

Challenges Facing Contemporary Nigerian Artists and Prospects for Advancement in Society

Çağdaş Nijeryalı Sanatçıların Karşılaştığı Zorluklar ve Toplumda İlerleme Beklentileri

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Abstract / Özet

The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges facing contemporary Nigerian artists and explore the prospects for advancement in society. This study was necessary due to the multifaceted nature of these challenges, which can be physical, psychological, social, political, or economic. Moreover, these challenges vary among individual artists, making generalizations unreliable. Therefore, a survey research design was employed to examine the extent of these challenges and the prospects for advancement in contemporary Nigerian society. The sample size consisted of 104 professional artists in Anambra State. Data collected using the Challenges of Nigerian Artists Questionnaire (CNAQ) and the Prospects of Advancement of Nigerian Artists Questionnaire (PANAQ) were analyzed using mean scores. Respondents rated items on a four-point scale: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The study revealed that lack of recognition, limited funding, trust deficit between artists and trade agents, inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, and lack of government support were the primary challenges facing Nigerian artists. Conversely, the findings suggested that digitalization, public-private sector partnerships, exposure to skill development programs, awareness creation, international collaboration, and patronage of art works through art collectors could facilitate advancement. Based on these findings, it was recommended that Nigerian artists should leverage digitalization to expand their audience and reach more consumers of art works.

Keywords: Nigerian artists, Challenges, Digitalization, Funding, Prospects

Genişletilmiş Özet

Çağdaş Nijerya toplumunda sanat eserleri, sosyo-kültürel ve politik uyanışın araçları olarak önemli bir rol oynamış ve toplumsal değişimin sembolleri haline gelmiştir. Örneğin, 2023'teki "kötü yönetimin sonu" açlık protestolarında görsel sanatlar (fotoğrafçılık, illüstrasyon, grafik tasarım, resim) ve müzik, hükümetin dikkatini yoksulluğa yol açan politikalara (yakıt sübvansiyonunun kaldırılması ve dövizin birleştirilmesi gibi) çekmede etkili olmuştur. Bu sanatsal aktivizm, hükümeti ulusa hitap etmeye zorlamış ve tarihsel olarak Act Up'ın 1987 "Sessizlik = Ölüm" kampanyası gibi propaganda sanat eserleriyle paralellik göstermiştir. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma çağdaş Nijeryalı sanatçıların karşılaştığı zorlukları ve ilerleme olanaklarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, bu zorluklar bir sanatçıdan diğerine değiştiği ve sanatçı grubu için tam genellemeler olarak varsayılması veya çıkarılması gerektiği için daha da gereklidir. Bu nedenle, çalışmada çağdaş Nijeryalı sanatçıların karşılaştığı zorlukları ve çağdaş Nijerya toplumunda ilerleme olanaklarını bulmak için bir anket araştırma tasarımı kullanılmıştır.

Anambra Eyaletindeki 104 profesyonel sanatçıdan oluşan bir örnekleme gerçekleştirilen anket araştırması, Nijeryalı Sanatçılar Anketi (CNAQ) ve Nijeryalı Sanatçıların İlerleme Beklentileri Anketi (PANAQ) aracılığıyla veri toplamıştır. Katılımcılar, dört puanlık bir ölçekle (Kesinlikle Katılıyorum: 4, Katılıyorum: 3, Katılmıyorum: 2, Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum: 1) maddelere yanıt vermiş ve veriler ortalama kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular; sanatçıların karşılaştığı temel

zorlukların tanınma eksikliği, sınırlı fon, sanatçı-ticaret temsilcileri arasında güven eksikliği, yetersiz altyapı, güvensizlik ve hükümet desteğinin yetersizliği olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. İlerleme olanakları arasında ise dijitalleşme, kamu-özel sektör ortaklıkları, beceri geliştirme programları, farkındalık yaratma, uluslararası iş birliği ve sanat koleksiyoncularının himayesi yer almaktadır.

