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**Cultural Diplomacy and National Development: A
Study of the Nigerian Entertainment Industry**

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Abstract

Recent scholarship in international relations, particularly foreign policy discourse has focused attention on the increasing interface between cultural diplomacy and national development. This has become necessary in view of the growing level of involvement of individuals and institutions other than traditional diplomats in promoting diplomacy across different societies and sectors. Indeed,

unlike formal diplomacy, cultural diplomacy has become a subtle method of engagement in contemporary international relations. It is on this score that this study investigates how cultural exchanges in the Nigerian entertainment industry engender development of that key sector. The study argues that the Nigerian artistes are not just singers or actors but are also representatives of Nigeria who act as pseudo-ambassadors by projecting Nigeria and Africa in their works, thus attracting development to the country and the continent. The study uses both primary and secondary data alongside a detailed historical, analytical and descriptive method to test the impact of the Nigerian entertainment industry on Nigeria's national development. Findings indicate that, while cultural diplomacy promotes Nigeria's image and international cooperation, it also enhances national development with income gotten from foreign investors and tourists. The study concludes that cultural diplomacy is a valuable, indeed, vital tool for Nigeria to win more friends, get international support, boost its economy and arrive at internal development. It recommends that, cultural values should be taken seriously and regarded as equally important as political and economic structures, as it is a major selling point for many advanced economies. Furthermore, adequate and substantial funding should be channelled to the preservation and development of the Nigerian culture.

Key words: Cultural Diplomacy, National Development, Foreign Policy, Nigerian Entertainment Industry

Introduction

Cultural diplomacy is a soft spot of diplomacy that arguably has more influence than formal diplomacy in contemporary International Relations. Apparently, the promotion of foreign cultures in several countries of the world has been very beneficial and this has helped in attracting tourists and supporting economic ventures, especially trade and foreign investment. Many leaders of the Third World countries who studied in Western countries have unconsciously become agents of cultural values of those countries. To be sure, this includes areas

such as music, movies and literature which serve as effective weapons of cultural diplomacy (Asobele, 2002).

The inherent hospitable nature of Africans to other people makes diplomacy essentially an African culture. In effect, the Nigerian musicians and actors have shown to the global society that they understand the full import of Nigeria's new diplomatic position, which is citizen-centered diplomacy. Musicians like Sunny Okosun, Onyeka Onwenu, Chris Hanen, Majek Fashek and Ras Kimono have immortalized the need for total eradication of colonialism, racism, and apartheid in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and Azania (South Africa), when they sang "Fire in Soweto", "Winnie Mandela", "Free Mandela, Margret Thatcher". Musicians are cultural workers and their contribution to Nigeria's foreign policy is immense. Indeed, our musicians and actors have contributed largely in projecting Nigeria's cultural heritage abroad (Asobele, 2002).

In essence, the objective of Nigeria's cultural diplomacy is essentially to make friends, expose and convert other nations to the values Nigeria cherishes and her cultural patrimony. The Nigerian cultural diplomacy therefore seeks to make other nations of the world take notice of Nigeria and by establishing friendship; there would be an atmosphere of understanding between Nigeria and other members of the international community, which would in turn foster cooperation and development. Cultural exchange and communication between Nigeria and other countries of the world can go a long way in defending Nigeria's cultural values, furthering Nigeria's national interest and also fostering national development (Asobele, 2002, p.4).

It is against this background that the study thoroughly examines how the activities of the Nigerian entertainment sector can positively affect national development. The paper is divided into five sections. After the introductory part, basic concepts are explained. This is followed by discussion of the history, advent and development of cultural diplomacy in Nigeria. The fourth section bridges the gap between cultural diplomacy and national development in Nigeria, with special

emphasis on the entertainment industry, while the last section concludes the study.

Conceptual Discourse

Key concepts in the study are identified and clarified with a view to creating a synergy in the course of the discourse and to avoid ambiguities.

Culture

Culture is the shared beliefs, values, customs, practices and social behavior of a particular nation or people. These shared beliefs and practices identify where these people belong. Taylor (1971, p.4) defined culture as “that complex whole, which includes shared ideas, knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” He contended that, though culture is something that cannot be seen, heard, smelled, touched, or tasted; it has been in continuous existence for years. Incidentally, culture is very real, and so important that without it, human societies would be quite impossible.

Green (1972, p.13) argues that culture is not planned; how people act and behave is fostered and limited by the specific culture within which they live. He stressed that, culture is the sum total of a people’s response to the environment and this gauges their ability to change and respond to the dynamics of change. Broadly speaking, culture is:

The totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization, thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours. It comprises material, institutional, philosophical and creative aspects (Chibundu, 2009, p. 63).

