



**ADEQUATE ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT:
A PANACEA FOR SELF-RELIANCE**

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ABSTRACT

The need for society and or individual self-reliance is not particularly new in the history of human being in general and in Nigeria in particular. Nigerians have for example, sought and pressed for independence and self-determination from colonial rule and in October, 1960 were granted. It is often said that self-reliance cannot be achieved without self-freedom, and so there was the justification to seek, first for political independence. It was soon realized that being merely politically independent as it were, did not mean much, unless it is matched with economic self-reliance. The term self-reliance may be defined as the ability to be self-sustaining economically without the anxiety and agony of desperately seeking for assistance. At the level of individual, self-reliance is having or ability to have the necessities of life. One of the problems we have in Nigeria today is how to inculcate the spirit and virtue of self-reliance. This study addresses the issues of self-reliance and realizes that self-reliance can be achieved through proper entrepreneurial training and education. The target audience in the realization of self-reliance objectives, the study suggests, should start with graduates, unemployed, school leavers, subsistent farmers and the disabled, as they are in greater need of employment opportunities. The methodological approach, suggests the use of train the educators, mounting workshops and seminars and employing the services of consultants and specialists.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial, Risk, Self-reliance, Self-sustenance, Skill.

INTRODUCTION

The quest for self-reliance of individual and or nation is not a new concept in the economic history of any nations. The same can be said to be true for Nigeria. The Nigerian struggle for emancipation from the colonial administration in the 50's was a demonstration in this regard.

Nigeria as a nation soon came to realize after independence in 1960, that mere political independence was not enough, unless it is matched with enough economic independence. The concept of self-reliance is well ingrained in economic independence, whether at the level of the individual or nation.

It was the recognition of this very important need for economic independence and to reinforce the spirit of self-reliance that gave rise to the famous Arusha Declaration of February 1967 in which the former Tanzanian president, Julius Nyerere urged African leaders to strive to match economic independence with political independence. It is by doing this, that politically independence countries can justify their sovereign status. One can imagine how disappointed the former Tanzanian president has been, considering how many African countries have painfully remained enslaved economically after decades of political independence.



The Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree in the early 70s and the indigenization decree of 1977 were a demonstration by the Federal Government to make the country and the people self-reliant. The exercise of indigenization was in keeping with Nigerian's aim of development, which was highlighted by Adaka (2002) to include:

- i. A just and egalitarian economy
- ii. A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens and
- iii. A free and democratic society

The concept of self-reliance has been accepted in meaning and purpose as demonstrated by successive governments in Nigeria. In fact, the principles of self-reliance have been made an integral part of Nigeria's national development policies and strategies as shown in the national development policies and strategies have relied on the promotion of structural changes in order to reduce exclusive dependence on external factors of transformation. This will now encourage Nigerians to make use of their own resources, accumulated their capital and operate their own economies with the view to achieving accelerated growth in the economy and equitable income spread.

The structural adjustment programme (SAP), the directorate of food, roads and rural infrastructures (DFRFRI), school to land programme in river state, better life for rural women, family support programme (FSP), national directorate of employment (NDE), family economic advancement programme (FEAP) and poverty eradication programme introduced at one time or the other by state and federal government were practical demonstrations of government policies and strategies for self-reliance.

Concept of Self-Reliance

Self-reliance has attracted many definitions from various scholars in line with their perception of the subject matter. Self-reliance may be defined as process of making people masters in their own house. It is the ability to achieve self-sustenance economically without having to "go cup in hand" at the slightest crisis. Onaleme (2010) in Agbogeda (2008) has argued that a correct interpretation of self-reliance is the one supported by appropriate policies. In his opinion, to equate self-reliance with capitalist individualism of elite nationalism was wrong, but that self-reliance must be broad based. According to him, it may not be necessary to close one's borders to the outside world as demonstration of self-reliance. It is just possible to achieve self-reliance through a dynamic interdependence among nations.

One other very important principle of self-reliance is the organizational aspect, which has to do with the machinery for coordinating, producing, distributing and defending vital interest of the nation, (Agbogede, 2008). It has been observed that the problem, for example, with food self-sufficiency may not necessarily emanate from inadequate production, but from distributional bottlenecks. This particular aspect calls for entrepreneurial education and training.

