

Funding Issues in the Visual Art Industry and Potential Opportunities, Comparative Analysis of Countries in West Africa

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Abstract

This paper discusses funding challenges in the visual art industry and the possibility of such opportunities by comparing countries in West Africa. The arts institutions indicate that the future for the Visual Arts Industry in West Africa remains bright and full of opportunities; however, several obstacles to growth and development persist in the following areas: Source of Funding, Infrastructure/Coordination, Capacity Building, Education/Training, and Exhibition/Museum. Using the BCG growth-sustenance matrix, West African countries must follow a dual approach which involves government support coupled with private sector investment, funds from abroad, crowdfunding, capacity building, collaborations, development of structures and infrastructure, art tourism, accountability and transparency for sustainable development for this creative industry.

Furthermore, narrative meaning-making is employed as a communication strategy to capture the viewers' attention about visual art in West Africa and the effects of funding on artists and art institutions. As this paper draws to a close, the author affirms the need for constant and purposeful investment in the visual art business to help the company grow long-term, preserve the cultural and artistic heritage, and boost the economic development of West African countries. This forward-thinking approach of proposing funding and promotional avenues for collaborations and partnerships in West African countries is encouraged to support the growth and sustainability of the visual art industries for the global socio-economic development of arts and culture.

The paper provides policy recommendations that can be adapted to support the growth and sustainability of the industry, including increasing government funding, encouraging private sector investment, supporting art education and capacity building, fostering collaboration and networking, building infrastructure, promoting art tourism, establishing cultural diplomacy programs, developing intellectual property policies, promoting digital platforms, and encouraging community engagement. By implementing these policy recommendations, West African countries can unlock the full potential of their visual art industries and contribute to the region's growth and development of arts and culture.

Key Words: Visual Art, Funding Issues, Countries in West Africa, Visual Art Industry, Potential Opportunities

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to give a brief background of the Visual Art industry and funding challenges in West Africa, the social and historical values of the Visual art industry, the economic potential of the industry and the role played by the Visual Art industry in societal and cultural transformation in West African countries. The most significant implication that funding challenges and potential opportunities have on the visual art industry in West African countries is the sector's stagnation. A general constraint noted was that the visual art industry in West Africa lacks infrastructure, visibility to the international market and few practising opportunities for the artists to enhance their skills and display their artwork (Allanso & Novelli, 2024). This has stunted the industry's growth, and artists and art organizations have failed to achieve the needed success.

In addition, the attractiveness of the visual art industry is that it can make a significant contribution towards the socio-economic development of the West African nations; this shows the potential for employment, as well as

revenue generation through art sales and tourism, and the preservation of art and culture within the area (Nwankwo, 2018). However, Asare (2020) mentioned that the problem is that without proper funding and backing, the industry cannot achieve these objectives. Moreover, the restricted advancement and progress of the visual art business in West Africa could be detrimental to the culture and image of the region in the broader global context (Kasfir, 2020). Art and culture are the soul of every nation. When West African countries fail to invest in the visual art industry, they will likely experience a diminishing cultural identity when competing with other nations and organizations worldwide (Gross, 2019).

Consequently, this paper is focused on the implications of funding challenges in the visual art industry and potential opportunities that could be vast and unlocking for the countries in the West African sub-region. Lack of funding has led to poor infrastructure, inadequate international engagement, and poor experience and expertise for artists and creatives (Taylor & Luckman, 2020). Due to inadequate funding and support, the industry cannot grow to its productive best and support the socio-economic development of West African nations (Serubiri, 2019). Moreover, the retracted advancement and expansion of the industry may be problematic for the region's cultural identity and visibility on the international stage. Hence, there is a need for continued and purposeful funding of the visual art industry to develop and expand the industry and maintain and grow the culture and economy of the West African nations (England et al., 2021).

The Visual Art Industry in West Africa is a thriving and complex field that contributes immensely to the region's creative economy; it comprises painting, sculpture, photography, textiles, performing arts, and digital media, among others (Myles, 2020). Art has always been integral to the West African culture, and the region has a rich artistic history that embraces the differences. The present-day West African visual art is vibrant and diverse, encompassing both traditional and modern art, where artists use local and international influences to produce new and original art (Mamvuto & Mannathoko, 2023). The Visual Art Industry plays a crucial role in the economy through sales and exhibitions of arts, as well as organizing events that create revenue and employment (Borowiecki & Greenwald, 2024). In terms of social and cultural aspects, the industry also uses art to enhance the cultural and social development of West African societies.

Several art museums, galleries, and art schools in West African countries enable artists to display their work and be supported (Bunn et al., 2020). The region also hosts several large-scale art events and fairs, such as the Dak's Art Biennale, the Lagos Photo Festival, and the FNB Joburg Art Fair (Maaba, 2023).