For Stark (1987:33), Culture is a complex way of living that humans have developed, that they pass on from one generation to the next. Culture is used to identify people depending on what the people

believe, know, and how they communicate. Bates and Julian (1967), as cited in Babawale (2007, p.10), argue that considerable parts of culture are the ideas that bear directly or indirectly on behavior, and these ideas can be sustained and kept alive only by social behavior. Culture changes as a result of the inevitable departures of actual behavior from what culture prescribes. Culture is a combination of the material and immaterial tools, artwork and work of art of a people and the knowledge accumulated by them. The summation and refinement of the past that provides a sound basis for living in the present and projecting into the future is culture. Therefore, in comparing man in relation to other forms of life, culture becomes his primary ‘means of survival and adaptation’ (Babawale, 2007, p.7). On this note, Ayandele describes culture as “what man interposes between himself and his environment in order to ensure his security and survival;” (cited in Babawale, 2007, p.8).

In essence, culture entails all that people have learned and preserved from past collective experience. The value, volume and complexity of culture grow with time, even though some parts of it are lost or discarded in the process. Culture is self-regulatory as it largely controls and guides social behavior. As a shared, learned, symbolic system of values, beliefs and attitudes culture shapes and influences perception and behavior and the way we carry out our affairs.

Diplomacy

Diplomacy is a strategy through which states achieve their national interests and it is one of the oldest tools of foreign policy. The quality of diplomacy of a given state is instrumental to the pursuit of its interests in the international arena. As cited in Akindele & Ate (2000, p.15), Morgenthau (1973) sees diplomacy as the art of bringing the different elements of national power to bear with maximum effect upon those points in the international situation which concern the national interest most directly. Ernst (1982) defines diplomacy as “the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between governments of independent states” (cited in Onuoha, 2008).

Hence, intelligence and insight are the major ingredients for the proper conduct of diplomacy.

Diplomacy usually begins with bargaining, either directly or indirectly in a bid to reach agreement on an issue. This could be done through subtle means, or openly and is usually reciprocal. Diplomacy involves bargaining and negotiations and these are both somewhat of a culture-bound activity. Sharp (1999) as cited in Onuoha (2008) also defined diplomacy as “a discrete human practice constituted by the explicit construction, representation, negotiation and manipulation of necessarily ambiguous identities”. Diplomacy is the means by which states through their formal and other representatives, articulate, coordinate and secure particular or wider interests, using correspondence, private talks, exchanges of views and culture, lobbying, visits, threats and other related activities (Barston, 2006:1).

Chris Landsberg (2010) distinguishes between the specific meaning of diplomacy, distinct from foreign policy and the more generic meaning in which the concept is used interchangeably with foreign policy. According to him, in the former case, diplomacy refers to the output side of the process, or the means and instruments used to achieve goals, whereas foreign policy connotes the input side, or stated aims to be pursued; while in the latter instance, diplomacy may involve the entire foreign policy relations process of a country – agenda setting, policy formulation and policy execution – in which case a nation’s diplomacy and foreign policy are the same. In this study, the generic meaning of diplomacy is applied and the concepts of diplomacy and foreign policy are used interchangeably, even though occasionally, this distinction may be apparent.

Foreign Policy

Sometimes, states need the active cooperation and even the assistance of other states in the international system to achieve their national objectives; hence a state has to continually be in communication with its external environment. This communication is referred to as foreign policy. Both the primary and secondary interests of states are important in international relations because they form the raw material

that the foreign policy of a state is made from. Once formulated, an ideal foreign policy contains a selection of national interests which have been judged against each other according to their level of priority and the potential of the state to achieve them (Oche, 2000).

Foreign Policy according to Frankel (1967) as cited in Ojo & Amadu (2002) “consists of decisions and actions which involve to some appreciable extent, relations between one state and others”. It is generally believed that the manner of the formulation and implementation of a nation’s foreign policy is considerably influenced by the nature of its culture. Dorothy Pickles (1968:187) in supporting Legg & Morrison (1971) argues that foreign policy implies “a stated set of attitudes towards the international environment, an implicit or explicit plan about a country’s relationship with the outside world”, “a conscious image of what is or ought to be the country’s place in the world, or some general guiding principles or attitudes determining or influencing decisions on specific issues” (cited in Ojo & Amadu, 2002).

