

Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

Education is considered the key to effective development strategies. Entrepreneurship is the master key that can unlock the potential of Youths through acquisition of appropriate skills relevant to the world of work and for the development of the individual in particular and national economy in general. No effective development will be achieved under the production of graduates that have no relevant skills that will get them engaged on job for profitability to themselves and the larger society. It is against this back drop that this paper examines the roles of Vocational and Technical Education in Nigeria characteristics of Nigeria Economy, Entrepreneurship and Development of small, and medium enterprises. The paper also outlines what new class of entrepreneurship can do, identify and discussed challenges faced by entrepreneurs in developing countries as well as suggestions and recommendations that will enhance a new class of entrepreneurs who will appreciate the crucial role of knowledge and innovation in the economy.

Keywords: Vocational and Technical Education, Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria today, transition from school to the World seems to create problems for young school leavers. Their ability to adopt school-based knowledge, skills, attitude and competencies to work often depends on how adequately exposed they are to real-life business and office environment while they were in school. It has been an established fact that the formal and non-formal education system as practiced in Nigeria and most African countries patterned after the British public schools has resulted in the production of graduates for job, that are not suitable.

The geometrical progress of the unemployed in Nigeria today has shown that most graduate from higher Institutions seem not to possess requisite entrepreneurial skills needed for proper transition from school to the world of work. To buttress this assertion, Okwuanaso (2000) pointed out that many graduates who go to work cannot fix in perfectly because they lack the expected skills required in the work place. Yahya (2007) equally expressed the view that the type of education offered to our students has constrained their entrepreneurial capability and is unable to equip them for success in the word of business. The result of the study carried out by Okebukola (2006) confirmed that most Nigerian graduates are deficient in self-reliance and entrepreneurial skills.

The major problem with our country today is our inability to assess the true needs of our people and try to match them with appropriate training, equipment, and adequate funding that will facilitate the acquisition of the right skills and competencies needed for proper adaptation within the environment of practice. Since most Nigerian tertiary institutions seems not to have all it takes in terms of equipment and facilities to equip the young graduates with necessary skills and competencies, it then become necessary for schools to be creative. Creativity involves the use of skills and the imagination to produce new or work of art (Aornby,

2006). Creativity means thinking about problems in a new way therefore, using entrepreneurial as an innovation could lead to study creativity and manipulative potentials for the benefit of humanity.

STATE AND ROLES OF VTE IN NIGERIA

Vocational and Technical Education play a crucial role in the transformation of an economy and the consideration here is entrepreneurship for sustainable development through the instrumentality of Vocational and Technical Education, in other words what roles do VTE play in entrepreneurship for sustainable development? Is there any link between Vocational, Technical Education and entrepreneurship to bring about sustainable development? Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) is a vital instrument for harnessing the forces of nature and transforming raw materials into goods and services for better quality of life.

The present depressed state of the Nigerian economy and the poor state of public facilities are manifestations of our inability to properly utilize the existing body of knowledge in vocational and Technical Education for the benefit of the Nigerian society. Adeoti, Odekunle & Adeyinka (2010) denotes this knowledge gap as innovation deficit. It is worthy of note that past policies on industrialization and economic development have been very weak with regard to technology, explicit and implicit linkages within the economic system, internalization, adaptation and adoption of foreign technology and the development of enabling environment for rapid technology development.

Paradoxically, our history is replete with technologies ranging from the Igbo Ukwu metal works to the blast furnace of Saki, the black-smithery of Awka, iron smelting of Ajilete, the Junkun salt mines, the dye pot of Kano and Benin moat. Others are the architecture and construction of the Zaria Mosque, the war canoes of the delta Ijaw, the enormous barges of Kede people and irrigation on the mambila plateau among others. These attest to our historical capability as a people to generate, create, initiate and innovate laudable ideas scientifically (NISER, 2001).

In Nigeria, scientific and technological development is considered a luxury to be pursued only after economic problems have been resolved. At present, the Nigeria economy is characterized by:

- Heavy dependence on crude oil as a major revenue earner, concomitant with deterioration in agricultural production, culminating in excessive food importation.
- Undue dependence of industrial sector on imported inputs.
- Gross inadequacy of research and development facilities and concentration of available facilities on the development of non —frontier technologies
- Essentially consumers-oriented tendencies
- Ill — focused educational system
- Poor transportation and communication facilities.

The goal of government has been the development of an indigenous technological capability will enable the nation to cope with these problems. The importance of indigenous technologies in any country cannot be over-emphasized as it is a precondition for building technological capabilities and for sustaining domestic efforts aimed at effectively adopting and utilizing imported technologies. Furthermore, successful industrial development lies in the ability to utilize available technologies, equipment and facilities effectively and efficiently.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

The importance of SMEs in Industrialization has been realized in Europe and North America since the 19th Century and later in Asia and South America since the middle of the 20th century. In these places, in spite

of the noticeable development and technological superiority of large — scale enterprise, the role of SMEs is enshrined in their industrial policy blueprint due to the proven resilience of SMEs. More recently, the critical role SMEs has been established in the economic development of countries like India Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan and Mexico. Small business is a vital source of innovation and job creation. They help barge companies to gain ready access to new products and markers through equity investments in small companies and R & D contracts with them. They are also most appropriate for absorption and training of the ever-increasing graduates of educational institutions.

