

Section C

THEATRE ARTS/MUSIC

Developing and Deploying African and Black Creative Energies in the 21st Century: Some Suggestions for Policymakers

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Abstract

Within the varied context of global reflections on the instrumentality of the creative sector as a driver of development in different parts of the world, a lacuna exist about what can be considered the appropriate and commonly accepted continental position regarding the issue beyond UNESCO projections. This obviously potentiates a crippling recourse to the interiorization of a serious matter by African leaders and Policymakers in clear adherence to the spin strings of imposed policy templates including cultural policy that should rightly emanate from endogenous sources. This enduring deficit in working out a common and coherent vision of engaging the creative energies of Africa and the Black race leaves us as perpetual recipients of foreign ideation and international cultural policy impositions that often negates the cultural reality in our societies and sometimes operates in opposite terms with the desires and goals of the local creative community. Stemming the tide of this error requires a multiplicity of perspectives, approaches and strategies. This paper aims to articulate a policy-driven template for developing and deploying African and Black creative energies for maximum productivity within the competitive space of cultural and creative globalization in the 21st Century. The paper shall attempt to generate fresh perspectives about the necessity for rethinking the development and deploying of African and Black creative energies with a view to inculcating best practices as well as mainstream the welfare, safety, conducive and equitable work conditions for local artists, cultural workers and creative stakeholders. Using theoretical and analytical binoculars built out of a deep understanding of the African environment and context, the paper idealizes that the development of African and Black creative energies is critical to the realization of African Union' *Agenda 2063* and without the strategic envisioning of what that development entails, Africa and its Black diaspora will find itself being left out of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Moreover, the paper further concludes that the development of a critical mass in the creative sector cannot suffice without the mobilization of all the core players in the economic, education, the organized private sector, the local economies and knowledge systems, foreign direct investors, the public sector and all the agencies and institutions focused on the creative industries in the continent and in the Black diaspora.

Keywords: Developing, African and Black, Creative Energies, Policymakers, Creative Industries.

Introduction

Africa's place as a critical resource base for development in all sectors has been widely acknowledged over the years. Its standing as a rich continent of great history, resourceful people, beautiful environment, inviting biodiversity, a vibrant culture and heritage scene is well-established and extensively documented by generations of scholars and researchers

(Aig-Imoukuede, 1991; Bisschoff, 2013; Awodiya, 2017). The resourcefulness and creative capacity of the Black diaspora in different parts of the world is an uncontested fact. In the fields of music, fashion, art, design, performance, architecture, creative writing, film, entertainment, the creative genius of Africans and the black diaspora is second to none. The vivacity and vibrancy of the African potentials in the creative industries have built a global tome to the power and uniqueness of a race that thrives in deep knowledge and creativity. To say the least, Africa is a frontline player in the culture sector on the basis of her natural endowments, but it is unfortunately not active in the global management and appropriation of these cultural assets. Whereas many keen observers of the global art and culture sector expect that Africa and the Black diaspora should have been one of the core global players and a key stakeholder in global decisions in the sector, the reverse is the case. Is it therefore surprising to observe that Africa is not benefitting maximally from her cultural and creative industries because for decades it has only been functioning as a source of good arts and heritage but a non-participant in how they are appropriated in the international arena?

A combination of years of exploitation and smuggling of African art and creativity through colonialism and contemporary thefts of African artistic, heritage and creative resources has left the continent seriously disempowered and lean on the capacity to gain maximally gain from her creative resources. Moreover, the imposition of channels of creative industries governance and appropriation mostly controlled from the global North has added to a variety of disempowering policies by policymakers in Africa to deny the continent and the Black diaspora the frontline role it should be playing in the arts and culture world while also impoverishing local artists, cultural workers and critical stakeholders. This failure of policy is identified by researchers as central to the noticeable weaknesses in the sector that implicates on the capacity of the cultural sector in Africa to have a significant voice in the global arena as well as benefit maximally from its heritage and cultural resources (Sirayi & Nawa, 2014). This failure at the policy level has crossly impacted the capacity of the sector to strategically develop and deploy creative energies for greater utility, performance and beneficial outcomes. Taking this background into consideration, the paper aims to advocate for the necessity of policymakers in the continent to create an enabling environment for the creative energies to thrive in the continent through transformative leadership and effective policy mechanisms.

