of the task and the collective outcome is equal to the sum of the individual's contribution. It was further explained that collaborative creativity involves a more complex interaction between group members and can yield an outcome that is greater than the sum of an individual's contribution. That greater collective outcome arises because the difference in task conditions prompted by group members working together instead of individually allows for occurrences of ideas that cannot be attributed to any one person. While citing Fischer et al, (2005) he pointed out three categories of creative collaboration to include:

Serial is when an individual creates something in isolation, and then presents their creation to others who can build on it.

Parallel, if group members create things separately, then bring them together to combine them into something new, or

Simultaneous is when group members create something together at the same time.

The first and third categories of the above are most common to Nigerian popular musicians and will be exemplified to drive home this aspect of the study. The first is the song 'Fada fada' created by Phyno in 2018 in which he featured Olamide, another example is 'Aza' by Duncan Mighty in 2018 featuring Davido. In the third category, what is commonly known as freestyle comes into play in the song titled 'Soco' in which Wizkid collaborated with artists like Terri, Spotless and Cezza Milli in 2018. Another example of such is seen in the song titled 'Dimension' which saw artists like Skepta and Rema in collaboration with J5 in 2021.

### **Empirical Framework.**

In a study conducted by Victor Martinez-de- Albeniz (2020), the following information was elicited... That collaboration in music has been on the rise, which tends to produce commercially and critically successful songs. That it sought to uncover the effect of collaborative projects on an artist's career trajectories and identify the factors that lift an artist's profile in the short and the long term. He stated that in commercial music where being at the top makes or breaks careers, joining hands with direct competitors and sharing one's recipes for writing hit songs (successful new products) with them may seem unprecedented. And yet collaborations have become increasingly common in recent years in the music industry. That as in the film industry, collaborations may help team members widen their knowledge base and build a network of connections to gain a stronger foothold in the music industry. To advance the theory of collaboration in new product development explicit recognition of particular features of cultural creativity should be a precise objective, for the input of creative arts are more than just products, and possesses the power to alter individuals, societies and culture altogether.

Furthermore, he stated that music is chosen as a paradigmatic context which commands massive global influence. That the result of research conducted with most songs across Europe with collaboration as against those without collaboration shows that releasing a collaboration song significantly increases the number of plays of the artiste in future by 6.6% which can be traced to the product which gained 27.5% more plays for collaboration in comparison with a solo effort. That this helps increase the artist's capital which could be utilized in future production occasions (p.2).

This assertion is evident in the collaboration among Nigeria's popular music artists some of whom have been mentioned above. Their efforts have yielded a significant increase in the amount of capital accruable to them thus enabling them to among other things acquire wealth, create employment opportunities for other Nigerians, export their products and generate foreign exchange to boost national development and produce new songs every year.

### **Conceptual Framework.**

Some of the concepts which give this study the validity it requires include Benefit, Collaboration, Pop- musicians, the Music Industry, Contribution and National development. These are explained thus;

**Collaboration.** This is defined in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, New 9th Edition (2018) as the act of working with another person or group of people to achieve something; a piece of work produced by two or more people working together (p.290).

**Pop-musician.** A popular musician could be described as someone who either composes or performs popular music. Popular music on the other hand according to Ojukwu, Obielozie and Esimone (2016) refers to all contemporaneous music with broad immediate and implicitly transient attractiveness which appeals to a mass audience. That such music is quite receptive to people since they are familiar with its idioms and does not require guided listening (p.117).

**Music Industry.** Ojukwu et al (2016) describe an industry as consisting "of various specialists who make up the industry" and that the "music industry involves the production; distribution and sale of music in a variety of forms as well as the promotion of live musical performances"(Miller). It was further stated that the industry connotes several activities and organizations by different artists working towards specific ends but united in the common objective of processing and distributing musical products to the consumers to make a profit (p.118).

**Contribution.** The third definition of contribution in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, New 9th Edition (2018) is; an action or service that helps to cause or increase something (p.333). While the Offline English dictionary (2011) defines a contribution as; the part played by a person in bringing about a result (p.271).

**National development.** Young-Sook (2011: p.108) perceives that: "The concept of national development is the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of the people, by providing social amenities like quality education, pipe-borne water, adequate security, food, life and finances.....it could also mean the steady improvement of a nation". In the same vein, Goulet in Udaba states that, "for the understanding of the inner meaning of development, three core values are involved: these core values are life sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. That the core values "represent the common goals sought by all individuals and societies, which also form the fundamental human needs" Ibekwe (2011:p.82). In addition, she stated that "development could also be seen as an upward (positive) progression of both material and non-material (spiritual) structures within an environment"(p.82).

In light of the voices of the above authorities, it could be admissible to say that Nigeria is one of the countries of the world that are richly and naturally blessed in terms of material and human resources. The abundance of these resources especially oil and gas, where properly harnessed would have gone a long way in improving the living standards of the citizens and alleviating their hardships. It also would have yielded considerable gains for national development. Regrettably, this is not the case in Nigeria, as past and present governments have wasted and mismanaged these resources to the impoverishment and detriment of their citizens and nation.