There are many famous visual artists have hailed from the countries of West Africa, and here are some examples:

- 1.1 **El Anatsui (Ghana/Nigeria):** A contemporary sculptor who hails from Ghana-Nigeria but practices in Nigeria, El Anatsui's work includes large installation sculptures from recycled metal foils, including bottle caps and aluminium sheets (Adedina, 2020). His works reside in museums and galleries in various parts of the world; he has been honoured several times for his work on the visual arts.
- 1.2 **Sokari Douglas Camp (Nigeria):** Sokari Douglas Camp is a Nigerian sculptor known for her large-scale steel sculptures that explore themes of identity, culture, and history. Her art pieces have been displayed in highly recognized museums and art galleries across the globe, and she is referred to as one of the most popular contemporary African artists (Nwafor, 2021).
- 1.3 **Abdoulaye Konaté (Mali):** Born in Mali, Abdoulaye Konaté is a contemporary artist who mainly uses large textile sculptures engaging the themes of political power, human rights, and the African past. He has been prominent in museums and galleries globally and has been honoured with many awards for his services in the visual arts.
- 1.4 **Bruce Onobrakpeya (Nigeria):** As for the art, Bruce Onobrakpeya's work is considered to be a part of an artistic renaissance in Nigeria and has evolved as an artist whose printmaking includes such traditional nostril African motifs and techniques (Lenssen, 2018). Many of his works are now displayed in almost every prominent museum and gallery all over the globe; he is one of the founding fathers of modern African art.
- 1.5 **Viyé Diba (Senegal):** Viyé Diba is a Senegalese artist who has painted an array of paintings that are characterized by bright colours and depict different aspects of Senegalese people's lives as well as paint a picture of social and political struggle. African celebrity artists have participated in several museums and galleries globally, and their works are considered among the best in the modern art world.
- 1.6 **Owusu-Ankomah (Ghana):** Owusu-Ankomah, a Ghanaian artist currently based in the United States of America, is another artist who has a distinctive style of painting, using fine detail in his work, depicting traditional African emblems and icons in his paintings, hence giving his social-political themed paintings an African perspective (Aidoo & Agbeshie, 2022). His art has, due course, been

showcased in some of the finest museums and galleries around the globe and is held in high esteem in the stable of contemporary African artists.

- 1.7 Chéri Samba (Democratic Republic of Congo):** Chéri Samba is one of the leading artists from Congo who worked in the art of painting and is famous for his colourful and cheerful pictures that convey the everyday life in Congo and humour marked by social and political messages (Fraiture, 2022). His creations have been displayed in prominent art museums and galleries globally. He is recognized as one of the most famous modern African artists.

The chapter has discussed the evolution of the visual art industry in West Africa, which has seen the emergence of the following great artists. Some artists have incorporated aspects of identity, culture, and history in their work and have played a key role in documenting this area's diverse culture.

However, due to several prevalent issues that are witnessed in the works produced in West Africa, the visual art industry is surrounded by several vices, such as relatively poor governmental patronage, minimal/ inadequate funding, restricted resources and technological access, and improper recognition of public appreciation and importance of the sector. Meeting these challenges calls for multi-stakeholder whose players include the governments, the private sector, civil society, and the artists in the industry.

Therefore, the presently developing visual art industry in West Africa is the crucial sector that may profit from the three elements of society and enhance the region's economy. This way, challenges would be effectively addressed, and opportunities within the industry would be effectively utilized so that the stakeholders can ensure the development of the industry and that the arts and culture of the region and many others can be enhanced worldwide.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – AGENDA SETTING THEORY

The agenda-setting theory can be used to understand funding problems facing the visual art industry and potential opportunities; considering several countries in the West African region, this theory postulates that the media can and does control which issues come to be seen as relevant and significant about the population (Mathenge, 2021). The media can help create awareness of the problems that the funding poses to the future of the visual art industry in West Africa and the possible successes it may achieve if it acquires the funding it needs.

Several relevant media outlets, such as newspapers, television, and online, apply the agenda-setting theory when it comes to providing information about the visual art industry in West Africa (Ihechu, 2019). These outlets can neutrally write and air what can go wrong with the industry, including lack of funds, structures, and exposure to the international markets (Guanah, 2021). They can also emphasize the prospects for its development, including the growth of state grant funding, private investments, and cooperation with international organizations.

In addition, comparative analysis allows showing the specifics and similarities in terms of funding for the visual art industry in the countries of West Africa, and it can be achieved using bar charts and other tools that enable the presentation of the distributions and trends of funding in the respective countries (Oke, 2023). Comparing the funding plans and schemes across the countries will show the media how other funding has been done more effectively to support the industry.

However, storytelling may serve as a means of fulfilling the communication function by explaining the recipients' experiences of funding and the overall functioning of the visual art industry in West Africa (Mitullah, 2021). The stories and real-life accounts of artists, collectors, and art lovers can be employed to document the problem in a way that makes it easily understandable. These stories can highlight the challenges artists and art organizations face in securing funding and the impact of funding on their work and livelihoods. They can also showcase success stories and examples of artists and organizations that have overcome funding challenges and achieved success.

Overall, the Agenda Setting Theory can be a powerful tool for raising awareness about the funding issues facing the visual art industry in West Africa and highlighting the potential opportunities for growth and development. By using media outlets to disseminate information, comparative analysis to illustrate funding patterns, and storytelling to connect with audiences, stakeholders can be encouraged to invest in the development of the industry. This can lead to increased government funding, private sector investments, and collaborations with international organizations, which can support the growth and sustainability of the visual art industry in West Africa.