A viable self-reliance strategy according to Onaleme (2010) is heavily anchored on a well-articulated national ideology or development model. It requires collective solidarity to enable us to become intellectually liberated from 'inherited' colonial mentality of discounting our worth in whatever we produce.

Nigerians typically, have great respect for foreign contractors, and foreign goods than those emanating from Nigeria. As Olofin (1981); Onaleme (2010) in Agbogede (2010) rightly observed that, consultancy firms as well as economic models and methodology emanating outside the country are more respected than those fashioned in Nigeria. Indeed, this slave mentality has led to a situation where suggestions by Nigerians that do not rhyme with those from London, Paris or Washington are sometimes viewed with skepticism or out rightly



termed subversive. Self-reliance must therefore begin from believing in ourselves, our capability and ability in whatever we set out to accomplish without discounting our individual and collective worth.

Definition of Entrepreneurship

By definition, the entrepreneur is the individual who has the ability to see and evaluate business opportunities, gather the necessary resources to take advantage of them, and initiate appropriate action to ensure business success. A typical entrepreneur is a risk taker. He/she is the individual who braves uncertainty, strikes out on his/her own and through native wit, devotion to duty and singleness of purpose, creates a business and industrial activity where none existed before. Even when one has existed before, the entrepreneur tires to do that same thing in a different way.

Humenta (2006) defines an entrepreneur as “a person who attempts to earn a profit by taking the risk of operation a business enterprise. Some authors, notable among them Schumpeter, see entrepreneurs as both innovators and initiators, who engage in a business that is unique in its own right. On a functional level, an entrepreneur is one who runs a business enterprise. For example, the man who runs a bookshop, restaurant, beauty salon, retail shops etc. can be regarded as an entrepreneur. Typical entrepreneurs like Henry Ford, John Rockefeller, Moshood Abiola started their businesses from the scratch and they nursed them into greatness through sheer ingenuity and hard work.

Entrepreneurship is an act of process getting into and managing a business enterprise. Entrepreneurship is about creating wealth. Uduka (2002) has this to say concerning wealth creation. You will call the shots if you create wealth. Economic slavery is worse than political slavery. Economic emancipation of an individual is inaugurated by the wheel of production. Economic growth is directly proportional to production growth. If you do not produce, you do not grow (Uduka, 2002). In a nutshell, entrepreneurship involves taking risk, investing funds, time and energy. It also involves applying creativity and ingenuity in doing what one knows best to do, or learning how to do some things in a more unique way. Entrepreneurs exhibit different types of behaviors that lead them to success. However, in general, entrepreneurs share and demonstrate uniqueness in the following areas:

1. Ability to identify opportunity and the willingness to take advantage of opportunity so identified (Onaleme, 2010).
2. Desire for responsibility. They feel a personal responsibility for outcomes; prefer to be in control of their resources.
3. They prefer for moderate risk. The entrepreneurs are calculated risk-takers. Unlike profit gamblers, they rarely gamble.
4. Have confidence in personal success. They have self-confidence, believe in personal ability, and support this belief by looking for facts before taking a decision.
5. Have future orientation. This is the ability to look far into the future, and the perception of a time horizon. They believe that tomorrow would be better than today.
6. Have desire for innovation. Innovation as implied here is doing a common thing in an uncommon way, by introducing new ideas, and setting new goals, not necessarily implying act of invention.
7. Have desire for immediate feedback. The entrepreneurs want to know how they are doing at any point in time.

The relevance of highlighting these characteristics is to provide a methodology or more for self-assessment by entrepreneurs, and those who aspire to be one. This is especially relevant to graduate unemployed and school leavers, and perhaps the disabled in the society



whose need for self-reliance cannot be over stated. The saying that nothing good comes easy is germane here. As many people desire to go into business of their own, it is necessary to consider some problems or likely problems the entrepreneurs may face during the course of their career.