Despite this, Nigerians have been able to survive this enormous hardship by engaging in individual or collective strives to make life bearable. To this effect, popular music is one of the areas of endeavour which young and talented Nigerians have embraced. This has not only provided self-sustainability but also to a large extent has aided the economic growth of the nation.

### **Benefits of Collaboration in Music**

In the field of music all over the world, Nigeria is inclusive; different benefits and opportunities abound in music collaboration that can be of advantage to the artiste. According to Mary Woodcock (2019), these include:

**Different skills and ideas.** A lot of people in the music world have slightly different ways of doing things. Songwriters have different styles of writing, producers mix alternatively. Collaboration with other artists provides the ability to create something completely new and original. With two or more artists working on a music collaboration together, inspiration and ideas to create something great are exchanged. Having other artists around also motivates me to finish the composition and production of a song that hasn't been able to complete sometimes due to procrastination.

**Exposure and connection.** This is one of the most beneficial aspects of collaboration in music projects. It enables a new fan base to know who you are especially when the collaboration is with an artist who is different to you in style and genre. This provides the opportunity to promote yourself to new people who could be potential fans and audiences at concerts during live shows.

**Broad-based audience.** A much wider audience will be reached when more than one artiste is promoting a song. Each collaborating artiste will be talking about the song to their audiences thus more people are convinced to listen to the song.

**New bond and friendship.** By collaborating, new bond and friendship that might be beneficial in future is created.

The above benefits are attributable to overall collaboration in music, however, in particular to Nigeria popular musicians, Ojukwu et al (2016) said that: Nigerian popular musicians have at one time or the other been invested with prestigious international and national honours in recognition of their contribution to the society as cultural ambassadors of the nation (Onwuegbuna 155).

### **Contribution to National Development.**

Some of the contributions of Nigeria's Popular music to national development include:

- **Promotes spirit of nationality.** Nigeria is a country with a multi-ethnic population that cuts across different religions, cultures, traditions, classes, and gender which affects about two

hundred million people. Popular music has the power to appeal to people of different races and creeds whenever it is played in places of relaxation and entertainment centres, thus creating a strong bond of national unity in diversity, as is peculiar to the country.

- **Creates employment.** The products of popular music has to a large extent employed a considerable number of the populace as evident in the sales and distribution and marketing of compact disc containing songs of popular musicians in Nigeria, and in the overall pursuit of trade and transactions. Also, music graduates who are not fortunate to be gainfully employed in public service earn their living through music as rightly averred by John (2011;173.) that "quite a number of these graduates work in churches either as organists or music directors.... in the media houses (such as Radio and Television centres) as performers, presenters, producers"... In addition, he said that "most of them serve as session men in the waxing of records in recording companies or studios to produce and arrange records" in most cases, for popular musicians. In another submission, Forchu (2009) states:

Apart from entertainment and relaxation, Nigerian popular music contributes significantly to other areas of human endeavour. The impact of popular music on the national economy cannot be overestimated. Nigerian popular music has been able to raise the standard of living by creating more job opportunities in the nation. The establishment of subsidiary industries, which have created jobs and income for the musicians and personnel of the recording studios, storage and marketing agencies, is a direct consequence of the music industry in Nigeria (p.105).

- **Generation of revenue.** Export of the products of Nigeria's popular music to other countries has significantly generated a huge amount of revenue for the government thus making it a reliable source of foreign exchange earners and by implication boosts foreign exchange earnings from the oil and gas industry, the movie industry (Nollywood), and other sectors of the economy. The above assertion leans its weight on Forch (2009) when she stated that "Nigerian popular music is a source of foreign exchange through the international patronage of popular music by Nigerians in diasporas and other nationals, particularly, African nationals". In other evidence, Ojukwu et al (2016) stated that "popular music is a very powerful process of socio-cultural communication and strong source of economic growth of a nation" (p.117).

- **Promotion of culture.** The image of any nation is mostly portrayed through its culture, and to this assertion, Nigerian popular music has continued to play a considerable role in showcasing the culture of the nation. Through its song texts, dances, costumes, and aesthetic features on some musical instruments with which popular music is performed, the promotion of the culture is carried too far and near places. This most often positions the country as a tourist destination for other nationals who would want to visit and witness its cultural values thereby providing an opportunity for foreign exchange which in turn boosts economic growth.

- **Vanguard of political change.** This is most evident during electioneering campaign periods when political parties and opponents employ the use of popular music to campaign and

canvas for either change of government or success in their political ambitions. During such periods, loudspeakers and other sound systems are positioned in strategic places and sometimes mounted on buses or other vehicles moving from one place to the other while playing different tunes of popular music to drum support for one political candidate or the other. Most times popular musicians are employed directly to do the bidding.