Ayrıca, 3.12 olan en yüksek ortalama puan, katılımcıların çoğunun sınırlı fonlamanın Nijeryalılar için büyük bir zorluk olduğuna katıldığını göstermektedir. 2.64 olan en düşük ortalama puan ise, katılımcıların en az sayısının hükümet desteği eksikliğinin Nijeryalı sanatçılar için bir zorluk olduğuna katıldığını belirtmektedir. 3.52 olan en yüksek ortalama puan, katılımcıların çoğunun beceri geliştirme programlarına maruz kalmanın Nijeryalı sanatçıların gelişim fırsatlarının sağlanabileceği yollarından biri olduğuna güçlü bir şekilde katıldığını göstermektedir. Buna karşılık, 3.00 olan en düşük ortalama puan, dijitalleşmenin Nijeryalı sanatçıların gelişim fırsatlarının sağlanabileceği yollarından biri olduğuna katılan en az sayıda katılımcı bulunduğunu göstermektedir. 3.28'lik genel ortalama, katılımcılar arasında Nijeryalı sanatçıların gelişim fırsatlarının sağlanabileceği yollar üzerine bir görüş birliği olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu doğrultuda, çalışma Nijeryalı sanatçıların karşılaştığı başlıca zorlukları tanımladı: tanınmama, sınırlı finansman, sanatçılar ve ticaret temsilcileri arasındaki güven eksikliği, yetersiz altyapı, güvensizlik ve hükümet desteğinin olmaması.

Öneriler arasında; sanatçıların küresel görünürlük ve satış potansiyelini artırmak için sosyal medya, dijital sanat pazar yerleri ve kişisel web siteleri gibi platformları kullanarak dijitalleşmeyi benimsemesi bulunmaktadır. Temel dijital becerilerin geliştirilmesi, etkili çevrimiçi pazarlama için kritik öneme sahiptir. Kamu ve özel sektör işbirlikleri, finansman, eğitim ve yeni pazarlara erişim sağlayabilir; bu nedenle sanatçılar galeriler, müzeler ve özel kuruluşlarla ortaklıklar kurmalıdır. Sanatçılar, yeni teknikler, teknolojiler ve iş yönetimi becerileri öğreten programlara katılmalı ve deneyimli sanatçıların uzmanlık paylaşımından faydalanmalıdır. Hükümet, hibeler, sponsorluklar ve kamusal sanat projeleriyle mali destek sunmalıdır. Ayrıca sanatçılar yerel topluluklarla etkileşime girerek sanat takdirini teşvik etmeli ve desteğini artırmalıdır. Bu stratejiler, çağdaş Nijeryalı sanatçıların karşılaştığı zorlukları aşmalarına ve sanatsal potansiyellerini gerçekleştirmelerine olanak sağlayabilir. Bu, Nijeryalı sanatçıların çalışmalarını ilerletmeleri için bir umut olduğu anlamına geliyor. Diğer bir deyişle, bu stratejilerin uygulanması, sanat koleksiyonlarının ticarileşmesini artırma olasılığını taşıyor. Dijital teknoloji gelişmeye devam ederken, sanatçılar, eğitimciler ve teknoloji uzmanları arasında gelecekteki iş birlikleri, toplumda ilerleme için daha fazla fırsat sunma ihtimali taşıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler:Nijeryalı sanatçılar, Zorluklar, Dijitalleşme, Finansman, Tanınma

Introduction

Nigerian artists are indeed the backbone of the country's creative industry, and their contributions to socio-economic development cannot be overstated. However, they face a myriad of challenges that can be overwhelming. The lack of stability in governance, civil unrest, and limited social amenities are just a few of the obstacles that hinder their progress (Egonwa et al., 2024: p.,148)). It's fascinating how artists from different regions in Nigeria have unique struggles, reflecting the diversity and complexity of the country's cultural landscape. For instance, an artist in Anambra State may struggle with issues that an artist in Rivers State finds inspiring.

