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THE DISCORDANT NOTES OF PARENTAL CONCERNS: UNDERSTANDING PARENTAL RELUCTANCE OVER THEIR CHILDREN'S MUSICAL CAREERS

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Abstract

Choosing a career part is a very important decision which people take on early in life and begin to work towards its actualization and the possible fulfilment that comes with it. It is very important because one's choice may provide career satisfaction or lack of career fulfilment in its later stage. So many factors like natural endowments, areas of interest, parental influence, parental endorsement, peer pressure, etc. play significant roles in the career choice people make. Parental endorsement and approval is one of the most common influences on career choices, especially for children who are perceived not to be old enough to make such important choices themselves. Many career parts have received wide endorsement from parents, while some others have received numerous disapproval from parents. An example of such career choice that continues to meet parental disapproval is Music. This study is therefore an attempt towards understanding why some parents are reluctant to support the musical careers of their children. Using document study and interview for data collection, it was found that so many factors are responsible for the parental disapproval of their children's choice of music as a career. Some of these factors however, are misconception, and they include perceived unhealthy lifestyle of musicians, the uncertainty associated with the career, ignorance of what a music career entails, etc. The researcher therefore recommends that there is need for proper sensitization of parents, to enable them make proper research into any career path chosen by their children.

Keywords: Parental Concerns, Music Careers, Parental Reluctance, Discordant Notes.

Introduction

Choosing a career part in the early stages of one's life is an essential step in life, especially since the decisions made can most times pave the way for a successful future or career, or what some people will refer to as a mistake in career choice. Some may argue that success is relative and can be measured with different parameters. However, career success can be seen as having a stable financial situation, doing work one enjoys, and feeling satisfied with one's life decisions and peer group. Whatever the success story is, there is a question that keeps yearning for an answer. Can a

career that meets some of the above-listed criteria be seen as a successful career? It may, therefore, mean that there might be a fragile line between a successful career and an unsuccessful career.

Moreover, it is believed that career success consists of both objective and subjective elements. Objective measures of professional success include overall income, number of promotions, and other observable rewards for achievement. On the other hand, an individual's subjective impression of their level of

job satisfaction and professional advancement determines their level of career success. (Callanan, 2003, Heslin, 2005).

So many factors play significant roles in choosing a career part for young people. Several factors, therefore, influence a person's career decision. To begin with, in industrialized countries, it is assumed that the outcomes of specific psychological tests indicate an individual's suitability for a given profession. However, the bulk of young people who choose their jobs based on ignorance in the majority of third-world countries, including Nigeria, are many. These young people are ill-informed about these careers once they realize they have made a significant mistake that is difficult to fix. Some young people base their career decisions on factors from their environment, such as their parents, peers, socioeconomic status, family professional presumptions, etc. (Uzoeshi, et al., 2001).

In Nigeria, parents are an indispensable determinant of the career choices of their young ones (children). What that statement means is that some persons out there pursuing one career path or the other had it chosen for them by their parents and guardians. The ideal thing is for the parents and guardians to find out a child's area of interest as the child grows and then guide that child appropriately towards this perceived area of interest. The reverse is, however, the case in Nigeria, as many parents tend to push their wards into careers that are perceived to be prestigious, lucrative and presentable, dissuading their children from pursuing careers that are wrongfully perceived as less lucrative and irresponsible. The above statement is not an attempt to say that parents have never been right in their career choices for their children, but many cases of unfulfillment in their careers have been from people whose careers were chosen for them. Olusegun (2023) posits that "Our world today is filled with many unfulfilled people in their chosen careers and professions. Many have attributed this problem to the insistence of their parents or guardians in forcing them to study a particular course of study during their time in the tertiary institution. The results for such individuals today are frustrations, lack of fulfilment, regrets, and the likes". (p.1).

Music is one of those careers that receive less approval from parents. There are, therefore, many young persons who are musically gifted and who may have taken up a career in music but could not because their parents disapproved of it. There would be different reasons for this action by different parents. This paper is, therefore, an attempt to find out the reasons for parent's disapproval of their children's choice of music as a career. It also outlined the pros and cons of such actions.

UNDERSTANDING PARENTAL CONCERNS

This section of this work looks into some reasons for parental disapproval of a career in music for their children. It tends to answer questions of why parents disapprove of the practice of music as a career for their children. The following are some of the reasons:

Ignorance/Lack of Understanding: An interaction with some of these parents shows that many times, their decisions are from the little they know of the music profession. Many need an in-depth knowledge of how a career in music works. They lack an understanding of the holistic makeup of the music profession and, therefore, are required to gain an in-depth knowledge of how a career in music works.