### Some Collaborating Artists in the Nigeria Music Industry.

The table below shows a list of some Nigerian popular music artists in collaboration.

S/N	Names Of Artistes	Title of Song	Year produced
1.	Phyno and Olomide	Fada fada	2018
2.	Duncan Mighty and Davido	Aza	2018
3.	Wizkid, Terri, Spotless and Cezza Milli	Soco	2018
4.	Pato Ranking and Davido	Confirm	2019
5.	Ray Black and Steflon Don	Over You	2020
6.	Skales and Manse	I dey miss you	2020
7.	Crayon and Rema	Too correct	2020
8.	Larry Gaga, Queen Theresa, Flavour, Phyno and Pete Edochie	Egedege	2021
9.	DJ Terico, Presh, Nelson Tivane and Burna Boy	Yaba buluku	2021
10.	Adekunle Gold and Davido	High	2021
11.	Davido and Focalistic	Champion sound	2021
12.	Dangbala Republic and Bello Shmurda	Party next door	2021
13.	Ajebo hustler and Omale	Pronto	2021
14.	Okezie and Teni	Call Caro	2021
15.	DJ Neptune, Zlatan and Lojay	Only fan	2021
16.	Jumabee and Umu-Obiligbo	Seriki Kudi	2021
17.	Laycon and Mayorkun	Verified	2021
18.	Davido and Lil Baby	So crazy	2021
19.	Poundz and Barry Jhay	Nobody	2021
20.	Focalistic, Davido and Vigro deep	Kestore	2021
21.	Jae5 Skepta and Rema	Dimension	2021
22.	Wizkid and Terms	Essence	2021
23.	Naira Marley and Busiswa	Coming	2021
24.	Timaya and Buju	Cold outside	2021

### **Summary of findings:**

In the course of this study, information gathered shows that collaboration in music enables different artists to come together and share ideas on how to make new creations of musical works. It has also broadened the knowledge and exposure of artists working together more than when working solo. In the Nigerian music industry, there is also evidence that collaboration has helped to increase the capital base of artists thus improving their living standards, enabling consistency and relevance in the music scene, providing employment for others in the society and enabling significant gains for national development.

### **Recommendations:**

The researcher does not claim to have exhausted the investigation of the study therefore it is recommended that:

- Extensive research should be carried out by music scholars to uncover more facts and benefits of collaboration in the Nigerian music industry.
- Popular music artists especially up-coming ones should endeavour to make their songs accessible to musical artists with a larger fan base and exposure as this could provide the much-needed opportunity to be successful in their musical career.
- To sustain the gains of collaboration, Nigerian Popular music artists should imbibe the spirit of teamwork to improve their musical knowledge and take their music to the next level.
- Policymakers should make policies that could sustain and promote Popular music as this could be a drive to create employment and generate foreign exchange.
- The focus on collaboration on popular music should not only be centred on the performing musicians themselves but should also include other resource persons and stakeholders such as music directors, show promoters, artiste managers, cameramen, costumiers, sound engineers and so on.

### **Conclusion:**

The discussion above bear evidence of the benefits of collaboration among pop music artists in Nigeria and its contribution to national development. It has also provided information on some Nigerian popular musicians who have collaborated on different songs. Some recommendations were also made which if well and timely implemented will go a long way in harmonizing and enhancing the topic under discussion.

## References

- Forchu, I. I. (2009). Nigerian popular music: Its problems and prospects in development. *UNIZIK Journal of Arts and Humanity*, 10(2), 105-117
- Ibekwe, E. U. (2011). Traditional music technology and national development. *Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts (AJRMA)*, 8, 78-85.
- Idamoyibo, I. O. (2021). Collaborative theory of Igoru composition in Okpe nation anthem: An approach to art music creativity. *Journal of the Association of Nigerian Musicologists*, <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/janm/index>
- John, A. (2011). Functional Role of Music in Nation Building. *Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts (AJRMA)*, 8, 173
- Mary, W. (2019). Advantages of collaboration in music:
- Ojukwu, E.V.; Obielozie E. & Esimone C.C. (2016). Nigerian value and contemporary popular music: A new look. *Ogirisi; A New Journal of African Studies* 12(1), 114-129.
- Victor, M. A. (2020). Come together right now. IESE Business School Uni- N a v a r a . A v . *Pearsons 21, 08034 Barcelona, Spain.*
- Yong-Sook, O. (2011). Music education music curriculum and national development. *Awka Journal of Research in Music and The Arts (AJRMA)*, 8, [https://www. music gateway. com>blog](https://www.musicgateway.com>blog). Retrieved on December 12th, 2021
- English dictionary  
O f f l i n e   A p p   i n   G o o g l e   p l a y   ( 2 0 2 2 )  
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?hl=en&g>
- Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary New (9th ed.). (2018).