Aig-Imokhuede (1991) defines Foreign Policy as “the articulated strategy by which national interest is extended worldwide for the control of the world’s resources” (p. 1). Foreign Policy can also be seen as a strategy with which institutionally designated decision-makers seek to manipulate the international environment in order to achieve certain national objectives. Foreign policy helps countries to understand the international environment and guides them to make better and more intelligent choices especially in the face of several alternatives. Foreign policy affects territorial proximity of states in that it identifies ways of regulating relationships between states to ensure that the territorial sovereignty of states are respected since states must interact. It also offers the opportunity of socio-economic cooperation, as well as political and diplomatic relations to states (Thompson & Macridis, 1962; Macpherson, 1996; Zimako, 2009).

National Development

Development is critical and essential to the sustenance and growth of any nation. Development is usually associated with positive changes

or growth. It involves changes in social, political, economic and physical structures of man which give rise to both qualitative and quantitative changes. National development is an umbrella term which is used to refer to a situation where we can sufficiently utilize our various resources, whether human or natural with the aim of benefiting from such resources to the fullest. It is a situation where people harness the resources at their disposal to have a meaningful life (Bamidele, 1999). On his part, Goulet (1971) saw development as freeing men from nature's servitudes, from economic backwardness and oppressive technological institutions, unjust class structures and political exploiters, and also cultural and psychic alienation. Therefore national development can be described as the overall development of a collective socio-economic, political, as well as religious advancement of a country.

Amucheazi (1980:4) states that "Development is a multi-dimensional process involving the totality of man in his political, economic, psychological, social relations, among others". For Okigbo (1983), National Development should embrace political, economic, educational, technological and cultural changes. He contends that National Development also connotes the process through which a state or society improves its standard of living not only materially but also the realm of its value system. Chrisman (1984), as cited in Lawal & Abe (2011) views development as a process of societal advancement, where improvement in the well-being of people is generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. It is therefore reasonable to know that development is not only an economic exercise, but also involves both socio-economic and political issues and pervades all aspects of societal life.

Adesina et al (1988) views the concept of development as the gradual expansion of available facilities and resources both quantitatively and qualitatively so as to produce a better and greater state. This is indicative of the fact that there is progress from one stage to another, characterized by better resource allocation and utilization and greater

effectiveness. Adnan (1991:5) conceive of development as a multi-dimensional process in which the non-economic dimensions are at least as important as the economic dimensions and it involves achieving a number of objectives such as growth and equity at the same time.

Sen (2000) argued that development should be seen as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy instead of the narrow views of the concept, which identify development with the growth of gross national product, or with the rise in personal incomes, or with industrialization, or with technological advancement, or with social modernization. According to him, development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over-activity of repressive states. In short he asserted that:

The ends and means of development call for placing the perspective of freedom at the centre of the stage. The people have to be seen, in this perspective, as being actively involved – given the opportunity – in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programmes (p.53).

From these definitions, it is evident that achieving national development, to a large extent, is hinged on people's ability to liberate themselves from oppressive forces of nature and rely on attitudes, and institutions - economic, social, political as well as cultural that will help transform and revitalize their value systems.

History, Advent and Development of Cultural Diplomacy in Nigeria

Diplomacy is essentially an African culture, because it involves hosting, reception, friendliness to other people and the use of cultural items as gifts such as beads, kola nuts, cloths, salt, cowries, and animals – in short, hospitality. This is often witnessed in the

traditional Yoruba diplomacy, and Olaniyan (1993) agreed with the position when he argued that

the Oyo-Yoruba were sticklers for Protocol. In their palaces, Kakaki players, *asunrara* (praise singers) and drummers played an important role. They served as receptionists to visiting dignitaries providing pomp and pageantry. They would announce the arrival of visitors to the Oba by reciting the visitor's *oriki* (Praise names), thus preparing the king for the arrival of important visitors (p. 14).

The Oyo Kingdom with a Province in Abomey extended to parts of present day Benin Republic, which explains why both provinces have enjoyed diplomatic relations, especially in form of marriage. Just like the Hausa states, the Oyo Kingdom traded with North Africa. They traded goods like Kola nuts, textiles, and steelworks from Oyo weavers and black smiths and in return, cultural items like glassware, leather goods and sacks were imported from the north into Oyo. Some Hausa ambulant traders went as far as Dakar and Bangui where they spoke the native languages of their clients and took wives whom they in turn taught their Nigerian tongue (Olaniyan, 1993).