Challenges of Entrepreneurship Venture in Nigeria

This study consider it expedient to highlight the under mentioned problems so that those who may be concerned should become aware of them. This will help them to guard against such problems or know how to respond to them when they occur. Some of the likely problems and challenges include:

- i. Capital limitation: capital has been singled out as one of the limiting factors in entrepreneurship pursuit in Nigeria. Young entrepreneurs require financial resources to start something. They especially require start-up capital which is usually difficult to come by. Although we may say that there are special banks, financial institutions and bodies whose responsibilities are to grant soft loans to young entrepreneurs, graduates and school leavers, this group may be constrained by the bank's lending conditions.
- ii. Lack of experience. Many young graduates and school leavers invariably lack experience in business. They are therefore frequently victims of what lack of experience would present, such as prudence, precaution and good judgement.
- iii. Poor record keeping. One of the quickest ways to fail in business is to ignore keeping any form of financial records. Closely related to poor or no recording keeping is inability to separate personal financial records and account from business records. Keeping records allows one to know how the business is doing or otherwise.
- iv. Extended family system and societal demands. The young entrepreneurs especially, have to be psychologically prepared for pressures and demands from members of the extended family and the expectations of the community. Such expectations and demands have far reaching effects on the success of the entrepreneur.

The list of problems and challenges is endless, but entrepreneurs can overcome or at least minimize them through experience and education, which is the suggestion, and better still, a prescription of this paper.

Opportunities of Entrepreneurship Venture in Nigeria

Nigerian is blessed with a variety of resources, including agricultural, forestry, mineral and environmental. A wide range of products and services can come out of these resources. One of the characteristics of a successful entrepreneur is ability to identify and take advantage of opportunities.

Beside the presence and availability of resources, governments have also continued to provide enabling environment to encourage and support entrepreneurial pursuit in Nigeria. As for back as 1956, Government has started providing loans to entrepreneurs through the Federal Loans Board and also subsidized rentals at the Yaba Industrial Estate. Early in the 1970s, the Federal Government has established some development banks (Bank for commerce and industry, Nigerian Industrial Development Bank and Agricultural Development Bank) to provide loans and assistance to entrepreneurs. Recent and current government reform programmes such on the family economic advancement programme (FEAP) Poverty Alleviation Programme and deregulation were and are intended to challenge and provide some



sort of assistance to entrepreneurs, graduates and school leavers. Other categories of beneficiaries include disabled persons and beggars whose self-reliance status will go a long way in solving some social problems often associated with this group of people.

Entrepreneurship Education

Education for entrepreneurship should start early in life during the student's formative years in primary and secondary schools. It should also be extended to activities in the home and in the community (Namuche, 2000). Entrepreneurial motivation should be integrated throughout one's formal and informal education and training. This will encourage young people to develop their entrepreneurial talents early in life.

Awareness of self-employment opportunities should be included in our secondary school curriculum. This will be further developed to include how to manage small business accounting and marketing at the post-secondary levels. The post-secondary programmes would expose students to skills, personal characteristics and knowledge required to successfully management a small business, as are being done in our universities and polytechnics.

Apart from creating awareness through the formal school system as mentioned above, many more people can be reached through workshops at the federal, state, local government and ward levels. Such workshops may start with "train the trainers" who would then pass down information, knowledge through the levels. Trainers are expected to employ teaching and learning aids that will facilitate learning for potential entrepreneurs during such training sessions.

In additional, National Youth Service (NYSC) orientation camps provide opportunities for graduating corpers to be imparted the requisite entrepreneurship knowledge and skill by experts in various fields of endeavor. The services of consultants and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will be most valuable in this regard.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the challenges of indigenization and the need for economic self-reliance have made entrepreneurship management education very imperative. It can be accomplished through formal and informal training programmes, and through the use of consultancy services and non-governmental organizations. Apart from creating awareness through the formal school system as mentioned above, many more people can be reached through workshops at the federal, state, local government and ward levels. Such workshops may start with "train the educators" who would then pass down information, knowledge and skill as may be necessary and required through the levels. Trainers are expected to employ teaching and learning aids that will facilitate learning to potential entrepreneurs during such training programme sessions.

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