The role of art in driving socio-cultural and political change in Nigeria is undeniable. The #End-Bad-Governance hunger protest in 2023 is a prime example of how art can be a powerful tool for activism and awareness-raising. The use of various art genres to convey messages and critique government policies is a testament to the creative minds of Nigerian artists. An example is the picture of the typo-visual artwork in **Figure 1** found in an online newspaper publication in Nigeria. They conveyed clear messages through their forms and movements, emphasizing the philosophy of #End-Bad-Governance' hunger protest within and beyond Nigeria's borders. The comparison with historical archives of propaganda graphic artworks, such as Act Up's "Silence = Death" campaign poster, highlights the enduring power of art as a means of social commentary and activism. **Figure 2** shows an example of Act Up's campaign poster "Silence = Death" existing around 1987. This phenomenon is not unique to Nigeria or the contemporary period; art has long been a potent force for driving change and challenging the status quo. The strategic use of visual arts, especially on digital platforms, amplified the visibility and reach of movements, enabling global awareness and engagement (Nyamari, 2024, p., 53). It's also worth noting that the impact of artistic activism can be felt beyond the art world itself. The pressure exerted by these creative minds can influence government policies and actions, as seen in the response to the #End-Bad-Governance hunger protest. This underscores the significance of artistic expression as a means of holding those in power accountable and advocating for social justice.

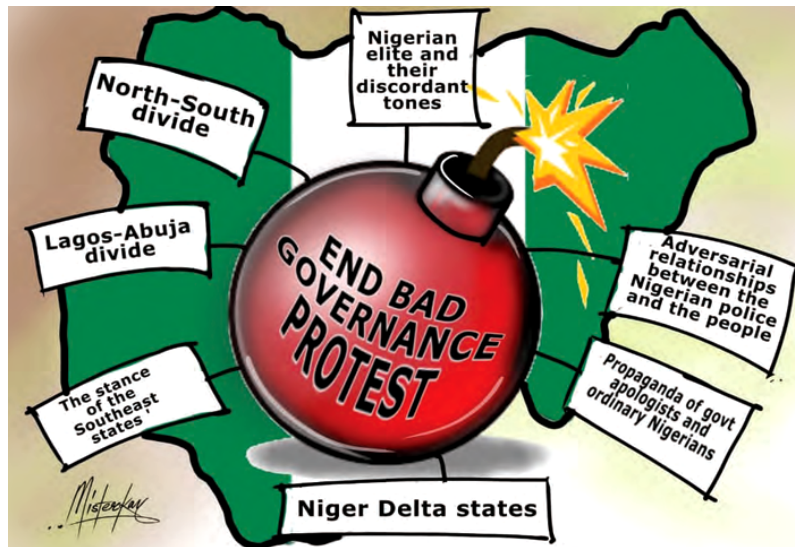


Figure 1: An example of #End-Bad-Governance artwork. From the "Perspectives on #Endbadgovernance Protests" published by the Online Leadership Newspaper, September, 2024, <https://leadership.ng/perspectives-on-endbadgovernance-protests> (Retrieved March, 2025)



Figure 2: Campaign poster archived in Gran Fury Collection, photographed by the New York Public Library/Art Resource. From "The Most Influential Protest Art" by T Magazine, The New York Times, October 15, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/15/t-magazine/most-influential--protest-art.html> (Retrieved March 12, 2025)

The notion that art can become a major driver of the Nigerian economy is an intriguing one, and it's exciting to consider the potential impact that Nigerian artists could have on the country's socio-economic development. However, as Oyedemi's quote highlights, there's a disconnect between the value placed on art and the more practical needs of the country, such as infrastructure development. The role of the creative industry in Nigeria's economy has been an issue for every successive government because the industry is expected to have been creating wealth for the nation and promoting employment, but the government continuously lays emphasis mostly on oil generation as a source of government revenue, has been a setback (Oke, 2023, p., 68). This attitude seems to have gone a long way in weakening the drive for creativity in Nigeria hence, the growth of the creative industries seems ignored especially in the aspect of visual art (Oke, 2023, p., 68). While the value of a single painting reaching \$300 million might seem astonishing, it's essential to consider the broader context. The worth of art is often subjective, and its value can be measured in ways that go beyond monetary

terms. Art has the power to inspire, educate, and bring people together, which can have a profound impact on a nation's cultural and social fabric. Also, the worth of one painting, can build roads which are hazard to the motorists, paralyzing the economy of the affected areas?" (Oyedemi, 2015, p., 35).

