

ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING IN CHRISTENDOM AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE IN NIGERIA: A SOCIO-ETHICAL ANALYSIS

BY

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ABSTRACT

This paper is geared towards examining the entrepreneurship training in Christendom and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria. No Nation can achieve its socio-religious and economic growth without embarking on entrepreneurship scheme. This will help to improve the living standard of the people, and promote religio-economic and the political development among Christians in Nigerian community which is the cardinal objective of Millennium Development Goal (MDGs). Entrepreneurship that couple with peaceful coexistence open up doors to progressively high levels of religio-economic and socio-political growth among Nigerian Christian Community, This will equally enhance innovation, creativity, initiative, visionary focus, self-confidence, optimum disposition, solution to economic empowerment challenges and church future vision accomplishment. Furthermore, peaceful co-existence enhances entrepreneurship and necessary ingredient of security of life and meaningful development in the society. Also it is a respect for the law and order and tranquility which is based on justice, fairness, fear of God, harmony, and cares. Similarly, the main objective of this paper is to delve critically into religio-economic role of the "Ecclesia" (Church) in the economic development among the adherents of Christian Religion, and improvement of moral values in the Nigerian Society. This research work will adopt explorative and observation methods to elicits our findings.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Christianity, Co-existence*

Introduction

Church as an institution which serves as one of the mechanisms of achieving economic transformation in Nigerian community through entrepreneurial education. Education is seen as a powerful weapon of development and indeed the continued agent of corporate existence of any nation. It is the key that the early missionaries used as a means of developing individual to become knowledgeable, skillful, experienced, resourceful and contributive towards the development of African people. It is expressly stated in the National Policy of education (2004) that Education especially Vocational Education (Entrepreneurship) should involve the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his or her society; this means that any meaningful societal transformation can only be achieved through the entrepreneurial education of the citizens. The Nigerian economy which is experiencing hardship that has resulted to shrinking industrial output, low level commercial activities and loss of employment opportunities

for millions of Nigerian which eventually resulted to inability to cater for individuals both youths and women. However many people live in abject poverty and unemployment when in actual sense, they should put their hands to work and survive amidst untold hardship in the economy. This is what necessitated the introduction of entrepreneurial education in the formal school system by some Christian organization (Dashen and Nyshom 2012). Therefore, the objective of this paper is to examine the active participation of Christian sector in promoting entrepreneurship at the grass root to encourage peaceful co-existence among the citizens for a sustainable modern society.

Conceptual Clarification of Entrepreneurship and the Church (Ecclesia) and peaceful co-existence

The word entrepreneur was derived from a French word “*Entreprendre*” meaning (undertaking). Thus an entrepreneur is an accomplished individual who makes decisions that have significant impact on his or her organization. Entrepreneur can also be viewed as an individual that identifies, develops, monitors and injects or brings vision and mission to life under conditions of high risk and considerable uncertainty. Aliyu (2013) examined an entrepreneur as an action oriented and a high motivated individual who has the ability to see and evaluate business opportunities to take advantage of them, to initiate appropriate actions to ensure success and take risks to achieve goals.

Entrepreneurship awareness as the process of creating something different with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychological and social risks and receiving the resulting towards of monetary and personal satisfaction (Akanbi, 2010). The concept of entrepreneurship however has been associated with several activities concerned with the establishment and operation of business enterprises. No wonder, Osuade discussed entrepreneurship as “a way of using available capital in any form for business endeavours in an open and free market economy for the role purpose of making a profit”. Moreso, entrepreneurship as the ability to set up a business enterprise as different from being employed. This ability should be acquired and should differ in some respects from the abilities required to enable a person get employed, it involves the acquisition of skills, ideas and managerial skills or abilities necessary for self reliance. The role idea of entrepreneurship is achieved when the entrepreneur takes risk which is energized by inner drive and the ability to develop a new venture and apply a new approach to old business.