3. FUNDING ISSUES IN THE VISUAL ART INDUSTRY

This section looks at the problems of funding in the Visual art industry in West Africa, such as lack of adequate

public funding, low government funding, little private funding, most of which is nonspecific, little or no access to international financing, poor evaluation and assessment, and finally, no money for the newcomers and experimenters.

The Visual Art Industry is one of the promising segments of the creative economy as it plays a sociocultural and economic role in different communities worldwide. However, the industry encounters several challenges, majoring in financing (Wright & Xiao, 2020). As an enabler of the growth and sustenance of the industry, the difficulty in funding is evident to be at the core of the slow growth and development of the Visual art Industry (Hirsch, 2018).

Another primary concern identified in the funding of the visual art industry is that the Government plays a minor role in the funding of this industry. Today's situation is paradoxical since the visual art industry is vital, yet there needs to be more public support and appreciation for its importance (Mutanda, 2024). This, in turn, poses a significant problem for artists and organizations in sourcing the funds and support they need. In addition, there are limited government grants for the visual art industry, and at times, the grants are likely to be unequally divided. This may reduce the chances that artists and organizations can source funds and other necessities to enable them to expand (Friedlmaier et al., 2018).

Another challenge in funding the visual arts industry is more capital investment from the private sector. Funding from the private sector for projects within the visual art industry scenario is scarce, mainly because investors will consider the industry very uncertain and this puts artists and organizations in a difficult position; they struggle and need help to come up with the required amount to create the work and maintain its growth (Currid-Halkett, 2020). This is especially so because the visual arts sector is an essential sector of the economy, and any disruption of sales, exhibitions, and events adversely impacts people's income and employment.

Another issue raised in the visual arts industry is the need for more accountability in distributing the funding received; procedures used to control financing are obscure, and those that work on the dispersal of funds may need to be better understood (Belk et al., 2022). This can lead to many distortions in addressing funding needs; hence, the efficiency of funding programs could be improved, and proper utilization of funds is compromised. Further, Whitaker (2019) noted that there is a problem in adequately evaluating and assessing the effects of funding on the visual art sector, and this can complicate the assessment of funding programs, where funding is going, and whether issues must be addressed.

Secondly, new and unknown artists may still need to be eligible for funding due to its likely focus on financing known artists and organizations; this may prevent new and creative approaches that benefit the formation of new work within the industry (Hirsch, 2018). Also, the industry involved in the visual arts in many countries, including Nigeria, may need to be able to access international funding. This is because they may need more resources and funding from those outside their region, a factor that can slow down their growth and productivity.

However, various sources of funds may present some opportunities for the industry. Alternative funding sources include international grants and funding, Crowdfunding, Corporate social responsibility, collaborations and partnerships, Government support, Art fairs, and exhibitions (Donelli et al., 2022). Alternative funding offers a broader opportunity for artists and organizations to source funds and resources that may be difficult to get locally (Rijanto, 2018).

Industry stakeholders must work cohesively using various strategies to address funding challenges and learn how to leverage opportunities. These strategies involve lobbying for government support for the industry, creating relationships with key players, using crowdfunding and foreign funding, and raising awareness of the sector's potential benefits.

This indicates that funding remains a significant problem in the development of the visual art industry. Some industry challenges include poor government support, little private investment, an absence of accountability and transparency, weakness in assessment and evaluation, and poor access to funding opportunities by new entrants and innovative artists (Clark et al., 2018). Although the following risks may threaten the game industry, there may be certain advantages:

- International grants and funding
- Crowdfunding
- Corporate social responsibilities
- Partnerships and collaborations

- Government support
- Art fairs and exhibitions.

This paper posits that resolving funding challenges in the visual art industry calls for collective action from the various players in the sector: the Government, the private sector, civil society, and the artists. The Government can improve its contribution through funding for specialization and offering incentives for private capital investment. There are ways artists and organizations can foster relations with stakeholders, use crowdfunding, find international funding sources, and raise the general public's attention to the field. Furthermore, industry stakeholders are responsible for addressing issues of fairness and equity in funding distribution, enhancing the monitoring, assessment, and evaluation of funding schemes, and ensuring that funding is accessible to risky or experimental artists.

Applying broad strategies to tackle funding challenges and harness opportunities enhances financing and the development of sustainable models for the visual art industry to support the growth of arts and culture in Nigeria and other countries. It should be acknowledged that the visual art industry is a dynamic sector that can foster social, cultural, and economic changes. It is crucial to work actively for the sector's development.

4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN WEST AFRICA COUNTRIES

The level of funding support for the visual art industry differs from one West African country to another. Funding opportunities depend on the level of governmental subsidies, private sector investment, and civil society in the industry. Here are examples.