The paper in this respect argues that African policymakers are yet to maintain an impactful understanding of the critical importance of the cultural and creative industries in economic development. In this direction, the paper further argues that a visible lack of understanding of the role of the creative sector in economic development, enterprise building, security, international diplomacy, education, engineering, design and technology has left us with decades of misinformed interpretation of the creative and cultural industries as soft

tissues of national life and not a key player in national development.

Notwithstanding the strides of ambitious creative scenes in the continent such as the case of Nigeria's Nollywood in pushing new frontiers of economic development and contribution to the national purse, the generality of continental Africa's approach to cultural policy (outside perhaps the case of South Africa which has a better-defined scope of interpretation arising in no small measure from the role of the arts and artists in the apartheid struggle and the concomitant application of tourism as a critical source of income to the state) is driven by a colonial skill set that has since been abandoned by many nations including those who imposed it on different African states during the colonial era. The arts have taken a new standing and identity in the 21st century. It is no longer art for art's sake but rather nations have come to increasing awareness that tied to their survival and critical to their survival is the need to actively incorporate the arts and creative energies into how society operates. The cultural and creative sectors which include fields in the arts, design, film, technology, fashion, architecture, entertainment, and heritage are increasingly recognized for their services and support to human advancement (Palanivel, 2019). Their cumulative impact on changing the dynamics in the global creative market is exerting impact on local situations in developing societies including the ones in Africa (Haines, Lutshaba, Shelver, 2018). A new idea of a creative economy that works in partnership with the emerging knowledge economy has now been widely recognized as possessing the potentials to transform societies and have actually transformed many (Levickaite, 2011; Schlesinger, 2016). This is clearly reflected in the quality of policymaking around the creative fields as well as the breath of interest in cultural governance institutions. It is therefore the objective of this paper to articulate the need to review policy mechanisms in African countries in order to effectively develop and deploy the abundant creative energies in the continent and engage the Black diaspora for maximum productivity leading to a positive impact on livelihoods in the nations.

Defining Creative Energies

Creative Energies represents the fulcrum of artistic and creative resources that are available in the society. They can be classified into the various streams of artistic and creative endowments available in a society as well as the human resources committed to livelihoods and practice in those fields. The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines creative energy as "having the ability or power to create" or a set of activity and engagement "characterized by originality of thought or inventiveness." In line with this definition, our understanding and usage of the concept of creative energies apply to the existing artistic and creative resources in terms of the personnel working in the creative sector in Africa and the diaspora. African creative energies are the people who make up the cultural and creative sector and define the daily operation of the sector whether from an organized or private context. The creative industries

as a concept fall into the emerging trope of economic and sociopolitical thinking about the arts as sources of capital, new markets, employment, and productivity (Laycock, 2008; Moore, 2016; Flew, 2017). Our concern in this paper is to link the creative industries with the workers and stakeholders (herein referred to as creative energies) with the functioning of this sector in sub-Saharan Africa. It is these creatives that policymakers need to create policies that can enhance their effective functioning within their individual or collective arts and creative spaces.

The Link between Policy and Creative Practice

The practice of different sectors and disciplines thrives on the existence of a policy mechanism or template that guides how things are done. This is a traditional trajectory in the history of productivity and development. Policy acts as a guide, a direction, a frame of reference, a binocular of seeing things, and how ideas are applied. In the context of creative practice, policy is also a vital necessity and constitute an important resource that provides direction to practitioners in the sector. Many nations, regional bodies and economic zones have come to realize the need for cultural policy or policy of creative practice and have instituted them to guide how work is done in the cultural and creative sector. The European Union for example has a guideline that informs various levels of creative engagement in the areas of research, development, fieldwork, studio practice, and use of intellectual property and of artistic and creative products (European Commission Report, 2018). Although United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) admits that “many developing countries still lack the environment or regulatory frameworks needed to support the emergence of dynamic cultural and creative sectors”, there are some countries in the developing world including some African countries notably South Africa that have well-defined policy documents that provide insights into how the arts, culture and heritage sector should operate. As of today, South Africa has managed to draft several White Papers that have passed through different levels of debates, review and awaiting final ratification. A listing of the white papers includes White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (1996), Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (2015), Draft Revised Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (2016), Executive Summary for the Revised White Paper AC&H (2017) and Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage 4th Draft (2017) (Department of Arts and Culture, 2019). Even the City of Cape Town in South Africa’s Western Cape region has its own Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy (World Cities Culture Forum, 2020). Many other African countries have policy documents on culture and the arts that either do not speak clearly to the needs of the cultural and creative sector in their countries or were actually borrowed from other cultural settings without sensitivity to the context at home. Policy documents like this seem to be in the majority in African countries and have been extensively