Thus today, we find a colony of Hausa-speaking Muslims in Kaolack, Senegal whose language of communication remains Hausa. Another existence of cultural diplomacy in Africa is that between the Yorubas and Tapa where the Oyo Yoruba, the Egbas and the Isale Eko people still perform the Nupe Igunuko Masquerades. Furthermore, Nigerians have also succeeded in re-exporting the Islamic religion to Senegal. The Ajele slaves who were loyal to the Obaro of Kabba were usually sent as Ambassadors of the throne to the vassals. The Ilaris were also trusted descendants of slaves who acted as intelligence agents for the royalty (Asobele, 2002).

The objective of Nigeria's cultural diplomacy is therefore to make friends and to draw the attention of other nations to values that Nigeria cherishes. The Americans, the Germans, the French, the

Japanese and the Italians have participated actively in a two-way flow of cultural diplomacy with Nigeria. A diplomatic and cultural phenomenon known as the American Peace Corps was a forerunner of Nigeria's Technical Aid Corp (TAC) where over 20,000 young American graduates participated in 1960. This aided the strengthening of personal and cultural ties between Nigeria and Americans and as such, elements of Nigerian culture are found in far distant areas beyond West Africa such as the Caribbean and in South America (Adefuye, 2011).

Entertainment Industry and Cultural Diplomacy in National Development

There is an inextricable relationship between cultural diplomacy and national development especially in contemporary international system. Indeed, the dynamism and ubiquitous nature of the entertainment sector reinforces this complexity. Let us examine some of the major sectors in the Nigerian entertainment industry for deeper clarifications.

Nigerian Movies and National Development

Film is the most potent weapon by which the identity and character of a nation, its image, its culture, its peculiar sounds and its aspirations and achievements are impressed on minds throughout the world (Asobele, 2002). Film is a transmitter of culture. It helps to preserve the culture of a people from being eroded and this is a focus of implementation of the Nigerian National policy on film article 4(3) c, which states that "film will be produced to protect and promote our rich cultural heritage and our national aspirations in the process of development". In essence, films can be used to popularize and promote government policies and ideologies amongst the masses (Adenugba, 2006).

Following Nigeria's independence in 1960, a film unit was created in the Ministry of Information in Lagos. It was not until 1979, that the National film Corporation of Nigeria was established to produce film for domestic and export purposes (Asobele, 2002). Consequently, in

2009, the former Minister of Information and Communication, Dora Akunyili enlisted Nollywood to serve as part of the then rebranding project (Adefuye, 2011). This unit helped to exhibit documents on Nigeria through her missions abroad. These documentaries were therefore, essentially for external publicity on Nigeria's image crisis abroad.

Prior to the establishment of the National film Corporation of Nigeria in 1979, Nigerian films had been exhibited during the famed Festac' 77 held in Lagos from January to February, 1977. By the 1980s, indigenous Nigerian film producers took their rightful place in the use of cinematography in projecting Nigeria's national cultural identity. Such people include Baba Sala (Moses Olaiya), Dr. Chief Hubert Ogunde, Ola Balogun, Wole Soyinka, Eddy Ugbomah and so on. The premier of *Jaiyesimi* and *Aye* by Chief Hubert Ogunde in the USA in October 1989 was what heralded the use of Nigerian films for international relations. Dr. Ogunde's films and plays were performed around the West African sub-region like in Benin Republic, Ghana, Togo and Ivory Coast. He therefore served as a cultural ambassador in the ECOWAS sub region (Asobele, 2002:25).

The financial and technological rewards that Nigeria can derive from cultural diplomacy using film can be huge. Films are vital in changing people's mentality and thus can serve as a medium of cultural export for Nigeria. In an interview with Kunle Afolayan, he stated that:

A country's name is put in the spotlight for the world to see whenever that country's movies are selected in film festivals all around the world; this makes such a country and its actors very popular (Afolayan, oral interview, 2013).

He also affirmed that the Nigerian film industry projects and promotes the image of the country as CNN and BBC have done a lot of reviews on the Nigerian film industry (Afolayan, 2013). The first Nigerian film festival to be held abroad opened on 3rd December 1984 at the Commonwealth Institute in London, which was the venue of the Film

week. Films like *Bissi Daughter of the River*, *Orun moru*, *Owo L'agba*, *God Dance Man Dance*, *The Mask*, *Sheu Umar*, *Dinner with the Devil Efunsetan*, *Ireke Onibudo*, *Death of a Black President* and *Cockcrow at Dawn* were featured. Furthermore, *Ija Ominira* by Ade Love featured in 1979 Jamboree of films in Moscow (Iwunze, 2011).