The challenges facing Nigerian artists are indeed multifaceted and extend beyond the quality of their work, creativity, and the country's economic state. Limited art education, for instance, can hinder artists' growth and development, while the poor economy can affect consumers' purchasing power. However, to fully harness their potential, it's crucial to address the challenges facing the Nigerian artists and provide a supportive environment for artistic expression. Although, other publications about challenges facing the Nigerian artist are available; they have only discussed the quality of works coming out of the country, the creativity of the artists, and the poor state of the economy (Oyedemi, 2015, p., 37). Challenges facing Nigerian artists go beyond just the quality of their work, creativity, and the country's economic state. While these factors do play a role, with the poor economy affecting consumers' purchasing power and limited art education, there are pressing issues that might include the lack of infrastructure and resources for artists, such as studios, exhibition spaces, and art supplies. Additionally, the absence of effective policies and support systems for the arts can make it difficult for artists to thrive. There's also the issue of art piracy and copyright infringement, which can undermine the value of art and discourage artists from creating. To fully harness the potential of Nigerian artists, it's crucial to address these challenges and provide a supportive environment for artistic expression. This could involve initiatives such as art education programs, grants and funding opportunities, and infrastructure development. By doing so, Nigeria can unlock the creative potential of its artists and pave the way for art to become a significant contributor to the country's economy.

A significant concern is the dearth of patronage from the general public, with a stark disconnect between the quality of art produced by Nigerian artists and the appreciation and collection of these works by the local populace (Oyedemi, 2015, p., 40). This paucity of local support compels art dealers to seek international markets, often through auctions, raising concerns about the fairness of compensation for the artists. Furthermore, Nigerian artists face considerable challenges in terms of limited exposure and recognition, both domestically and internationally, largely due to the scarcity of art galleries and exhibition spaces. The cultural stigma surrounding art as a profession also poses a significant barrier, deterring many young Nigerians from pursuing their passion for art. This lack of understanding and appreciation for the value of art translates into limited opportunities and support for artists. In light of these challenges, this study aims to investigate the obstacles confronting contemporary Nigerian artists and explore potential avenues for advancement, seeking to shed light on the complexities surrounding the Nigerian art scene and identify possible pathways for growth and development.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine challenges facing contemporary Nigerian artists and the prospects for advancement in contemporary Nigeria society. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. challenges facing contemporary Nigerian artists
2. the prospects of advancement for the Nigerian artists in contemporary society.

Literature Review

Challenges of Nigerian Artists

The Nigerian artists are confronted with myriad of challenges in the course of their professional practice. Although, other publications about challenges facing the Nigerian Artist are available; they have only discussed the quality of works coming out of the country, the creativity of the artists, and the poor state of the economy (Oyedemi, 2015, p., 37). Thus, present study will further elucidate challenges by considering lack of recognition, trust deficit between artist and their trade

agents, limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of government support through literature review approach.

Lack of recognition

Lack of recognition is one of the challenges facing the Nigerian artists. As noted by Nwombu (2019), there are many artworks produced that go unacknowledged as some persons tend not to accord the artists the recognition deserving of their profession. Many of such artist are struggling with the problem of lack of recognition by the people in the metropolis (Nwombu, 2019, p.14). This is evidenced in the dearth of documents on professional artists in art museum, libraries and archives as well as the decline in studying of Fine and Applied Arts (Azuka, 2021, p.,181) as a professional course. This suggests that there is a sufficient level of awareness among the population regarding the socio-cultural significance of artworks, as most people did not perceive anything exceptional or noteworthy about them. (Oyedemi, 2015, p., 37). In light of these challenges, this study aims to investigate the obstacles confronting contemporary Nigerian artists in the aspect of lack of recognition and identify possible pathways for growth and development.