exploited by foreign interests to pillage the arts, cheat culture workers and even poach important artefacts and biodiversity out of African countries. The failure of policy is a major factor in the dismal positioning of the cultural and creative sector in Africa (Inyang, 2016). There is therefore an urgent need to revisit the issue of the functionality of cultural policy in African art and creative practice policy as a key factor in the operation of the creative field in the continent.

Existing Policies for Cultural and Creative Sectors

The global cultural and creative sectors are expected to operate on the basis of the existing policy documents in the sector. These include the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) and the UNESCO Global Report titled *Re/Shaping Cultural Policies: Advancing Creativity for Development* (2018). The 2005 Convention was ratified by many parties to the convention in 2007, a landmark development that registers its popular acceptance and considered relevant to the development of the world community. The direction provided for the cultural and creative sectors in the 2005 Convention enunciates broad areas of focus geared towards the development of the sector. These objectives clearly outline the need to:

- Support sustainable systems of governance for culture to implement policies and measures that are based on informed, transparent and participatory processes;
- Achieve a balance flow of cultural goods and services and increase the mobility of artists and professionals through preferential treatment measures for countries from the global south;
- Integrate culture as a strategic dimension of sustainable development frameworks including international development assistance programmes and national development plans;
- Promote human rights and fundamental freedoms as a pre-requisite for the creation and distribution of diverse cultural expressions through support for gender equality and artistic freedom (UNESCO, 2018:2).

The position of UNESCO and that of the participating countries in the 2005 Convention presents a clear picture of how culture implicates development and therefore should be factored into development planning in nations. The 2018 Global Report is a structural review of the 2005 Convention with the added perspective of the changing context of cultural and creative practice in the 21st Century. As rightly noted during the launch of the report, the Global Report is an analysis (every four years) of the periodic reports submitted by the parties to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of

Cultural Expressions (2005). According to UNESCO: “These country reports provide qualitative and quantitative information on policies and measures governments have taken to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions at both the national and international level.” What we further learn from this report is that:

It provides evidence of how the 2005 Convention continues to re/shape cultural policies around the world, **providing guidance for policymakers as they address the challenges faced by the cultural and creative industries today**. The Report also provides **evidence of how implementing the 2005 Convention also helps to achieve the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda** (Emphasis mine) (UNESCO, 2018:3).

Taking the emphasized portions of the quotation above, it is clear that policymakers have an important role to play in not only ensuring the achievement of the goals of the 2005 Convention but also that it is incumbent on them to ensure that the challenges faced by the cultural and creative industries are addressed through the formulation of enabling policies. It is left to be seen whether African policymakers have carried out this duty with an enhanced understanding of the UNESCO policy protocols as well as an informed knowledge of local cultural realities. This is where we need to re-emphasize the implication of policy as the fulcrum of the effective functioning of the cultural and creative sector in Africa. But before we draw some of our conclusions, it is pertinent to examine the African Union’s agenda on culture and the creative industries.

The African Union (AU) position on culture and the creative industries is guided by the Dakar Plan of Action (1992) which was developed out of the exigencies of UNESCO’s declaration of a World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1987) and the Treaty of Abuja which led to the inauguration of the African Economic Community (Protocol on Culture and African Cultural Common Market: Article 70, Charter XII: Education, Training, and Culture). This Plan of Action has been reviewed severally since its first drafting in 1993 including a 2005 review in preparation for the 1st Pan-African Congress and 5th Conference of African Ministers of Culture. The AU’s central position on culture is well captured in the statement that:

Culture can contribute to bringing together what politics as separated as well as to the hastening and consolidation of the process of restructuring in the economic field. On the other hand, cultural action can develop properly on a solid material and economic basis and it cannot be separated from the socio-economic reality, which constitutes its backbone.