Kunle Afolayan, a Nigerian actor and director, who has produced three movies, *The Figurine*, which won five major awards of the African Film Academy and experienced tremendous success in the Nigerian movie theaters; *Phone Swap* and *Irapada* which have also culturally promoted Nigeria, has consistently raised the bar in the Nigerian movie industry. When asked what way his work has been able to positively project the national cultural identity of Nigeria, Kunle Afolayan asserted that:

The language, the theme music, the costumes and the locations of his movies depict the Nigerian culture and who we are as Nigerians and this helps the movies to be more popular in the world than an average Nollywood film (Afolayan, oral interview, 2013).

On the trail-blazing feats of the *Figurine* movie, Kunle Afolayan recounted:

When we shot *Irapada*, it got premiered in London at the London film festival and when we did *Figurine*, *Figurine* travelled both far and wide to film festivals all over the world and we have done *Phone Swap* which has premiered in a lot of places, Amsterdam and so many festivals around the world (Afolayan, oral interview, 2013).

He stated that his aim in producing these movies was for artistic purposes and the need to showcase the Nigerian culture abroad and he hopes to open a new chapter in the Nigerian film industry with the new film he is working on which is set in 1960 at the backdrop of

Nigeria's independence showing where Nigeria is coming from and the part played by the British (Afolayan, 2013).

Nigerian Music and National Development

Just like film, music is the entertainment aspect of culture. It acts as a sort of therapy for both the body and the soul. In some societies and some countries, music is as important as food. It is an effective tool for mobilization against social injustice; a forum for fighting oppression and social inequality. As an illustration, Nigerian musicians like Onyeka Onwenu, Femi Kuti, Sonny Okosun and so on, have used music as a medium to fight oppression in Africa. Fela Kuti has used music to fight oppression and exploitation of the masses in Nigeria and his son Femi Kuti has followed in his footsteps. Music is a prized patrimony in certain parts of the world, especially in Nigeria where it has formed an integral part of the peoples' life. Popular in Nigeria are the Juju, Sakara, Apala and Fuji in Yoruba land; Goge in Northern Nigeria; Highlife in Eastern Nigeria; Funk, Afrobeat and Reggae music (Asobele, 2002a; Asobele, 2002b).

Indeed, Nigerian music has a lot of potentials, a kind of inner power that can be used to project the various aspects of the Nigerian culture to the outside world and Nigerian hits have made enviable sales locally and internationally. The essence of the Black and African peoples' music is still felt far away in the U.S.A, Brazil and Cuba. For instance, the Samba and Rhumba music and dance were contributed by Africans and the Yoruba Bata drums are still used in Cuba. This musical affinity between the Afro-Cubans and the Nigerians was emphasized by Professor Rogelio Martinez Fure, an Afro-Cuban when he visited the Alafin of Oyo in Nigeria in March 1990 (Asobele, 2002a; Asobele, 2002b).

Nigerian music and musicians have also made their mark in world musical scenes. Their performances in recent times by playing in front of a huge crowd of over 50,000 persons in countries like Britain, France, United States of America and Japan have been very impressive. Through their performances, these musicians have

accumulated huge income abroad thus the nation stands to gain substantially in various ways from the music industry and employment opportunities are created. Musicians such as Orlando Julius, Sunny Okosun, Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, Christie Essien-Igbokwe, Terra Kota of the Afro-beat genre have won awards in America, Japan and South Korea. Wale Abiodun, Moses Olaiya, Ayinde Barrister have also popularized Yoruba tunes in America. Fela, Sunny Ade, and Obey are at the top of the chart of Nigerian musicians whose works are played on V.O.A, BBC and France international. I.K. Dairo was awarded an MBE in 1963 by the Queen of England for being a doyen of juju music and for introducing native music to the highest court in the British Empire. Also, Zimbabwe incorporated the lyrics of “Papa’s Land” by Sonny Okosun into its national anthem as a lasting tribute to Nigeria’s efforts in Lancaster house liberation and independence talk of 1978 (Asobele, 2002; Obutu, 2011; Cultural Diplomacy Outlook Report, 2011).