Trust deficit between artist and their trade agents

The Nigerian art industry faces a significant challenge due to the unethical practices of some trade agents. These unscrupulous agents exploit desperate artists, who are often driven by economic hardship, and deny them fair compensation for their works. According to Kunde (2014, pp., 6-7), the economic struggles of many artists force them into the hands of fraudulent agents who appear genuine. These agents take advantage of the artists' vulnerability, deceiving them and withholding payment for sold or acquired artworks (Kunde, 2014, p.,7). This exploitative practice not only jeopardizes the financial security of artists but also undermines the integrity of the art industry as a whole. The situation is further exacerbated by galleries and art dealers who renege on their obligations to artists, failing to provide payment for sold artworks and leaving creators without a fair return on their investment. This disturbing trend underscores the imperative need for enhanced transparency, accountability, and regulatory oversight within the Nigerian art market to safeguard the rights and interests of artists.

Limited funding

Nigerian artists require sufficient funding to produce high-quality artworks. Insufficient funding can significantly hinder their creative process and overall productivity. Conversely, adequate funding enables artists to work efficiently and effectively. However, the current state of art supply procurement in Nigeria poses a challenge. Many professional artists rely on Artworld, a prominent art dealership in Lagos, as a primary source for materials. Unfortunately, the prices at Artworld are often exorbitant, making it difficult for artists to afford the necessary supplies. Furthermore, cheaper alternatives imported from China or other Asian countries often compromise on quality, which can negatively impact the overall effect of the artwork. This highlights the need for affordable, high-quality art materials to support the creative endeavors of Nigerian artists. (Nzoiwu, 2018, p., 105).

Inadequate infrastructure

The operational efficiency of Nigerian artists relies heavily on basic infrastructure, including electricity, water, and road access. However, the provision of these essential services is often inadequate. Electricity supply in Nigeria is notoriously erratic, and even when available, the cost is prohibitively expensive for many struggling artists. Furthermore, access to water is another significant challenge hindering the viability of the arts industry. The unreliable nature of electricity supply also has a ripple effect on water availability, exacerbating the problem. This highlights the need for a more reliable and affordable provision of these basic infrastructure elements to support the creative endeavors of Nigerian artists.

Insecurity

The security challenges in the country has taken a different dimension in recent times. The art industry such as textile arts industry is challenged by security concerns in Nigeria (Kunde, 2014, p., 8). The insecurity in the country has culminated in workers' abandonment of their jobs, thereby

resulting in the closure of some plants. This includes burning and vandalism of business centres like shops as seen **Figure 3**.



Figure 3: Shops burnt down in Kafanchan Kaduna State after the 2011 crisis cited by permission from Kunde (2014, p.8). From "Contemporary Issues Affecting Studio Artists / Art Market in Nigeria. *The 2014 International Conference; The Humanities and Africa's Contemporary Challenges, Organized by Faculty of Arts, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria*, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kunde_Matthew_PhD/publication/281175499_Contemporary_Issues_Affecting_Studio_ArtistsArt_Market_in_Nigeria/links/55d9947308aeb38e8a87d4df (Retrieved March 12, 2025)

Lack of government support

The Nigerian government's lack of substantial support for the art industry has significantly impacted local artists. Despite the government's lip service, financial backing and resources remain scarce, hindering artists' ability to produce high-quality work and gain international recognition. This results to insufficient financial resources force artists to rely on international markets, where their work may not receive fair compensation. Also, the erratic electricity supply, water scarcity, and limited access to quality art materials further constrain artistic production. Cultural Stigma in terms of art been viewed as a less viable profession also discourages young Nigerians from pursuing their passion for art. Government also has a role to play in this aspect.

Prospects of advancement for the Nigerian artists

The art industry, when properly harnessed, has the potential to generate significant revenue, contributing substantially to Nigeria's economic growth and sustainability. With a rapidly growing population, Nigeria can tap into the vast creative potential of its citizens to drive productivity and innovation. To unlock the prospects for advancement and empower Nigerian artists, infrastructure development must be one of the focus. Establishing state-of-the-art art facilities, galleries, and museums to showcase Nigerian art and provide resources for artists.