- 4.1 Nigeria:** The promotional landscape in Nigeria is well-developed for visual art, with various government grants and incentives available and the private sector supporting this industry. (Adubasim & Sunusi, 2019). The programs include the National Endowment for the Arts, which offers grants to artists and art-related organizations, and the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund put in place by the Lagos State Government of Nigeria to support sectors like the creative arts, among others (Embu & Onoja, 2019). Further, some private sectors, like the African Arts Foundation, support artists and facilitating organizations through funds and other encouragements.
- 4.2 Ghana:** The Ghanaian visual art market is still in the growth stage, and several government funding programs and private initiatives are aimed at supporting the industry. The Government of Ghana supports art through the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture, which assists artists and organizations financially (Cooper, 2022). Simultaneously, the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre has instituted the Creative Arts Funds for the creative industry, including the visual arts (Fiagbedzi & Fio, 2022)—further, other private developments like the Nubuke Foundation fund and support artists and groups.
- 4.3 Senegal:** The visual art industry in Senegal is well developed since there are governmental support programs for artists and private sector projects (Sankalé, 2020). The Ministry of Culture supports artists and organizations by offering them grants. On the other hand, the Municipality of Dakar supports artists and organizations by funding a big art event known as the Dakar Biennale (Franco & Njogu, 2020). Additionally, several programs in the Private Companies category, like the Raw Material Company, offer support funds to artists and organizations
- 4.4 Mali:** Presently, Mali has a somewhat developing visual arts industry that needs more government subsidies, financing programs, and less private business venture support (Madichie & Hinson, 2022). Some funding is available through the Ministry of Culture for artists and organizations; however, the financing of photographers can be limited. However, the Bamako Encounters, a significant photography event, offers several funding availabilities. In this respect, there are very few activities facilitated by the private sector to propel industry.
- 4.5 Cote d'Ivoire:** Currently, Cote d'Ivoire has a developing visual arts business; numerous state-funded programs and private-sector endeavours support visual arts. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for subsidizing artists and related companies. At the same time, the National Fund for the Promotion of Art and Culture is, on the other hand, responsible for subsidizing cultural projects in any way, including the visual arts. In addition, there are different private sector programs, such as the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, which offers support to artists and art groups.

Financing the visual art industry in West African countries may be a challenge. Nigeria and Ghana have comparatively more advanced visual arts industries, with several governments and private organizations supporting them and intervening. This is particularly the case with Senegal, which boasts an established visual art industry and various possibilities for funding from the Government and other related organizations. Mali and

Cote d'Ivoire have emerged as visual art markets and some state and business actions. Nevertheless, for the encouragement and development of the visual artist, there is a need for more funding opportunities across the region to support the industry.

Besides the current Government and private funding programs, the Crowdfunding funding program is a new funding source for artists and organizations in West Africa. Crowdfunding has taken root as artists and organizations have employed websites such as Kickstarter, GoFundMe, and Indiegogo to fund their projects, exhibitions, or events. However, the deficiencies that can be mentioned regarding crowdfunding include high levels of marketing and promotion to attract the donors' attention and relatively high risk for the donors as they do not receive any security for the funds that they provide.

5. WHAT CHALLENGES DO ARTISTS AND ORGANIZATIONS FACE IN ACCESSING FUNDING IN WEST AFRICA

Visual art is one of the most significant segments in the creative industry as it is essential in developing social, cultural, and economic value for global communities. Nonetheless, the knowledge-intensive industry has had several issues, the most notable being funding. Funding plays a crucial role in the wealth and growth of the visual art industry, but due to inadequate funding, the visual art industry has yet to grow to the expected standard (Ellerson, 2024). Artists and organizations in West Africa face several challenges in accessing financing for their work, some of which include:

- 5.1 Limited Government Support:** Unlike other regions, support for arts in West Africa is usually not well developed because most governments prefer supporting sectors other than arts (Maaba, 2023). This implies that artists and other organizations can find it extremely difficult to get government funding, or they must fight for a share of the scarce resources.
- 5.2 Limited Private Sector Investment:** West African organizations that fund arts can often rely only on private sector contributions. Unfortunately, arts may be regarded as an undesirable business and, therefore, not financially sustainable and unattractive as a form of investment among investors, hence the limited funds most artists/organizations receive from this market (Kolyvas & Kostagiolas, 2024).
- 5.3 Lack of Transparency and Accountability:** The arts funding process in West Africa might be very bureaucratic, and there needs to be more accountability (Asare, 2020). This can cause challenges to artists and organizations in learning how they can access these funds or, again, why they were not funded.
- 5.4 Limited Funding Opportunities for Emerging Artists:** An emerging artist can have little or no access to most funding because most financing tends to go to established artists and organizations. This can bring a negative consequence of suppressing innovation, either by stopping fresh ideas from penetrating the industry or discouraging innovation within the context of the existing industry.
- 5.5 Limited Access to International Funding Opportunities:** West Africans and other artists and organizations may need the privilege of global funding that may not be available in the region.
- 5.6 Lack of Capacity-Building Opportunities:** This may be due to artists and organizations needing to know or having inadequate skills in applying for funding or managing the budget (Nwankwo, 2018). It can make it challenging for them to obtain financing, or if they get financing, it becomes difficult for them to utilize the financing to fund their activities.
- 5.7 Limited Evaluation and Assessment:** There could also be problems with evaluating and assessing the effectiveness of funding for the arts industry in West Africa. This can be a problem when evaluating funding programs and determining what adjustments must be made.
- 5.8 Limited Networking Opportunities:** Developing networks and partnerships with stakeholders in the creative industry can be a worrying problem for artists/Art organizations in West Africa. This can restrict their opportunities to get funding, resources, and partnerships that may come through partnerships.
- 5.9 Limited Infrastructure:** This means that the arts industry is confronted with challenging obstacles, and there is simply a lack of funding for infrastructure in West Africa. This is because studios, equipment, and other production necessities are some of the areas and resources that are restricted.
- 5.10 Limited Awareness of Funding Opportunities:** Many artists and organizations may not even be aware of funding opportunities because funding organizations and institutions sometimes do not adequately promote the available funding opportunities (Nwankwo, 2018). This may impede the chances of the group applying for funding.