The role of entrepreneurs in the process of innovation is very significant since they are the main users of innovations. Entrepreneurship is a means of stimulate innovation in products, services and techniques, increase productivity, and help companies retain some of their best and brightest employees. Therefore, if a company wants to be innovative, it must learn how to manage entrepreneurs and develop new strategies for them to work within the organization. It is now widely recognized that no process of industrialization can be successfully implemented or sustained without a very large number of entrepreneurs. Most entrepreneurs in Nigeria have low level of education and, because industrial and technological entrepreneurship is extremely complex, risky and capital — intensive, these entrepreneurs follow the path of least resistance, and go into trading and other non — productive sectors of the economy. Therefore, Nigeria needs a new class of entrepreneurs who will appreciate the crucial role of knowledge and innovation in the economy. The new class of entrepreneurs will be able to:

- Analyze and prioritize technologies with the aim of understanding their strategic and competitive implication;
- Design new business and products based on trends in demographics, lifestyles, technology, etc.
- Think globally and internationally;
- Understand customers' behavior and anticipate and prepare for changes in such behaviour in future;
- Continuously learn new ways of improving business by aggressive acquisition of knowledge from within and without;
- Invest heavily on innovation, training and retraining, quality improvement programmes, machinery upgrading, continuous improvement of the manufacturing process, and aggressive sales and marketing techniques; This can mainly be achieved through government assistance by:
 - Providing infrastructure
 - Constructing and maintaining functional industrial parks and incubators.
 - Showing greater commitment to the development of the capital sector.
 - Nurturing the emergence of a new type of industrial employment;

CHALLENGES TO THE ENTREPRENEUR IN NIGERIA

The challenges faced by entrepreneurs in developing countries are monumental and quite similar. They are as follows:

1. **Lack of Credit Facilities:** Potential Nigerian entrepreneurs go through many hardships to access credit for business through there is a wide range of financial institutions offering business loans, they change high interest rate, deterring aspiring entrepreneurs. For instance, major banks change rates as much 28%, deterring potential entrepreneurs who are mostly low-income earners. Other obstacles faced by entrepreneurs include intimidating collateral conditions set by banks and other lending institutions.
2. **Corruption:** Widespread corruption in the form of bribe among others make the procurement of licenses, permits, goods and services from government agencies and even the payment of taxes and levies difficult for non-conforming customers.
3. **Inconsistent Government Policies:** Lack of continuity in government policies constraints entrepreneurs to lose interest in the business environment as they are not able to safely project the

future of investment.

4. **Multiple Taxation:** Nigeria's companies income Tax Act (CITA) approve only 39 taxes and levies, there are over 500 levies and taxes imposed by state and local government agents. These taxes are questionable and where they are genuine, are mostly duplicated and this has the effect of increasing the cost of doing business.
5. **Poor State of the Country Infrastructure:** Infrastructure which is deteriorating and non — existent in many places has tremendously raised the cost of doing business in Nigeria. The state of the Country's road makes it hard for entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector to transport produce from farms to factories. According to the World Bank, the pace of Nigeria's socio-economic development and grow this below its expected capacity. This is mostly because of the erratic supply of electricity which has negative affected many business. The outcome of power problems has prompted entrepreneurs to generate power with expensive alternatives that in turn increase production cost and make products uncompetitive due to high prices.
6. **Failure to adapt to Changing Business Environment:** Majority of those who venture into micro, small and medium Enterprises (MSMEs) do so to make money but often lack relevant and adequate information about the business. Where problems arise. Most of these business owners lack sufficient problem; solving skills and find it hard to survive. With the growth in the telecommunications sector since the introduction of GSM in 2002, Nigeria has become one of the fastest— growing ICI markets Worldwide. This presents a challenge to entrepreneurs who have not embraced technology, and who are finding it hard to remain relevant in the competitive business environment. For existing and potential MSMEs to survive and be relevant, they must adapt to the changing business environment and embrace technology.
7. **Low Standard of Education:** Education is the key to knowledge and it is crucial to the making of an entrepreneur. The contemporary World is a global village and since an intending entrepreneur must be conversant with the qualities required of him.
8. **Security Issues:** Where there is no guarantee of security of lives and properties, it is difficult to sustain a successful venture. According to Agbeze, (2012) Nigeria has become a hothed of hostage taking and similar crimes.
9. **Entrepreneurship Activities in Nigeria is primarily base on Necessity:** The aim of a business determines how far it will go. Is a business solely to make fast money? Is it to spread more time with friends and family members? It is to be one's own boss? If these are the major reasons for starting business, if is wrong? Experts counsel that business should be satisfied because of passion for the venture.
10. **Nigeria is Associated with high demand for expensive foreign goods and services.** Most citizens have negative attitude towards made-in-Nigeria goods of service.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been observed that technology used in the Industrialized Countries is not suitable for our economy. Therefore, if Nigeria is to transit into development, it must have access to tools and machines that required for labour — intensive production methods.

Considering the challenges and prospects, if Nigeria is to promote sustainable development and dignity of life for its citizens, the existing patterns of development, including the Entrepreneurship building capacity efforts must be re-examined and revolutionized.

Since Nigeria remains a major importer of technology, it must take some basic steps to import appropriate technologies. The effective selection of technology requires information and evaluation. Most enterprises in Nigeria do not possess technological information, and more importantly, seldom known where it can be obtained. Therefore, the Country should establish a national data bank containing detailed information of all

technological innovations in our research institutions, Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education.

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