Digitalization

This entails the use of digital platforms, tools or even resources to improve the art industry in Nigeria. This should include providing essential art facilities to the artists which would assist them practice effectively and contribute to the economy (Nwombu, 2019, p., 21). It involves digital design, printing, digital marketing, automation, digital payment systems (Nwombu, 2019, p., 20). The digitalization of art industry can shore up productivity while broadening the customer base of the Nigerian artists. In line with digitization, there is an important responsibility for artists to draw the attention of the people, especially the young students who have distanced themselves from their own cultural heritage (Aliosman & Müstecaplıoğlu, 2024, p.101). While new technologies give artists the opportunity to create different structures of meaning, they have also transformed the audience's perception of reality (Özdal, 2023, p., 1). At this point, the valuable contributions that illustrators can offer with a broader and more imaginative aesthetic perspective are considered as a professional responsibility (Aliosman & Müstecaplıoğlu, 2024, p., 108).

Public and private sector partnership

The place of partnership for the Nigerian artist cannot be over-stressed. Collaboration and partnerships between artists, galleries, museums, and private sector organizations to create opportunities for artistic growth and economic empowerment are also necessary. Kunde (2013) noted that the master artist in a bid to advance their artworks ought to be in partnership with the National Gallery of Art (NGA), Society of Nigerian Arts (SNA), and other relevant organizations such as non-governmental bodies. This is with a view to ensuring the development of art while enhancing the economic status of the Nigerian artists.

Exposure to skills development programmes

It is expected of the Nigerian artists to expose themselves to skill development. The Nigerian artists can embrace training programmes that are tailored towards improving their knowledge, skills and competencies. These programmes cover vocational training, conferences, workshops and seminars, capacity-buildings for artisans, internships as well as training programmes for established professionals.

Awareness Creation and international collaborations

The Nigerian artists are expected to create awareness about their artwork via the social media or other conventional media platforms. This involves developing effective marketing strategies to promote Nigerian art locally and internationally, leveraging digital platforms and social media. They are expected to interface with their foreign partners to promote mutual learning and cooperation through active participation in international workshops and conferences, study tours, international mentorship and research partnerships among others. This will enable Nigerian artists to stay abreast of contemporary global art trends, thereby fostering cross-cultural understanding and exchange.

Method

Research Design: The researcher employed survey research design. The use of this design for the present study is justified by the fact that data were collected from a sample of a population on challenges and prospects of advancement.

Population and Sample: The population of the study consisted of professional artists in Nigeria. The sample size for the study comprised 104 professional artist in Anambra State. Convenience sampling was used by conveniently focusing on Anambra State out of the 36 states of the federation. Then, accidental sampling technique was used to obtain professional artists who were present at their workplaces at the point of data collection.

Procedure: Two sets of questionnaire were used for data collection. The first questionnaire was titled 'Challenges of Nigerian artists Questionnaire (CNAQ) while the second questionnaire was titled 'Prospects of Advancement of Nigerian artists Questionnaire (PANAQ). The researcher developed two questionnaires, the Contemporary Nigerian Artists Questionnaire (CNAQ) and the Professional Artists in Nigeria Questionnaire (PANAQ), each comprising six items. Both questionnaires employed a four-point Likert scale, where respondents indicated their level of agreement with each item using the following response options: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The face validity of CNAQ and PANAQ was established through expert validation by professionals in the Fine and Applied Arts Department. The reliability of both questionnaires was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficient values of 0.82 for CNAQ and 0.72 for PANAQ, indicating acceptable reliability based on Nworgu's (2015) guidelines.

Data Analysis: Data analysis was done with the use of mean. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used. The decision on the questionnaire items of research questions one and two were based on item and cluster means relative to real limits of numbers viz: SA – 3.50-4.00; A – 2.50-3.49; D – 1.50 – 2.49 and SD – 1.00 -1.49.

