

UTILIZING THE CONCEPT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is the pipeline into the reality of socio-economic independence, in-depth creativity and the resourcefulness endowed on a people by nature and their environments. While conventional white-collar jobs are a mere routine that chains people to stereotype lifestyle for a whole or most parts of their lives, entrepreneurship fans into flame the creative geniuses in the ordinary person thus providing a platform for indigenous technological innovation, giving room for improvement overtime and consciously setting into motion the wheel of sustainable development. This paper presents a growing concept of re-defining entrepreneurship as a tool for societal liberation, breaking the boredom of routine and putting the responsibility of environment t and mindset. Finally, this paper highlights some notable challenges and short falls of sustainable development and concludes by proffering realistic solutions through achievable recommendations.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, creativity, indigenous, technology innovations, sustainable development.*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is an emerging concept for indigenous development, for every society. It is the means by which the society liberates itself from the boredom of routine stereotype white-collar jobs to a more creative, solution providing and self-empowerment drive for individual development, continuous improvement leading to sustainable development.

Alberti, Sciascia and Poli (2004), define entrepreneurship as the structured conveyance of entrepreneurship competencies, which in turn refers to the concepts, skills and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth oriented ventures. Another perspective of entrepreneurship is the term by someone is defined as having innovative ideas and skillfully transforms them into profitable activities (Omolaye 2006).

Entrepreneurship is the solution concept particularly in a country like Nigeria where we are dependent on foreign finished goods and almost 80% percent import driven in basic consumable goods. Entrepreneurship is the means through which the people are encouraged to develop indigenous technology that can provide solution to their immediate basic needs and translate same to addressing fundamental societal needs through progressive and sustainable development.

Entrepreneurship is globally recognized as an indisputable and indispensable tool for the transformation of a society. Each society desires that its citizens are knowledgeable enough; possess appropriate occupational skills and develop acceptable attitudes that can make them useful to themselves as well as to the society. These expectations place tremendous responsibilities on the government to create an enabling environment through the provision of basic amenities, physical structures, flexible policies and provision of access to capital. This is in addition to the provision of security and protection from undue market fluctuations and competitions caused by unchecked influx of foreign goods to compete unfavorably with indigenous goods in the local markets. Suffices to say that the sincerity of the government in the pursuit of these objectives and the implementation and continuity of an achievable national development plan, irrespective of changes in government, political parties and their ideologies, will guarantee sustainable development in any society, even in this great nation called Nigeria.

Definition of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a concept as well as an art of skills development and venture creation leading to indigenous technology. It has great impact a helping individual to acquire dynamic business skills and insights which will engender curiosity and thus giving people the useful tool and desired exposure for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. Entrepreneurship is therefore viewed as the new concept that promotes economic independence from the boredom of routine and stereotype of white-collar jobs to skills development, acquisition and new venture creation.

The term entrepreneurship comes from the French word 'Entreprendre' which means enterprising, displaying bravery and daring in an attempt to solve some tasks. It is being very able and indigenous in business creation and dealings. Entrepreneurship can be viewed from these different perspectives and definitions.

- (a). Entrepreneurship is the study of a person who coordinates, manages, integrates and controls an enterprise with a view to making entrepreneurial profit.
- (b). Entrepreneurship is the symbol of business tenacity and achievement.
- (c). An entrepreneur is a person who sees and recognizes an opportunity where other people see chaos and confusion.

For every entrepreneur, the success of business is dependent on the solution it is set to provide and the sustainability and growth of the business is fundamentally based on the personality traits of the entrepreneur. It is therefore the need for achievement, creativity, innovation, and propensity to take risk, independence and leadership that forms the basis for the attitude for prime movement, risk bearing and innovation.

Entrepreneurship also helps the plight of the retired and the aged of the society eradicating boredom and overdependence which is the secret fear of so many when the word retirement is mentioned. It is in the attempt to denounce this secret fear that some organizations have begun to take proactive measures by organizing pre-retirement entrepreneurial trainings for their potential retirees and these trainings are almost always entrepreneurial in nature.

Concept of Entrepreneurship

According to Adenuga (2012), entrepreneurship is the willingness, skills, ability, capacity and drive to harness all investment opportunities. It includes all the skills and drive necessary to harness all available resources in order to achieve a given objective. Kanu and Onwuike (2008) define entrepreneurship as the process of planning and organizing small and medium resources to create, develop opportunity where other people see chaos and confusion. For every entrepreneur, the success of business is dependent on the solution to problem that meets people's needs. According to Egai (2009), entrepreneurship is a deliberate planned process of actions that is aimed at transforming a country's economy by promoting a positive enterprise culture, enterprise creation and expansion and in turn creates employment for the people. Further on the above, Alawe (2004) defines entrepreneurship as a process that involves many activities performed in circle such establishing of business operation, sustaining success and responding to people's needs. This is done by utilizing resources, materials and non – materials, personnels, physical assets, human skills, capital and information as well as energy. It is always geared towards benefits such as profit realization, poverty alleviation, socio- economic independence, employment generation, power accumulation and the achievement of self worth.