Onyeka Onwenu, who started her music career with “You and I”, in her Album *One Love*, which was released in 1986, is also one of the most celebrated in the Nigerian music industry. She has performed in concerts, solo and jointly, locally and internationally and has also released some albums like *Endless life (1981)*, *For the Love of You (1982)*, *In the Morning Light (1984)*. She also held a duet with Ray Simpson in 1986. In doing all these, she remained true to her culture and language, musically and has since modernized that cultural influence in songs like Iyogogo, Ekwe, Nso Nso, etc, to the delight of old and new fans. She could still be understood and appreciated by the world, and today this style has become the norm (Onwenu, 2013; Asobele, 2002, p. 61). In an interview with Onyeka, She reminisced:

Some of my best works have been about my country Nigeria and songs that promote peace and unity as well as songs that are considered socially critical. The Centenary Song titled *This Land* is currently enjoying massive acceptance on the internet. It was performed with 8 other Nigerian Artistes, Tosin Martins,

Omawunmi, EBEN, J'odie, Zaaki Azaay, AYO, Silver Sadih and Seun Shobo. At the launch of this song in Abuja on February 4 2013, the audience of prominent Nigerians was moved to stand up and sing along, for the love of Nigeria. Politicians who normally don't agree on issues, stood together, singing and affirming their love and loyalty for Nigeria (Onwenu, oral interview, 2013).

Also, Onyeka stated that music and movies are instruments of cultural expression which is Nigeria's identity, and an indicator of Nigeria's existence. To her:

Nigerian Music and Nollywood (Film Industry) have re branded Nigeria in powerful and remarkably positive ways. Nollywood is the second largest film industry in the world and a huge employer of labour. Nigerian Music and Musicians are in high demand across the globe (Onwenu, oral interview, 2013).

She acknowledged that:

Through its Entertainment Industry, the United States of America has succeeded in dominating world culture. Like it or not, American slang, fashion, food and world view are copied and imitated, by others. In Nigeria, Nollywood, acclaimed and celebrated all over has given Nigeria a make-over. Our Musical icons, Fela, Sunny Ade, Tuface, Dbanj, Asa, Nneka, to name a few, have given the country reasons to be proud (Onwenu, oral interview, 2013);

But all these have been achieved without much encouragement from the domestic environment and there has been no deliberate effort to harness it as a diplomatic tool (Onwenu, 2013). She was also of the opinion that, if Government should decide to fully support the creative industry by providing an enabling financial environment, the benefits would be tremendous to the country (Onwenu, 2013).

Another popular and an award-winning Nigerian musician, Femi Kuti who is reputed to be the most travelled musician in Nigeria and has been nominated three times for Grammy Awards, is an asset to the country's cultural sector. He was the first to win the world music and KORA Awards which other Nigerians have tried to win for several years. His works have been targeted to achieve African unity, total eradication of corruption, eradication of poverty, and promotion of African pride (Ohia, 2009). In an interview with Femi Kuti, he stated that Music is doing very well in the country, citing himself, his younger brother and some other stars like Tuface Idibia as examples. When asked if Nigeria has properly used music to desired advantage in realizing its objectives as an African power, Femi Kuti contended that:

Individuals have excelled, but collectively we have still not reached our potential in the sense that we need infrastructures in place especially for the younger generation. The industry involves the whole country, so we're still far back at arriving at our full potential (Kuti, oral interview, 2013).

In his opinion, Nigeria National Culture has already been translated to effective instruments of diplomacy in Africa and beyond, but it is very minimal (Kuti, 2013). He argued that:

If America is famous, it is famous because of its movies and music which they have promoted and projected to the rest of the world that everybody wants to be like them. Take for instance hip hop, everyone wants to be like hip hop artistes because they're promoting it. Even if it is said that the dressing is from prison, they're promoting it and everyone wants to be like them. If Fela is unique for Africa today, it is because he projected African-ness; he projected the African status in the African culture, so he stands out from the rest because he was unique. The rest of the world doesn't want to see copycats,

the rest of the world want to see you for who you are (Kuti, oral interview, 2013).

In his concluding statement, Femi Kuti urged Nigerians to believe in themselves and focus on translating their cultural instruments to national power in Africa and the world, and not try to imitate others (Kuti, 2013).

Conclusion

This paper attempted to situate the Nigerian entertainment industry within the purview of cultural diplomacy and national development. In doing so it argued that, the Nigerian entertainment industry, by informal diplomacy, has not only contributed in promoting Nigeria's rich cultural heritage through music and movies, but has ultimately contributed immensely to the country's political, economic and socio-cultural development. The paper concludes that cultural diplomacy must be perceived as a pivotal medium for the advancement of Nigeria's national interest in the 21st century international politics, while canvassing for a structural and institutional reorganization of the entertainment industry in the country to reflect the ever dynamic and fluid international entertainment architecture.

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