Entrepreneurship Education: A Catalyst for Empowerment in the Church

The term Christianity emerged from the church (Ecclesia). The English word “Church” which originally evolved from the Anglo-saxon “*Circle*” to the mid-English Church is generally derived from greek *Kuriakon* which simply means “the Lord’s house, that is, a building for Christian worship (Richardson, 1977). The Latin *Ecclesia* and its derivatives (French *eglise*) though used of as a building comes from the Greek *Ecclesia*, applies to an assembly that is, a duly constituted gathering of citizens in a self-governing (Act 19:39). In other words in the new testament the word translated “Church” is the Greek *ekklesia* and not *Kuriak* (Stuart 1999). The concept of church is a universal community that is theologically significant for new testament. For church in real sense, is the earthly body of Jesus Christ (1cor12:12-17, Eph 5”23) (Milker 19”52).

In other words, in the fifteenth century, some sporadic effort, the Portuguese missionaries introduce Christianity to Africa especially West Africa. The result today is that the mission has had churches in almost all the villages and towns in West Africa. The outcome of this giant step was the introduction of Christian religion coupled with Western education. Many schools and colleges were built in many towns in West Africa by these European missionaries with the initial intention to teach African how to read, write and reason simple arithmetic. The other intention was to make them useful for the newly introduced legitimate trade and vocational work. The result of building colleges like the Westey Colleges, by Methodist mission in 1905, the Badagry College in 1842 among others. The Europeans intention was to provide firms with suitable labour as well as to re-orientate African lives. They succeeded in those attempts for more than 80% of educated African today in one way or the other, obtained their education from the mission schools established by the European missionaries. It is on this platform that the Christian organization today, establishes schools incorporating entrepreneurship curriculum to educational system (Abiola, 1974).

Moreso, Max Weber theory states that “look at social stratification from economic class distinction, class struggle exists in term of life chances or economic opportunities and expectations an individual right have”. In the present economic situation in Nigeria, attitude towards creation of life chances and opportunities by the peasants and unskilled person is relatively low (Ajere, 2006). The high unemployment rates in Nigeria have worsened the poverty level for instance. The unemployment rate increased from 23.9 percent in 2011 to 24.3 percent, 28.5 percent and 30 percent in 2012, 2013 and 2014, respectively. Recently the attempt by over 500,000 youths to secure immigration jobs meant for only 5,000 people led to the people being stamped by death.

Thus, economic growth achieved through the rebasing of the GDP failed to translate into creation of job. However, it has been argued that the issue in Nigeria is not even unemployment, but under-employment, because most Nigerians cannot afford not to work but a large share of population is engaged in low productivity and low paying tasks (Leadership, 22 July, 2014). However, the Christian organization today out in more effort to invest financial and Technical resources to promote entrepreneurship education in the best way possible to achieve the set objectives of the Church to the Nigerian society (Gabrial 2003).

Church and peaceful co-existence

The Greek word (Ekklesia) from which the word Church comes has the meaning of “being called out for an assembly of congregational meeting”. In the new testament sense, the church is the company of believers called out from the world and indwelt by the spirit of God (Gabrial 2003). It is Christian faith in the triune God-creation of all humankind. Redeemer in Jesus Christ revealing and renewing spirit which calls Christians to human peaceful relationship with their neighbours such relationship includes dialogue, witnessing to the deepest convictions and listening to those of their neighbor. It is Christian faith which set free to the open to the faiths of others to risks to trust and to be vulnerable. In dialogue and tolerance, conviction and openness are held in balance. In a world which Christians have many neighbours, dialogue, tolerance is not only an activity of meetings and conferences, it is also a commitment to the neighbours within whom Christians share town, cities, nations and the environments. Dialogue and tolerance is a style of living in relationship with neighbours. The member of churches of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the individual congregations are in awareness of the

great diversity of situations in which they find themselves. The neighbours with whom Christians enter into relationship in dialogue may be partners in common social economic and political and spiritual exploration or the people next door (Kenny, 1999). There are also situations of tension and conflict where dialogue may not be possible or opportunities very limited. In many places people of different living faiths interact not only with each other but also with people of various ideologies, though sometimes it is difficult to make a clear-cut distinction between religious and ideologies for there are religious dimension of ideologies and ideologies dimensions of religious, Christianity included. The role of religious tolerance in the modern society is a very lively issue especially for a pluralistic and developing or society like Nigeria (NTI, 1990)