Artists and organizations based in West Africa have several barriers to funding their work. Solving these issues involves working together in the industry, which means stakeholders such as the Government, private sector, civil society, and artists. These are encouraging government subsidies for the industry, creating stakeholder

relations, incorporating crowdfunding and other international funding sources, raising awareness of available funding sources, and supporting the capacity building of artists/organizations. This paper has discussed how the challenges may be considered and the opportunities utilized to keep advancing the arts and culture industry in West Africa.

6. CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL FUNDING MODELS IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Here are some case studies of successful funding models for the arts in European countries:

- 6.1 **The Netherlands:** The Netherlands has a well-developed arts market, with the Government and the private sector sourcing funds to support artistic capabilities. Dutch people value arts and various institutions are responsible for funding arts in the country, such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science and the Dutch Cultural Participation Fund (Jelinčić & Šveb, 2021). Further, the Dutch Government has also introduced other policies, such as tax incentives for private sectors to invest in arts to encourage corporation sponsorship. Another example of a successful funding model is the Dutch culture lottery, which collects funds to support various cultural projects by selling lottery tickets.
- 6.2 **United Kingdom:** The arts in the UK are funded through government grants, private finance, and charity funding from the public (Maclean et al., 2021). The Grants for the Arts, which is a government fund, funds arts organizations and projects; the Arts Council England, another government agency, commissions specific art pieces and supports arts organizations; private foundations, including the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Prince's Trust, support young artists and local arts projects (Prince et al., 2022). Britain also has a well-developed culture of philanthropy in the arts, where people and organizations contribute many funds to the arts.
- 6.3 **Germany:** Arts in Germany are well developed, and the needed financing comes from both the government and private investments. Cultural funding in Germany is complemented by the privately funded, namely the Federal Cultural Foundation and the Deutsche Bank Kunsthalle, which offer patronage to artists and community-based arts organizations (Citter et al., 2019). Furthermore, the governments of Germany have put in place tax credits for private investments in arts, thus enhancing corporate support for arts.
- 6.4 **Sweden:** Public funding, business sponsorship, and donations play an integral role in the arts in Sweden (Gianneschi & Broberg, 2019). Funding for cultural organizations and budding artists comes from a governmental body, the Swedish Arts Council, and other funding is in the private sector, such as the Wallenberg Foundation and the Swedish (Byrkovych et al., 2023). With Postcode Lottery, community arts get support. The Swedish Government has also devised specific mechanisms to facilitate tax deductions for investment by private companies in arts, which has supported corporate social responsibility in arts (Gianneschi & Broberg, 2019).
- 6.5 **Norway:** The Norwegian arts industry is funded half and half by government grants and private monies. Norway's Ministry of Culture administers cultural funds and is partly involved in funding cultural institutions and upcoming artists (Hylland, 2022). Norwegian-based organizations in the private sector are also involved in funding community arts, such as Sparebankstiftelsen DNB and the Kavli Trust, besides these, the Norwegian Government offers tax credits to private companies to spur philanthropy in the arts through investment (Hylland & Stavrum, 2018).

These funding models have been effective because they engage the Government, the private sector, and people's generosity. They also grant capital to almost all aspects of the arts, from museums to artists starting their careers to arts in community programs. In addition, they have developed policies supporting private funding of arts by exercising tax exemptions for investors in art-related projects, boosting funding for the sector. Moreover, these funding models have created clear and efficient ways of disbursing the funding, hence achieving fairness in funding.

Thus, funding models of the arts in European countries are rather diverse and will always be orienting and participating simultaneously, engaging the actors of both the public and private sectors and the state and individual donors. These funding models have introduced investments based on tax credits in the arts and procedural forms for disbursing the funds. They support programs in arts and culture for organizations, artists with the facility for creating new work, and many other community-based programs. When other countries mimic these successful funding models, it will encourage the improvement and sustenance of arts sectors, and in that way, it will support the processes of enhancing arts and cultures around the world.

7. CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL FUNDING MODELS IN WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Specific funding models for arts in West African countries are distinct from those in European countries because different meanings of the socio-economic context and the development of arts funding shape them. Nevertheless, some successful funding models in some West African countries can be taken as examples. Here are a few examples:

- 7.1 **Fonds des Arts et de la Culture (FAC) in Senegal:** The Fonds des Arts et de la Culture (FAC) is a government fund established in Senegal to support the arts and culture sector in the country; the fund provides financial assistance to individual artists, cultural associations, and organizations in the country. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism administers the fund. It operates by realizing a certain percentage of ticket sales for cultural activities and festivals in the country. Indeed, the FAC offers funds for numerous arts endeavours emphasizing theatre, music, dance, and literature.
- 7.2 **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in Nigeria:** NEA stands for the National Endowment for the Arts and promotes the arts in Nigeria. The NEA is responsible for financially supporting artists and cultural groups/institutions in the country—the NEA grants activities within most art disciplines, including visual arts, music, theatre and literature. The agency, known as the NEA, is sustained by a portion of the total funds of the federal Government.
- 7.3 **The British Council in Ghana:** The British Council is a British organization located in Ghana, and its central role is to facilitate cultural relations between Britain and Ghana. The British Council in Ghana has schemes that offer funding and support to artists and organizations, such as the Creative Enterprise Support Program, which offers skills development and stipend support to new artists and innovators. The British Council also assists in sponsoring cultural activities and festivals in Ghana, through which artists and organizations can exhibit their talents, share ideas, and gain reception from their target markets.
- 7.4 **African Arts Trust in Cote d'Ivoire:** African Arts Trust is a non-governmental organization aiming to sponsor arts in the Ivory Coast and other parts of Africa. Some important initiatives include the Artist-in-Residence Program, which supports artists and organizations in the country, enabling them to work and develop new material. The African Arts Trust also sponsors cultural performances and festivals, such as those in Cote d'Ivoire, which allow artists and art organizations to perform and reach out to the public.
- 7.5 **Artist Network in Nigeria:** It is imperative to point out that Artist Network is a non-profit organization that promotes arts and activism in Nigeria. Through several programs and the Artist Fund, this organization supports artists and activists in the country and offers grants for art projects related to political and social issues. The Artist Network also encourages cultural events and festivals in Nigeria where artist/organizations get a podium to do their performances and events.

These funding models have implemented formulas to support individual artists, cultural associations and organizations because they offer financial help and other assets for various arts projects. They also disbursed their funds through accountable means, either run by government entities or non-profit organizations with experience in funding for the arts. Some of these funding sources are also a small percentage of tickets or government budgets that make funding for the arts sustainable. Lastly, these funding models offer capacity-building opportunities and provide for emerging artists and creative entrepreneurship, thus aiding in forming a sustainable arts funding environment in the country.

Funding models for the arts in West African countries often differ from those in European countries, but some successful models can serve as case studies. These models provide financial assistance and resources for various arts initiatives and have transparent and accountable processes for allocating funding. They also often provide capacity-building opportunities and support for emerging artists and creative entrepreneurs. By adopting successful funding models and building a supportive ecosystem for the arts, West African countries can promote the growth and sustainability of their arts sectors and contribute to the development of arts and culture globally.

8. BEST PRACTICES FOR FUNDING IN THE VISUAL ART INDUSTRY IN WEST AFRICA

This part outlines the available strategies on how to enhance funding for the visual art industry in West Africa; these strategies include enhancing funding from the public, enhancing government funding mechanisms, encouraging more funding from the private sector, enhancing access to international funding, entrenching principles of accountability and transparency, enhancing evaluation and assessment, and, last but not least, encouraging funding for young, upcoming, and experimental artists (Appiah, 2023).

The best way can be summarized as complex when funding the visual art industry in West Africa because the

sector is not well endowed in terms of financial and infrastructural resources. However, some of the best strategies can be implemented to ensure the future sustenance of this industry. Here are a few examples:

- 8.1 Establish Government Support:** To effectively sustain this industry, governments should have funding programs, tax credits and other means of support for visual art. Governments may decide to issue direct financial support to individual artists or art groups or set up mechanisms through which investors may be enticed to support the arts. Moreover, governments can create conducive legal frameworks enabling industry development by constructing more culture centres or availing of public arts finance.
- 8.2 Leverage International Funding Opportunities:** The West African visual art sector may gain from global funding solutions like international grants, fellowships, and residency programs (Gregory & Rogerson, 2018). It has become important for governments, art organizations, and individual artists interested in such opportunities to seek these resources since they may not be locally available
- 8.3 Promote Crowdfunding:** Thus, funding class can be a valuable tool for a single artist or small organization that works within the sphere of art. The Government and art-related organizations can help advertise the available crowdfunding platform and, at the same time, assist artists and organizations in understanding how to embark on effective crowdfunding initiatives.
- 8.4 Support Art Education and Capacity Building:** Improved support for art education and general capacity development will go a long way in enhancing a healthier and sustainable visualization of art in West Africa. This can be done by funding colleges and universities, giving grants to art representation groups, and subsidizing art associations to enhance artists' training and capacity to independently manage their projects and companies (Alexander, 2018).
- 8.5 Encourage Collaboration and Networking:** Organizations, associations and artists can work together and express themselves collectively to enhance more surrounding networks among the West African visual arts community (Nwanna, 2021). Governments and art organizations should also organize occasions enabling artists and organizations to interact and determine how best to work together. This can assist in the search for new sources of funding, publicity and development.
- 8.6 Building Infrastructure:** There is also the need to open art galleries, museums, and other facilities to support visual art businesses in the West African region properly. Forces related to this factor include Governments, art organizations, and private sector players who must come together to expand infrastructure and upgrade current structures to accommodate the industry's growth.
- 8.7 Promote Art Tourism:** Considering the arguments above, art tourism could offer a viable income generation mode for the visage of the visual art business in West Africa. It implies that governments and art organizations should ensure that the region's artistic and cultural endowment is marketed to reach more local and international visitors. It can create income sources for artists and art organizations and help promote artists' creations or art events.
- 8.8 Establish Transparent and Accountable Processes:** This counterargument points out that since the industry will be receiving funds from the public, there should be transparent and efficient ways of disbursing the supplies (Amsami, 2014). Lay down policies and procedures that can be followed in the distribution of funds, make competitive bids in the distribution of the funding and ensure that "reporting back" in the various funding programmes is done frequently.
- 8.9 Foster Community Engagement:** It is vital to engage the communities to assist in creating favourable conditions in the visual art industry in West Africa. It is always important for governments and art organizations to interact with local communities to be acquainted with their demands and involvement of the communities in both planning and implementing art events to enable community members to embrace arts by working as artists, collectors and fans.

Therefore, supporting the visual art industry in West Africa will need to involve the following dollar-framed strategies: government support, private sector funding, grants, crowdfunding, developing the capacity of visual artists, collaborations, increasing infrastructure, art tourism, legal business-like structures, and public participation. On the same note, it is evident that by implementing these best practices, the West African nation's visual art industries will grow and become sustainable, thus positively contributing to the sustenance of arts and culture worldwide and the development of the socio-economic sectors within the region.

9. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF FUNDING ON THE VISUAL ART INDUSTRY IN WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES

The influence of funding towards the visual art industry in West African countries has differences in the funding levels, proportions, and elucidation of the funding programs. Here is a comparative analysis of the impact of

funding on the visual art industry in three West African countries: Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal. About the class of destinations, the detailed breakdown is as follows: Meanwhile, the class of destinations to Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal is as follows:

- 9.1 Nigeria:** Nigeria's very active visual art industry has its funding from the Government, private sectors and charitable organizations; through the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Nigerian Government offers funding to the visual arts (Hutter, 2023). The sources of funding for the industry have been obtained through exhibitions, workshops, and artist-in-residence programs through the support of the NEA. Other pathways that have aided the industry's growth include the Art X Lagos fair, an initiative of the private sector, primarily through sponsorship by the Access Bank (Madichie & Hinson, 2022c). However, the role of funding in the growth of this industry in Nigeria has been constrained by unpredictable funding, issues related to how the funding is made, and inadequacies in infrastructure.
- 9.2 Ghana:** Visual arts, as a cultural industry in Ghana, is relatively budding through government grants, private investments from local and international donors, and personal charity. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, and the Government of Ghana fund visual arts, while the British Council and Nubuke Foundation are private organizations that fund emergent artists and community arts (Klutse, 2018). Funding has positively influenced this industry in Ghana as funding has helped create new talents, organize exhibitions and events and create new art domains. Nevertheless, the industry is grappling with weaknesses, including limited exhibition infrastructure and the industry's ubiquity on the international front.
- 9.3 Senegal:** Visual art in Senegal is well developed because there seems to be governmental and private body backing. Under the Government of Senegalese, the Fonds des Arts et de la Culture (FAC) assists in financing the visual arts in the country (Edeh et al., 2023). At the same time, there are other banks or private organizations, such as Société Générale Senegal and Total Senegal, which also sponsor cultural events and exhibitions. The effect of funding has been relatively buoyant in Senegal since funding has encouraged the nurturing of new talents, putting together exhibitions, and the creation of new venues for arts in Senegal. However, there have been several challenges, including limited exposure to operations in other countries and the inability to have better infrastructure.

Therefore, the influence that funding has on the visual art industry in West African countries can be attributed to funding level, funding distribution and quality of funding initiative. Like most African countries, Nigeria boasts a vibrant visual arts industry, but funding has a shameful record of being erratic and insufficient infrastructure (Madichie & Hinson, 2022a). However, Ghana has benefited from government funding, particularly for developing industry and private funds; challenges such as inadequate structures and limited exports are still evident. The industry in Senegal has grown robustly over the years with the help of government funding and support from private entities. However, the challenges they still experience include a lack of experience in competing internationally and a lack/of resources in terms of infrastructure (Madichie & Hinson, 2022b).

Overall, consistent and deliberate commitment toward the visual art industry and clearly defined and measurable funding processes and distributions remain key to enhancing the industry's development in West African countries. Further, investment in building the infrastructure, having training, gaining experiences from international exposure, and having consciousness from the society for the artists and art organizations are some recommendations that could help build a strong stained and interconnected visual art community. By implementing these strategies and assessing their effectiveness, West African countries can boost the development of visual arts fields, thus adding richness to the progress and diversification of the art world across the globe.