This in essence points to the underpinning positioning of culture as both a tool of societal cohesion and economic sustainability. The African Union in stating this raises the issue of the critical imperative of leveraging on culture not only to act as a unifier but also as a touchstone of economic survival. Given this context, the role of policymaking though not expressly emphasized but a reading of the tone of this submission by the central policy mechanism in the continent that the AU represents points obviously to the role of policymakers in building the blocks of cultural and creative renaissance in the continent. The instrumentality of the cultural and creative sector as critical to Africa's development aspiration led to a further review and updating of the AU Plan of Action. This produced the Nairobi Plan of Action for the Development of Cultural Industries (2005). According to the African Union (AU), the "development of the socio-economic context (of African cultural and creative sector) in the space of a decade" and "The emergence in the international arena of free exchange, accelerating the conditions of movement of cultural goods and products, as well as the difficulties of African economies confronted with the WTO" (AU, 2017:13) is critical to the realization of AU's Agenda 2063. As exemplified in the various Action Plans that guide the AU in cultural policy in the continent, the argument against a lack of apparatus for cultural and creative sector guidance is clearly out of the question. What needs to be examined remains the actual instrumentality of this cultural policy in the universe of arts and culture practice in the continent. It is also expedient to probe whether all the countries of Africa in keeping with the standard set by the AU are able to conceive of a cultural policy that adequately addresses the needs of the cultural and creative environment in their countries. This is why it becomes necessary at this juncture to review the Cultural policy environment in Africa.

The Policy Environment for the Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa

The African cultural and creative environment is yet to fully benefit from strong policy formulation, practice, and application protocols except for a few bright spots in the continent. There are obvious deficits in the application of cultural policy to the actual practice of the cultural and creative industries (Schultz & van Gelder, 2012). What is currently the norm is an unbalanced atmosphere of operation with many gaping holes for open exploitation. Schultz & van Gelder (2012:13) support their observation with a lamentable detail that lies at the heart of years of a cultural policy vacuum:

Africa's musicians are crying out for help, often quite literally. In recent years, they have taken to the streets seeking redress for the failure of their countries' legal systems to support creative activity effectively. The news brings reports of African musicians resorting

to noisy street protests and personal confrontations with pirates in Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Botswana, and Swaziland They contend that their livelihoods are being destroyed by rampant piracy, corruption and the non-collection or diversion of royalties.

The core problem relating to cultural policy and the role of the policymakers in the development of the creative sector in most African countries is that many African countries are yet to subscribe to nor ratify international conventions on cultural and creative expressions (CIPESA, 2015). Moreover, many African countries have very minimal if not outrightly negligible understanding and respect for the cultural and creative industries hence do not feature them in their constitution or where they are featured it is not in a sense that demonstrates an understanding of its role in the society. CIPESA Report (2015) cites a 2013 report of ArtWatch Africa to support its findings. According to the report:

In Africa, various factors impact upon these freedoms – including political, religious, social-economic, and cultural issues. According to the ArtWatch Africa 2013 report on Monitoring Freedom of Creative Expression, national constitutions, laws, regional and international conventions of which African countries are signatories support cultural rights. However, while some national constitutions expressly protect arts and creativity, others only “implicitly” refer to the sector through guaranteeing the rights to freedom of expression or cultural life.

Policy deficit to a great extent impinges on the capacity of legal systems to defend the cultural and creative industries because laws function out of the existing regulatory framework. Where there are no policies, the law becomes incapacitated. This is the core challenge in the African cultural and creative environment. The onus, therefore, lies on the policymakers to rise up to the task of protecting the creative and cultural industries in Africa through the right policies because “For the creative industries to prosper, the legal and business environment must be supportive” (Schultz & Van Gelder, 2012: 13). Bringing to light the self-defeating condition under which artists and creative people work in the continent should rightly constitute a timely wake-up call for policymakers to do something. When a nation fails to appreciate the arts and heritage of the country and demonstrates this failure of understanding in jettisoning its mention in the constitution, a key document that guides how the nations operate, then there is serious cause for concern.