Entrepreneurship is a vehicle for achieving socio- economic and sustainable development of the society. Thus entrepreneurship is a means of equipping the people through skills acquisition in different vocational trades to make them self employed, independence and in financially buoyant. The pillars of entrepreneurship are rooted creativity and innovation which is the basis for indigenous technological development. New business venture creation is highly risky but it creates new opportunities for budding ideas, skills and crafts development leading to actual problems solving in the immediate environment. Innovation, therefore, is defined as changes to existing processes or new ways of doing old things. Innovations can also be defined as incremental, radical and revolutionary change in thinking; products processes or organization (Wikipedia). Innovation is also viewed as intentionally bringing into existence something new that can be sustained and repeated successfully and which has some value or utility (Selmon,2000). In the concept of sustainable development, innovation can be viewed as intentionally bringing into existence and practice something new so as to enhance performance and growth through improvement in efficiency and effectiveness. It is therefore practicable to say that entrepreneurship is the adaptation of innovation, sustainability of ideas and process for continuous progressive improvement which in the long run is the bane for sustainable development.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

According to world English dictionary, development is the act or the process of growing, progressive or developing. Sustainable National Development refers to the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens. The measurement of improvement may be material or social, with an emphasis on reducing poverty, affordable and available welfare packages and community oriented projects e.t.c. (Government and Politics International Organizations 2015). Nigeria is a nation that consist of different ethnic groups, tribes and many other races, ethnicities and nationals as part of the mass forming its population and essential to it existence. In order to actualize sustainable development, there is the need for all these different facets of the society to be melted together in assimilation which can only be achieved through a patriotic commitment to the national agenda. The importance of entrepreneurship to sustainable development needs to be

emphasized, re – addressed and re- positioned for proper enhancement of the lives of the ordinary citizens.

Entrepreneurship is the best legacy any country can give to her citizens and this is critical to improve the chances of sustainable development in the society. Issues of sustainable development are multi- disciplinary in nature, therefore understanding them and developing\their resolution requires multi-disciplinary approach. This therefore places a demand on the elected and appointed leaders at all levels to be patriotic will full nationalistic ideals which will eventually contribute significantly and positively to sustainable development.

Sustainable development is a growing concern and it develops in stages, from the individual approach where the ordinary citizen is trained and equipped in entrepreneurship skills and empowered for self – reliance and economic independence. The next stage is sustainable development at the organizational level, where organizations are motivated to recognize, tap, harness and utilize the abundant natural, material and human resources within their environment or sphere of influence to produce basic common goods and services and progressively improve on the processes thereof.

This takes us to the ultimate stage of sustainable development at government level which places a demand on the government to provide the physical and capital structures, enabling business environment realistic and sustainable policies and programs geared towards providing security , access to small and medium scale funding and the uphill tasks of entrenching laws that will guarantee trans-governmental sustainable development plans. This is possible if and when the three arms of government (the legislative, the judiciary and the executive) will harness efforts in developing and adopting a transparent national development plan that will be trans – generational, make it a policy frame work cascaded down to all levels as action plans to guide budget implementation, government focus, and continuity irrespective of partisan or individual ideologies.

Entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Nigeria is surrounded with a myriad of challenges many of which are enormous. Our dearly beloved country Nigeria is already neck-deep into the mud of poverty, unemployment, ignorance propelled by religious bigotry, pervasive corruption, fraud, tribalism, ethnicity and religious sentiments. Things went so far this bad because we are more of a reactive society than a proactive one. Recovery and reversal of these decays will take considerable time and will require a watchful scrutiny, multidimensional approach with patriotic ideals and human commitment to the nation in cementing the differences of Nigeria ‘s many challenges and pave way for entrepreneurship that will guarantee sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION

In order for entrepreneurship to become a positive and workable tool to the achievement and continuity of sustainable development, the following recommendations must be observed, adhered to and complied with.

1. A new curriculum should be designed or existing curriculum enhanced to accommodate the new vision of entrepreneurship training and skill development from foundation to fruition in the lives of the citizens of Nigeria.
2. Entrepreneurship education should be introduced and made compulsory in schools at all levels to promote self – discovery, human improvement and skills development from foundation to fruition.
3. Making optimal utilization of the immediate, yet abundant human, materials and natural resources within the environment and sphere of influence.
4. Government and their agencies should be transparent and patriotic enough to develop a National Development Plan that will not only be trans- generational but also trans – partisan, and trans- administrative through government tenures irrespective of changes in time, ideologies and personalities in power.
5. A mechanism should be put in place where all arms of the government both vertically (Executive, Legislative and Judiciary), and horizontally (Federal, States and local governments), can be called to order where there is mis – direction of policy implementation especially in the areas of citizens’ rights to a conducive entrepreneurship environment.
6. Citizens should imbibe the spirit of creativity and independence by taking proactive steps of venturing into entrepreneurship and skills development instead of waiting endlessly for the government to provide white – collar jobs.
7. All hands must be on deck by both government and citizens to ensure that all our everyday basic needs are met by entrepreneurial efforts and thus project our National pride and balance of trade by reducing considerably our over – dependence on the importation of basic consumables.

CONCLUSION

In Nigeria, it is no doubt that entrepreneurship is a formidable tool that can be used to reduce citizens over – dependence on government for the provision of white – collar jobs that are largely becoming an illusion and also help government to create solution to the basic needs of its citizens thereby reducing over-dependence on importation. The solution to these myriads of challenges lies in the inscriptions under Nigeria’s coat of arms; peace and progress, unity and faith. The government must strive, through policies, visions, ideologies, justice, equity, and fairness so that Nigerians can be united in purpose, have faith in the ideals of the nation and through entrepreneurship, help to achieve measurable progress and guarantee peace for the future of all Nigerians even those yet unborn. This is the way forward to sustainable development in Nigeria.

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