Uncertainty: To many parents, the uncertainty associated with the music profession is something they do not want their children to experience. This uncertainty can be seen in a parent who supposedly loves a child and thinks he wants the best for the child. To some parents, it is believed that the field of practical music is highly competitive, and their children may need help to break even. They believe other careers are more reliable and financially secure.

Perceived Unhealthy Lifestyle: Some parents do not want their children to live out what they call "unhealthy lifestyle". For a practical musician, there is a tendency to spend some long periods away from home and family. There is also the fear of their children being exposed to the unhealthy lifestyle associated with the abuse of various substances. While the music profession may not be the only profession where substances are abused, substance abuse, alcohol, and loose men/women have become a part of the music culture, especially in widespread music practice.

Misconceptions and Stereotypes about the Music Profession

It would not be incorrect to say that there is a general view of the music profession as not a fit enough career path for one to follow. This is because while some people see it from that lens, others see it from another – a career path is worth pursuing, primarily if one's passion lies there. People's opinions about music as a career may have resulted from several factors, either from their personal experiences or the experiences of people around them. Some of these experiences may be true if looked at from an individual's perspectives. However, there is not enough reason to give a general verdict on the music profession, especially since there are numerous areas of music theory and practice where people can pursue careers. The following are some of the misconceptions about pursuing a music career:

There are no Jobs: Many parents are unaware of the numerous job opportunities available for musicians and music graduates. To them, there is no need to spend time pursuing a career path with limited job opportunities. They feel the available opportunities for music graduates are just teaching, being choir masters and church organists. This is, however, a misconception, as there is an endless list of job opportunities available for musicians.

You must not study music syndrome: Some parents feel that the ability to make music comes naturally to people, and as such, there is no need to spend money and time to study it. It may be true that there is a place for talent in the grand scheme of things; however, this does not put away the importance of learning, studying, training and improving on that talent for better results in music making. Furthermore, beyond talent, people who have developed an interest in music can go on to study music and major in areas that may not require them to produce musical sounds, thus preparing them for occupying one of the behind-the-scenes roles in the music industry.

Musicians are Wayward: It is a huge misconception to say that musicians are wayward. The lifestyle of some musicians (especially the public figures who wield an enviable level of influence over the youth) is not worthy of emulation. While this may be true, numerous persons are into teaching and practising music, whose lifestyle can be a worthy model for emulation. It is; therefore, wrong to generalize a bias for musicians based on the lifestyle of a selected few.

The Role of Societal and Cultural Expectations in Parental Disapproval

Society may have a significant influence on parental decisions. "Sociocultural characteristics, including economic hardship, religion, politics, neighbourhoods, schools and social support, can influence parenting" (Lang & Diener, 2020). Society often sets the standards and expectations for careers that should be regarded as stable or respectable. Music may fall outside that category, leading parents into not being in a hurry to approve of it as a career path for their children. Parents also usually worry about the financial stability of their children's future, especially when society has labelled a particular profession as not being financially stable. They dwell on the feeling that their kids may not have a bright financial future.

There is also an unusual pressure from elements of society, like family members, friends, or other persons within their social circle, who may share in their misconception about a musical career for their kids. Their social elements of family and friends often help them to strengthen their bias about approving a career in music for their children.

Benefits of Pursuing Music as a Career

There are numerous benefits which can be obtained from pursuing a music career. Some of these benefits are temporary, and others are lifelong. Some benefits can be associated with the formative stages of the music career, and others spring up at later stages. It is important to note that pointing out the benefits of pursuing a career in music does not suggest the absence of challenges in its pursuit. However, the following are some of the benefits of engaging in musical activities.

Creativity: The practice of music helps to enhance creativity. A good musician must express some required creativity for perceivable success, especially in bringing musical ideas from thoughts into reality. This enhanced creativity can also apply to other areas of one's life.

Stardom: For musical careers where the musician is always in the spotlight, the practice of music can lead one to achieve celebrity status. This celebrity status comes with many things, including fame and wealth.

Studies have shown that the practice of music helps to develop critical thinking. The continuous rehearsals, evaluating and adjusting until one achieves what one desires for a given performance, culminate into an ability to think critically and provide solutions to problems.