There is also the problem of the absence of monitoring mechanism for ascertaining

whether countries that subscribe to international treaties and conventions on the cultural and creative industries have implemented them in accordance with the stipulations of the conventions. Monitoring and evaluation is critical to the development of every field and yet retain the status of the least area of interest in the cultural and creative sector in many countries in Africa. Political players even take advantage of this existing gap by misappropriating allocations to the creative sector knowing that there is no capacity for monitoring in the sector. Therefore, we often see a situation where bogus budget allocations are made to the arts and culture ministry or department in many African countries but without later evidence to indicate that such amount was invested to back the reality on ground. There is also the issue of protecting the rights and welfare of artists and cultural workers in the continent. This appears a serious area of negligence that leaves the sector with declining interest by young persons to take a career in the arts because there are no incentives for the artist's welfare. It is common to see many prominent artists who contributed to the sector become completely abandoned by the government when they become sick with terminal diseases and need support for medical attention abroad. Most artists and cultural workers in the public sector are paid a very paltry salary that leaves them in poverty. Multinational arts organizations also take advantage of the policy and regulatory gaps in most African countries to exploit artists and professionals working in the creative industries.

Some Suggestions for Policymakers

The overall objective of cultural policy should aim to address issues related to core areas of cultural and creative operations including culture as a development tool, cultural and creative production on digital platforms, indigenous foundations of culture and creativity, the welfare of artists and cultural workers, gender issues in the culture and creative sector, creative and artistic mobility, governance of culture, foreign transactions and relations in the cultural and creative sector, cultural and creative education planning among other areas. Having identified these fields of concern, it is pertinent to further explore them and in the process link them to the critical role that policymakers can play in enhancing fruitful engagement in the sector.

Culture and Development

Culture's primary tool is to express a people's identity and therefore justify their historical standing within a given geographical construct. Set within that objective of creating a central location for the discovery of the self within the trajectory of the others, culture, and creativity whether in Africa and or other societies is fundamentally a resource for societal development. Culture has to be understood and expressed within the measures of this understanding away from the limited view common and prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa as only the tradition and customs of the land. Culture is more than that. It also operates in much broader space than

that tenuous localization in a customary *cul de sac*. It is true that aspects of a people's culture include traditions, customs and norms that are sacred and located within a highly revered space within the will and cosmo-vision of the society however it must also be understood that inside of those cultural norms are gems of development that can be tapped as an instrument of mobilizing the people to realize their potentials individually and collectively. This is the implicating role of culture and local creativity as a tool of development especially because it is well established in the society's consciousness, it is laden with attributes that a greater majority of the people are familiar with and can also speak in the language that ordinary people and almost everyone in the community can understand. Leaving indigenous culture and creativity in the silos of tradition is not in the interest of the vast majority of African societies and this to a great extent denies our people the opportunity to tap from, apply and engage culture to solve contemporary problems which they are well able to do. Policymakers have a duty to integrate this understanding of culture into the way they create policies that guide the society. At the forefront of developing the cultural and creative sector should be a clearly expressed modulation of policy to cover the role of culture in societal development. The cultural and creative sectors have to be included in the constitution of African countries and their role as sources of development thinking carefully crafted and expressed in the constitution.

Cultural and Creative Production on Digital Platforms

The future of culture is in technology. This may be considered a bit provocative when culture is considered from a limited definitive angle of the way of life of the people. But it is true in a number of ways because culture originated from technology. Remember that the very foundation of culture is traceable to man's search for the self, meaning in space and within an explorative technological aspiration that introduced him to early science of fire making, implements making, basic engineering and conservation. Therefore, culture should not be distanced from technology whether it is in its current expression as information technology and artificial intelligence. They have a role to play in the understanding and expression of culture here in Africa. With the incremental transformation in the digital world, there is going to exist a critical need for people especially young people to express themselves culturally and creatively on digital platforms. While this has to be accepted as the new way of cultural expression, the onus is on policymakers to come up with adequate regulatory frameworks to guide the expression of indigenous culture and creativity and especially to define the benchmark of intellectual property exploitation in the creative industries without infringing on the norms and trademarks of indigenous arts and creativity. I am often a bit taken aback by an advertisement by a multinational telecommunication company in Nigeria on television that says he who brings data brings life. That message rings in my ears the traditional proverb of a

certain ethnic group in Nigeria that says he who brings kola nut, brings life. Is this normal or is there a wholesale or some level of infringement of the intellectual property of that ethnic group in the advert? Effective policymaking should provide direction on where to draw the line between culture, creativity and indigenous culture.