Results

Data in Table 1 show that item 2 has the highest mean score of 3.12; indicating that most of the respondents are in agreement that limited funding is major challenge facing Nigerian artists. In contrast, item 6 has the lowest mean score of 2.64; indicating that the least number of respondents agree lack of government support is a challenge facing Nigerian artists. The grand mean of 2.89 shows an agreement among the respondents of the challenges facing Nigerian artists. Both Figure 4 and Table 1 are showing the result of the quantitative data concerning Challenges Facing Contemporary Nigerian artist

Table 1: Challenges Facing Contemporary Nigerian artists

The following are some of the challenges facing contemporary Nigerian artists:	Mean	Remark
1. Lack of recognition.	2.87	A
2. Limited funding.	3.12	A
3. Trust deficit between artist and their trade agents.	2.96	A
4. Inadequate infrastructure.	3.03	A
5. Insecurity.	2.71	A
6. Lack of government support.	2.64	A
Grand Mean	2.89	A

From the bar chart in **Figure 4**, inadequate infrastructure and limited infrastructure are the most profound challenges

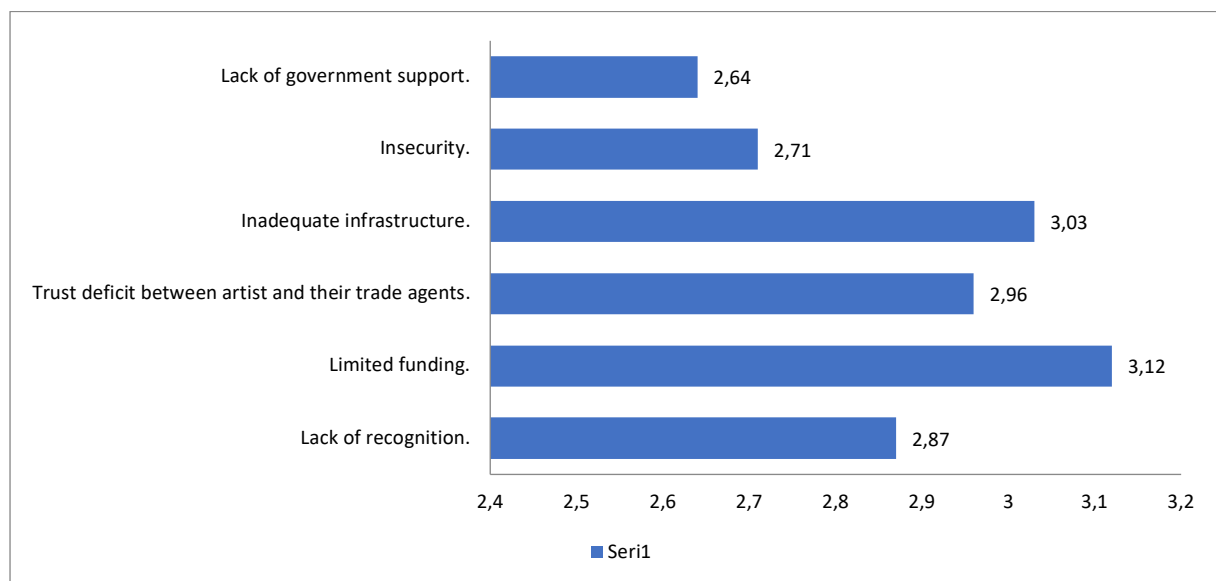


Figure 4: Bar chart showing Challenges Facing Contemporary Nigerian artists

Data in Table 2 show that item 3 has the highest mean score of 3.52; indicating that most of the respondents are in strong agreement that exposure to skill development programmes is one of the ways in which the prospects for advancement of the Nigerian artists can be achieved. In contrast, item 1 has the lowest mean score of 3.00; indicating that the least number of respondents agree that digitalization is one of the ways in which the prospects for advancement of the Nigerian artists can be achieved. The grand mean of 3.28 shows an agreement among the respondents on ways in which the prospects for advancement of the Nigerian artists can be achieved