Economic and Job Prospects in the Music Industry

There are many opportunities available for musicians in the music industry. Some of these jobs can be full-time jobs or part-time jobs. Working full-time or part-time depends on the agreement between the employer and the employee. There are also opportunities available where people can work for themselves and be answerable to no one else but themselves. These career opportunities are divided into two broad sections- the musician as an educator and the musician as a performer. (Branscome, 2010) It can also be seen as the musician in town and the gown. Musicians in town and gowns often work hand in hand, either directly or indirectly, to ensure a successful career. Products of the gown can also pursue

careers by employing musicians and music personnel in town. The following are some job opportunities available for musicians in town & gown:

Music Educator/Tutor: This set of musicians help to train musicians and harness their musical skills. They can train vocalists, instrumentalists, and sometimes both. Working as a music teacher, tutor, or trainer helps the trainer share his passion and knowledge with others. Also, it helps them develop lifelong skills that can help them improve their careers and the satisfaction derived from the practice of music. They also are responsible for helping both young and established musicians acquire basic and advanced knowledge of music theory. (Templeton, 2023)

Sound Engineer: The sound engineer is responsible for all audio equipment for rehearsals and musical performances. They help with setting up audio equipment during live performances, and they run sound checks. They also remain at the venue for the entire performance, monitoring live feeds, balancing sounds as the performance continues, and balancing vocals. If need be, and if the available audio equipment has the functionality, the sound engineer may provide audio effects throughout the musical performance. (Krosel et al., 2023)

Studio Engineer: Recording and processing audio to prepare it for release or commercial use are typical duties of a studio engineer. They oversee recording sessions, collaborate with musicians in studios, and make sure the right level of sound is captured. They may be in charge of audio mixing so the recordings can be merged to create a finished item, such as an album or single.

Artiste and Repertoire (A&R) Manager: An artiste manager can be a talent agent. He finds new talents, signs them up to record labels and manages the completion of their recordings. He is responsible for assisting up-and-coming musicians in their growth, so a manager must have excellent commercial acumen and a thorough understanding of the music industry. (Higginbotham, 2023)

Composer/Songwriter/Lyricist: A composer creates music for TV programs, films, and computer games, to mention but a few. In order to convey what is happening on screen, they employ sampling and live musicians to create the desired mood or emotion. They also compose music for stage performances. Songwriters, on the other hand, write songs and sell them to artists. A lyricist is limited to writing and selling lyrics to established artists. These persons contribute to the continuous supply of music in the music industry.

Music Producer: A music producer builds connections with musicians and record labels by being aware of both the artistic and business aspects of the industry. A producer should establish a space for artists to express and develop themselves. A producer also helps with many technical aspects of an artist's recording effort, such as selecting which tracks to record, coordinating with the recording engineer, modifying arrangements, keeping the recording budget in check, and influencing mixes. (Berklee, 2023).

Music Therapist: A music therapist employs music, either as a therapy or in therapy. He connects with and supports clients through his professional training and high level of musicianship. He does not teach children how to sing or play an instrument; instead, he helps them to make suitable changes in their behaviour, well-being, and communication by using music-making and shared musical experiences. In various clinical settings, therapists work

one-on-one or in groups with infants, children, and adults of diverse ages and social backgrounds. Various diseases, injuries, disabilities, obstacles, or difficulties impact the clients through music.

Music Performer: A musician can double as a composer and a performer. Performances can be in the studio or to a live audience. Performers can work alone or in collaboration with others who together may form a group. This group can be a choir, band, opera, . Performers always have to rehearse and prune their performing skills to continue to maintain relevance on the music scene, especially since music performance is a very competitive affair.

Disc Jockey (DJ): A disc jockey is usually hired for both public and private events and he is responsible for providing music entertainment in pre-recorded forms during events like weddings, funerals, birthdays and other celebrations and occasions. They also play at clubs, radio stations and TV stations.

Artiste Liaison: Serving as a point of contact for artists and hiring companies like record labels or venues is the role of the artist liaison. This role encourages a musician's relationship with the organization. It guarantees that the hiring organization and the artiste have a good grasp of the commercial and logistical aspects of an event or tour. By deliberately considering how the relationship can benefit both parties from working with one another, an artiste liaison creates and improves the professional relationship between the artist and an organization. They might be in charge of overseeing an artiste's attendance at functions, making sure that they are well appreciated and kept updated, and cultivating fresh, essential connections with artistes and agents.

Success stories of some Musicians who faced parental disapproval

This section gives a brief report of some Successful pop musicians who received parental disapproval at the formative stage of their music careers. This section is to serve as an encouragement for aspiring musicians bound to meet a similar fate.

Folarin Falana (Falz)

Born into a family where both parents are Lawyers, Falz's parents wanted him to pursue a career as a lawyer. Falz is a law graduate who started a career working in his father's law firm. He, however, decided to venture into music, where his passion lies. Although it was not difficult to convince his father, his mother never supported the idea, especially since she wanted him to continue the family line of lawyers. Falz is today a successful musician who has won many awards and is one of the voices that continue to speak against lousy leadership and contribute to nation-building.