Indigenous Foundations of Culture and Creativity

The foundations of culture represent the life wire of cultural expression. Where culture originates from, the original informing ideas about a particular culture, the guiding philosophies of artistic and creative expression, the personalities and legendary progenitors of the cultural expression, the norms, practices and the well-defined material and non-material notions that protects the culture needs to be properly contextualized as a means of the protection and promotion of the sanctity of cultural expression in a given society (Inyang, 2016). One of the major challenges of contemporary African cultural existence is that most people that interface with indigenous culture only pick what they want and are not interested in the original source. For example, we often hear of iconic African fashion pieces or ideas that have been adapted and presented in an international exhibition in the West or in Asia without the full complement of the acknowledgment of its source(s). This should not continue to happen. This is where policymaking matters as a regulatory mechanism that protects how culture and the creative industries are engaged. Our young people exist in a massive knowledge lacuna informed by interest in traditional art and creativity without adequate exposure to the dynamics of its emergence and context. Policymakers have to change this trend by enacting requisite laws that protect the indigenous foundations of culture and creativity because they don't just happen. All cultures and arts exist in a context and are propelled by ideas that transcend time.

The Welfare of Artists and Culture Workers

Artists and culture workers as already noted elsewhere in this paper are the lowliest paid persons within the public or private sectors. Some African countries have actually stigmatized careers in the arts and entertainment to the extent that most young persons are blatantly discouraged by their parents from pursuing education or careers in the arts because of fear that they will be poor and disrespected in the society. The issue of poor emolument and lack of incentives to encourage reasonable career progression in the cultural and creative sector is like a recurring decimal. Outside the growing encouraging gains by practitioners in the film and music industry purely out of personal and entrepreneurial ingenuity for example in Nigeria's Nollywood film sector, there is yet to exist a properly defined mechanism of compensation and professional fees in a majority of African creative and cultural industries in the continent. With the exception of few cases in Southern and North Africa, a greater

percentage of artists and professionals in the creative and cultural industries survive on handouts and large-scale exploitation by both local and international investors in the sectors is common. The imperative of a cultural policy framing that takes the welfare of artists and cultural workers into consideration is a considerably significant area needing attention by policymakers.

Gender Issues in the Culture and Creative Sector

Gender issues have taken a central position in the discourse of societal functioning, especially in the twenty-first century. There is therefore a serious need to factor in gender issues into how cultural policy is farmed. While understanding that most societies already have well-established structures of gender management in the operation of their cultural and creative institutions, there is still a critical need to sustain public awareness and interest in gender issues and especially the imperative of protecting women and children from all forms of abuses within the industry.

Creative and Artistic Mobility

Artistic mobility needs to become an active juncture of the cultural and creative sectors in Africa. Currently, this aspect of the creative arena has not functioned within expectations. The foundation laid by earlier cultural festivals including the First World Festival of Negro Arts (1966), the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC, 1977) and existing Pan-African cultural fiestas should have built incremental opportunities for artists, culture workers, professionals, troupes to traverse the continent to exchange ideas, networking and building new bridges using the creative industries. The current environment of the cultural and creative industries does not encourage integration and mobility within the continent rather economic and neo-colonial sentiments push many artists and artistic institutions in many African countries to go more to the highly developed parts of the world instead of travelling within the continent. We need legislation and cultural agreements and treatise that encourages the mobility of artists and cultural services within the continent. Policymakers have a critical role in bridging the existing gap through Pan-African policy input that encourages pan-continental mobility within the creative industries that will eventually foster relations, create jobs and open new opportunities for arts as a tool of cultural diplomacy. The Black diaspora should be seriously integrated into the creative and cultural sector in the continent. Their perspective and input will certainly contribute to the development of the sector and also create a veritable platform in sustaining their cultural connection and spiritual link with the mother continent. Black professionals and experts in the creative industries should be encouraged to come and take up positions of responsibility in the cultural institutions in the continent.

Governance of Culture

The governance of culture needs to be strengthened within the continent. While there are stronger systems of cultural governance in some countries, many African countries retain very weak cultural governance systems. The administration of culture and the management of the cultural and creative sectors in most parts of the continent still suffices on colonial legacies that are detrimental to the realization of contemporary objectives and the sustainable functioning of arts management institutions. In Nigeria for example, the various Arts and Culture Boards or Centres for Arts and Culture are some of the most poorly managed and often neglected organs of the public cultural sector. Redundancy, decayed infrastructure or non-existent infrastructures such as theatres, studios and creative spaces pile high into a demotivated system that often leaves once vibrant artists and culture workers discouraged and disenchanting. This needs to stop through the appropriate application of practical policymaking that locates the cultural and creative sector in a significant place of public focus and activity.