Table 2: Prospects for advancement of the Nigerian artists

The following are ways in which the prospects for advancement of the Nigerian artists can be achieved:	Mean	Remark
1. Digitalization.	3.00	A
2. Public and private sector partnership.	3.15	A
3. Exposure to skill development programmes.	3.52	SA
4. Awareness creation.	3.33	A
5. International collaboration.	3.41	A
6. Patronage of art works through art collectors.	3.24	A
Grand Mean	3.28	A

Discussion

The findings reveal that the Nigerian art industry is a vibrant and diverse sector, comprising talented artists who are eager to showcase their work and contribute to the country's cultural heritage. However, despite its potential, the industry faces numerous challenges that hinder its growth and development. The study identified lack of recognition, limited funding, trust deficit between artists and trade agents, inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, and lack of government support as the primary challenges confronting Nigerian artists. The analysis shows that inadequate infrastructure and limited funding are the most significant challenges.

Clearly, the more these challenges persist, the less likely Nigerian artists are to realize their full potential. As previously mentioned, one of the major challenges facing Nigerian artists is the lack of recognition and appreciation for their work. Many artists struggle to gain exposure and visibility, making it difficult for them to sell their work and sustain themselves through their art. This lack of recognition is often exacerbated by limited funding opportunities, which hinder artists' ability to produce and showcase their work.

Another significant challenge facing Nigerian artists is the trust deficit between them and their trade agents. Many artists have fallen victim to exploitation and unfair compensation, which can be devastating to their careers and livelihoods. This lack of trust is often fueled by inadequate infrastructure, including poorly equipped art facilities, galleries, and museums. In addition to these challenges, Nigerian artists also face insecurity and instability, which can make it difficult for them to work and showcase their art. The lack of government support and resources is also a significant challenge, as it fails to provide necessary policies, regulations, and funding to support the art industry.

Exposure to skill development programs can help artists enhance their skills and knowledge, while awareness creation can help raise the profile of Nigerian art and its value. International collaboration can also provide artists with opportunities to learn from best practices, access new markets, and gain exposure.

Despite these challenges, the Nigerian art industry has many prospects for advancement. By supporting Nigerian artists and providing them with the necessary resources and opportunities, we can help unlock the full potential of the industry and contribute to the country's cultural and economic development. For instance, an artist noted that one needs to have alternative sources of income to be an art seller or collector, as art is not a basic need like food, and customers only buy art to decorate or

beautify their homes after budgeting for essential expenses (Egonwa et al., 2024, p., 152). This finding is corroborated by Egonwa et al. (2024, p.150), who observed that the challenges facing Nigerian artists extend beyond those identified in the current study.

The study also revealed that digitalization, public-private partnerships, exposure to skill development programs, awareness creation, international collaboration, and patronage of art works through art collectors are ways to advance the prospects of Nigerian artists. This implies that there is hope for Nigerian artists to advance their work. In other words, implementing these strategies is likely to enhance the commercialization of their art collections. As digital technology continues to evolve, future collaborations between artists, educators, and technologists will likely lead to more specialized and impactful applications (Rashid, 2024, p., 29). Consistent with the findings of the current study, Kunde (2014, pp., 2-4) noted that master artists should partner with the National Gallery of Art (NGA), Society of Nigerian Arts (SNA), and other relevant organizations to advance their work. This highlights the importance of partnership in advancing the course of Nigerian artists.

Finally, patronage of art works is crucial for supporting Nigerian artists and providing them with a source of income. By encouraging art collectors and enthusiasts to buy Nigerian art, we can help provide artists with the financial support they need to continue producing high-quality work.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it is rather clear that Nigerian artists are constrained by myriad of challenges ranging from limited funding to lack of government support. It is further clear that ways in which the prospect of advancement can be achieved for the Nigerian artists range from exposure to skill development programmes to digitalization.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations were made. These include:

1. Nigerian artists should embrace digitalization so as to reach more consumers of art works.
2. Public and private sector partnership should be embraced by Nigerian artists so as to advance their art works.
3. There should be enough skill development programmes for the artists towards the efficiency of their creative art practice.
4. Government should ensure the availability of funds to ensure the visibility of artworks.
- 5.

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