Ayodeji Ibrahim Balogun (Wizkid)

Nigerian musician and songwriter Wizkid is well-known for his distinctive sound and successful songs. His father, however, insisted that he concentrates on his education because his family was first hesitant about his musical profession. Wizkid, however, persisted in pursuing his musical profession, and in the end, he became one of Nigeria's most prosperous artistes. He has won many prestigious musical awards, including the prestigious Grammy for his collaboration with world music sensation Beyonce and some other musicians.

Yemi Eberechi Alade (YemiAlade)

YemiAlade is a well-known Nigerian singer and songwriter renowned for her distinctive style and strong voice. Her father, on the other hand, first opposed her musical career since he thought it was an unfeasible one. YemiAlade ended up convincing her father and earning his support. Today, she is an established musician who has won several awards and has achieved celebrity status for her career.

Damini EbunoluwaOgulu MFR (Burna Boy)

Nigerian musician Burna Boy, a Grammy Award winner, is renowned for his distinct sound and aesthetics. His road to prosperity was a challenging one. Benson Idonije, Burna Boy's grandfather, was a seasoned manager and broadcaster who initially disapproved of his musical endeavours. Burna Boy stated in an interview that although his grandfather had advised him to choose a different path, he had refused to give up on his love of music. Today, he is a leading voice in the music industry.

Lessons and inspiration from these success stories

A critical look at the stories outlined above shows that there is a reward for persistence and pursuing one's passion. These stories should be a source of encouragement to every person out there whose parents are not in support of the career they wish to pursue. While it does not encourage outright disobedience on the part of the child, it encourages an intentional and deliberate act to convince the parent(s) of the need to pursue a career in areas of interest and passion. There is a need for people to derive enjoyment and satisfaction from the career path they chose. How, then, can this enjoyment and satisfaction be experienced if people are to work in career paths they do not like? Part of career issues and general problems faced at establishments can be traced to people working where they do not derive happiness. It is usually about more than just earning a good monthly pay. It is because while some people may only care about the payment associated with a job, others look beyond that to seek places where they derive enjoyment and satisfaction.

Strategies for effective communication between parents and aspiring musicians

Communication happens to be among the crucial materials of building a positive parent-child relationship. It plays a very significant role in the relationship in the sense that it forms and preserves relationship between the parent and child producing a strong and effective interaction (Ugoo-Okonkwo et al, 2022)

Communication is a two-way thing and, as such, requires at least two persons or objects for effectiveness. There has to be someone giving out information or instruction and another person or object at the receiving end. There are, however, different strategies which, if employed, will result in effective communication between people from different walks of life. The strategies for effective communication between an employer and employee may need to be revised for two siblings and may not work between a parent and a child. According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the following nine strategies for effective communication from parent to child are important:

- Listening actively to the child to help them feel heard and understood.
- Showing reflective listening to make a child believe he/she is paying attention to him/her.
- Speaking clearly, using languages the child can understand without difficulty.
- Avoid "Bribes" as it may unconsciously prevent you from developing clear boundaries. When it had to do with a child's behaviour, try to be as clear and reasonable as possible. When necessary, apply gentle consequences to help a child behave better.
- A child must learn to identify their emotions in order to foster the development of emotional intelligence. When a child uses words to communicate their emotions, pay attention to what they have to say without passing judgment and with empathy.
- Give a youngster praise for certain behaviours. It informs them of preferred behaviours and boosts their self-esteem. Try using a "noticing statement" to be more precise than "nice job!" Something like, "I noticed you put all your toys away after playtime." Well done!
- A great way to strengthen relationships and provide avenues for effective communication is by creating opportunities to have fun together.
- Make sure that any criticism or remarks made towards a child when one is upset about something focus only on the behaviour rather than on a person. For instance, try saying, "I do not like it when you leave your clothes all over the floor" rather than "I do not like that you are messy."
- Lead by example. What a child sees one do is as important as what they hear one say.

There are also strategies which children can adopt to communicate with their parents effectively. They include:

- A child should be respectful and warm to his parents.
- A child should be a good listener. Only talk when necessary, and avoid cutting in when parents or guardians are talking.
- Adhere to a problem-solving approach. Parents frequently voice worries about their kids, mainly when those kids are anxious or unsure. Follow a problem-solving strategy in such a situation so that there is collaboration between the parents in handling the specific issue.