Foreign Transactions and Relations in the Culture and Creative Sector

As already noted earlier, the practice of inappropriate exploitation of African arts and creativity traceable to pre-independence era and currently needs to be resisted with appropriate legal and policy frameworks. African countries can benefit from their arts in many ways, yet this can only happen where a system of regulated interaction of foreign interest in our creative and cultural industries is promoted. The arts are powerful economic value chains in most parts of the world. This is because there strong mechanisms in place that protect and guides how foreign direct investment in the cultural and creative sectors is conducted. We need to move from having just paper documents representing our cultural policies to actually setting up the structure to protect our arts, ideas and biodiversity against all forms of international encroachment and poaching.

Culture and Creative Education Planning

Culture takes a new life when it is transferred to the next generation. The future of culture is in its presence in the communities of the future represented by the young people. Culture and the creative sector have already suffered untold hardship for so many years in Africa through systemic neglect, stigmatization and absence in the training programmes of the young ones in our societies. There is therefore an urgent need to integrate culture and creative education drawn from our indigenous knowledge systems into the curriculum of schools at all levels of education in African countries (Akwang & Inyang, 2018). African policymakers have to act fast to stem the tide of decades of acculturation and education from the knowledge system

and the cultural norms of other societies. The current model of formal education that centres learning in a foreign language, using foreign cultural materials and that sets standards of progress with the rules of other cultures is detrimental to the sustenance of our own culture and identity. Add this to the power, penetration and indoctrination of a massive global media from West and recently the East, the future of our indigenous cultures certainly hangs in the balance as our children are exposed to and relate more with foreign cultural images than the local one.

Conclusion

This paper took off from the position of articulating the need for policymakers to contribute to the efficient development and deployment of African creative energies through appropriate cultural policy formulation. They viewed this as central to the realization of the African Union's Agenda 2063 that envisions a greater future for Africa in all spheres including the cultural and creative sector. The paper viewed the negligence of policymakers as impedimental to the realization of the dream of the "Africa we want" and also against the consolidation of Africa's heritage and identity at the challenging crossroads of the 21st century. It, therefore, called on African policymakers to be active facilitators of a renaissance in the protection of the interest of arts and creative practitioners who constitute the creative energies of the continent and in the Black diaspora. The paper drew from a variety of sources and goes ahead to argue that a well-informed cultural policy is critical to the development of not only the creative industries but also the overall economic, political, educational and diplomatic interest of African nations in the 21st century. It is a further position of the paper that neglecting the role of cultural policy works in many ways against the development of vibrant creative industries in the continent. The cultural and creative industries are a relevant field in the context of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR).

African cultural and creative industries have to be repositioned to bring the gains of this new global industrial advancement. This is best factored into the plans and actions of the future from the vantage position of policymaking that anticipates the gains, the challenges and outlook of this future. The cross inequalities existing in the global cultural and creative environment needs to be urgently addressed with a great deal of commitment by all concerned. However, African policymakers have to, first of all, put their houses in order by mustering the commitment and political will to settle down to create an enabling environment of practice through formulating policies that protect local interests and promotes confidence in the heart of those showing interest in African arts and creative industries from outside. This will require sustained investments in gathering the necessary data that will detail a clear understanding of what constitutes the creative sector in the first place because most African policymakers are not familiar with the sector beyond cultural artefacts and indigenous dance

displays during state functions. All the stakeholders in the sector have to be involved in the processes of research, design and debates leading to the formulation of an accepted cultural policy. There should be a deliberate decision to involve knowledge and perspectives from the local or indigenous bases of the society in order to stem the tide of the regular lacuna of policy driven by top-down approaches that do not make any recourse to the original sources and foundations of national arts and culture which resides in indigenous knowledge systems. The new expressions of the arts and creative energies by young people using digital platforms should be incorporated in policy and the youth involved in the drafting of such policies.

A template for the incorporation of arts and creative production on digital platforms already exists in both the UNESCO and AU Action Plan. Policymakers need to explore the creative energies of the young people in our different countries and integrate their creative thought into how the cultural and creative sectors operate. A well designed and articulated policy framework will certainly go a long way to reposition African cultural and creative industries for global competitiveness and local impact.

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