10. CONCLUSION

The visual arts industry in West Africa has the potential to expand to stellar heights if efforts are made to address some critical issues like funding, physical facilities, human resources, and marketing. Therefore, to achieve such development, the West African countries must provide support to the creative industries in the following ways: government support, private sector investment, funding opportunities from international organizations, crowdfunding, capacity building, collaboration, improvement of necessary infrastructures, art tourism, accountability and transparency, and stakeholder's engagement.

West African countries can consider other possible funding strategies/programs in the future that utilize technology and innovation to finance the visual art industry. For example, blockchain can sell and share art pieces, and VR and AR technologies can be implemented for realistic art and exhibitions.

Furthermore, West African countries can extend cooperation with other countries and international organizations, artists, and art institutions. Such collaborations may bring in new funding sources, visibility, and opportunities to exchange works and raise awareness of West African art and culture at the international level (Hind, 2020).

Finally, governments of the West African countries could promote the nurturing of new talents and the creation of new art platforms to enhance the field further. This will have to involve a joint effort by governments, art organizations, and various stakeholders in the private sector to aggregate funds to support and develop the young talents and the founders of creative entrepreneurship, as well as to open new spaces for exhibiting the works of artists of West Africa and the development of new cultural institutions. The vision for funding the visual art industry in the West African region will be more of a long-term process. It will need constant and intelligent work and the cooperation of all the interested parties. With these progressive funding tactics, countries in the West African region can foster the development of their visual arts industries, support the arts and culture worldwide, and support the overall socio-economic growth of the area.

11. Policy Recommendations for Visual Arts in West Africa

Based on the comparative analysis of the impact of funding on the visual art industry in West African countries, here are some policy recommendations that can be adapted to support the growth and sustainability of the industry:

1. **Increase Government Funding:** When it comes to funding for the future of the visual art industry, governments can raise money to fund young talents and new art spaces. We also can form strategies that will ensure a proper way of administering the funds with particular reference to accountability so that the amount of funding given out is appropriately used.
2. **Encourage Private Sector Investment:** To promote the industry, governments can offer tax incentives to make it financially viable for the private sector to invest. It is also possible for them to be encouraged to provide sponsorship for exhibitions, buy artworks, and support programs and projects for the arts.
3. **Support Art Education and Capacity Building:** The sensitization of supporting art education and building talents can effectively enhance and stabilize visual art in West Africa. Ministries responsible for the arts, art associations, and universities play the role of offering training on how artists can improve their skills and enhance their capacity to manage their businesses and art organizations.
4. **Foster Collaboration and Networking:** West African artists and art organizations can generate improved working relations for greater collaboration and networking for regional visual artists. As for opportunities, there is nothing like people contact, meaning that governments and art organizations must foster contact between the artists/organizations. This can open new possibilities for finding more funding, visibility, and expansion.
5. **Build Infrastructure:** Constructions of artistic public facilities, including art galleries, museums, and exhibition halls, can also contribute to the development of a favourable milieu for the advancement of the visual art business in West Africa. Local and central governments, artists' associations, art organizations, and private sectors can play an important role in establishing new infrastructure and upgrading the existing structures necessary for developing this industry.
6. **Promote Art Tourism:** As such, art tourism has the potential to generate a noteworthy stream of revenue for the visual art business in West Africa. It also suggests that governments and art organizations must publicize the region's artwork and culture to the people and tourists. It can also create profits for artists and art organizations by selling works of art and advertising the artwork.
7. **Establish Cultural Diplomacy Programs:** In this regard, cultural diplomacy programs can contribute to advancing the course of the visual art industry in West Africa worldwide. Thus, institutions and ministries of culture with art organizations should develop cultural exchange programs, artists in residence, and other projects that will help disseminate works by West African artists to other countries.
8. **Develop Intellectual Property Policies:** Developing strong intellectual property policies can help protect the rights of artists and art organizations and incentivize investment in the industry. Governments are, therefore, in a position to formulate policies that seek to safeguard artists' copyrights while at the same time promoting the creation and sale of the artworks, as discussed below.
9. **Promote Digital Platforms:** Digital media can assist in making all artists and art organizations access an audience and customers. Authorities and art organizations can encourage artists and art organizations to use social media and online tools for marketing, sales, and building relations and offer support and assistance related to using the online tools to the artists and organizations.
10. **Encourage Community Engagement:** Encouraging community engagement can create a more supportive environment for the visual art industry in West Africa. Governments and art organizations

can engage with local communities to understand their needs and preferences, involve them in the planning and executing of art events, and encourage them to participate in the industry as artists, collectors, and supporters.

By adopting these policy recommendations, West African countries can promote the growth and sustainability of their visual art industries, contribute to the development of arts and culture globally, and enhance the region's socio-economic development. These policy recommendations are not exhaustive; each country must tailor its policies to its specific context. Nevertheless, these policy recommendations provide a starting point for governments, art organizations, and other stakeholders to work together to support the growth and sustainability of the visual art industry in West Africa.

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