The Role of Education and Training in Music Careers

Education and training play very significant roles in shaping the lives of individuals and society at large. Education can be both formal and informal, as people have opportunities to learn new things daily. It is important to note that certain things may not be taught in a formal classroom, which people learn informally. In the same way, certain things can be learnt only within a classroom that cannot be learnt formally. From whichever perspective it is seen, education plays a crucial role in shaping the life of musicians. Education helps to create a balance between what is learnt informally and what is learnt formally. Beyond learning, education

helps people to develop good character. It helps them to develop the ability to differentiate between right and wrong.

Music education is crucial in talent development, cognitive skill development and cultural development. It has a significant impact on personal growth, social cohesion, and economic development. (Idoko, 2023). Musicians like David Adeleke (Davido), Tiwatope Omolara Savage (Tiwa Savage), and the twin brothers Peter and Paul Okoye (Psquare) went through some formal music education, which has played significant roles in shaping their musical careers, improving their crafts, and helping them create successful albums. Music education has been instrumental in their rise to fame, and knowledge from it has been applied to practical life situations, which has helped to keep them relevant in the music scene.

Music learning enhances memory, focus, and problem-solving abilities by stimulating brain development. It fosters creativity and sharpens critical thinking. It provides a platform for emotional expression and self-discovery. It supports people's resilience, empathy development, and stress management. Through fostering respect for many cultures, music education helps Nigerians become more tolerant and understanding of one another. It fosters a sense of oneness and aids in bridging cultural differences. (Idoko, 2023)

The role of Parents in their Children's musical growth

Parents play significant roles in the growth process of their children's musical careers. Whether learning an instrument, attending vocal training sessions, learning to perform with bands, or passing through the rudimentary classes, they all provide encouragement and support in several ways. Parental roles in Children's musical growth, as outlined by StringOvation (2019), are enumerated below:

Parents should ensure they know the teachers in their children's lives. It is good to develop personal relationships with those teachers to improve communication between parents and teachers.

Parents should engage their youngsters in constructive dialogue regarding their music lessons regularly. It takes much time for anyone to attend daily practice, rehearsals, and lessons, much less a child. To help them get through the challenging periods, give them the chance to share what they enjoy most about studying their musical studies.

Parents should discover more about their children's musical interests so that they can ask the right questions about their development stage. These abilities require more work and possibilities than they are ready for. A parent needs to be well-informed when discussing his/her child, with music professionals if he/she wants to make the most of their time together.

The Role of Mentors, Teachers and Peers in Shaping Music Careers

Teachers play indispensable roles in the growth and development of a music career, especially at its formative stage. Whatever area of music it is, the teacher's role cannot be overemphasized. The teacher provides the student with formal education, step-by-step guidance and consciously planned technical support/training. Teachers help their students to develop the required foundation on which their careers will stand. They help the students build the required technique for performance and have a good knowledge of music theory. They also help the students sustain interest even at

times when growth seems stagnant, and there is a need to continue working.

Mentors in the music industry provide invaluable contributions to aspiring musicians. This they do from the wealth of their experiences in their music careers. They offer real-life insights. They share their stories with young musicians and help them get through the complexities of the music industry. Sometimes, they introduce them to the helpful networks necessary for their musical success. Mentorship is one of the contributors to career growth and success in both career and personal growth.

Peers, conversely, are usually a good source of inspiration and encouragement among young musicians. A peer group of musicians can provide collaboration, support and inspiration. It is common practice for musicians to learn from one another and share their experiences, including their challenges, little successes, etc. They can also collaborate to achieve certain things. Relationships with peers help musicians develop skills, remain motivated, and can even serve as a source of gaining required exposure to different performing patterns, styles and techniques.

Summary and Conclusion

Parents play a significant role in the lives of their children. These roles begin from birth and sometimes continue until late into their adulthood. One of the significant roles of parents in the lives of their children is in guiding them, supporting them and approving a career path for their children. There are many career paths available where children can decide to pursue a career, and although these career paths are numerous, they receive different levels of approval among parents. Music is one of those career paths which have received a wide range of disapproval from parents for some reasons. Parental concerns, which are the reasons for their disapproval, have been traced to certain misconceptions about the music profession. These misconceptions include the bias that musicians are immoral in character, there are no jobs, and one does not need to study music to excel in its practice. These misconceptions have been addressed, as there are many musicians and musicologists whose lifestyles can serve as models for younger ones to emulate. There are also numerous job opportunities available for people who want to pursue a music career. Thirdly, the place of training, mentorship and education in musical careers must be considered.

Finally, the career interests of the children should be the parent's foremost concern before imposing what they want on the children as a career. They should find out the child's area of interest and ensure they guide the child where necessary. They should also provide all the necessary support needed for success in whatever career field their children have followed.

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