Entrepreneurship and the human Development

Entrepreneurship is not just skill acquisition for acquisition sake. It is an acquisition of skills and ideas for the sake of creating employment for oneself and also for others. It also includes the development based on creativity. Entrepreneurship leads to the development of small, medium and sometimes large scale businesses based on creativity and innovation. The success of these businesses in turn helps in developing the nation. It also reduce poverty with visible increment of employment rate among the youths. Practically than entrepreneurship does the followings:

Provides practical applications for students: Training in entrepreneurship has been used by nations like Germany to set up university where their potential engineers are encouraged to seek out ideas and subsequently develop the promising ones from invention phase to commercialization. Similarly, entrepreneurship programmes developed in some universities have graduated into business schools. For example, a nation like Norway has used entrepreneurship to inculcate innovation spirit, deliberately targeted at the youths. These examples are in line with the assertion of Dana (1992) which states that “entrepreneurship education will enable potential entrepreneurs and create avenues for people to: manage innovations. Manage entrepreneurial process; and develop their potentials as managers of creativity in given fields.

Job creation and crime reduction: Entrepreneurial programmes if properly planned and executed will ensure that the issue of self-employment and job creation will increase. Also, menaces usually visible due to youth unemployment and restiveness will work to deserve and justify their pay, work independently, globally and bring creativity into their work place. The current mismatch between what Nigerian economy needs and what Nigerian youths are made to study in schools is becoming very appalling. The result of a three week large scale, rapid national survey in 2004 jointly sponsored by NUC and Education Trust Fund (ETF) to determine the needs of the labour market that Nigerian university graduates are failing to meet revealed that, of 1000 individuals and 20 organizations visited, 44 percent rated Nigerian science graduates as average in competence, 56 percent rated them as average in innovation, 50 percent rated them average in rational judgment, 63 percent as average in leadership skills, 44 percent as average in creativity. On needed skills like literacy, oral communication, information technology, entrepreneurial, analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making 60 percent rated them as poor. This data can be said to explain why there has been very obvious increase in unemployment rate. One of the reasons given was that these graduates were simply unemployable (European Journal of Educational studies 2(2), 2010).

The effectiveness of Entrepreneurship in Job and Wealth Creation in Nigerian Society

1. Wealth creation and income Generation

Wealth, according to Aliyu (2012), “is a given quantity and quality of resource under the ownership of individuals or nations, while an income is a given amount of money earned by an individual or nation due to an engagement in any form of legitimate economic activity”. The provision of entrepreneurship education is a means for wealth creation and paves way for the alleviation of poverty in Nigeria. The educational inputs for entrepreneurship education include human resources such as teaching and non-teaching staff, experienced artisans and other resource persons in the community.

The material resources include the books and periodicals and audio visual materials; while the physical resources include the institutional buildings such as entrepreneurship centres in the institutions, classrooms, laboratories, technical workshops, libraries, administrative blocks and other physical facilities in the institutions. The financial resources refer to the available funds earmarked for entrepreneurship education in the institutions. The acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, cognitive development and development of desirable habits and attitudes through entrepreneurship education helps the recipient to become an effective entrepreneur who can hire other factors of production such as capital, land and labour for creation of utilities, wealth and income, which pave way to self-reliance and employment generation.

2. Employment Generation

Through entrepreneurship education, the entrepreneurial skills acquired will spur the entrepreneurs to set up various types of business enterprises. Such business enterprises according to Adeyanju (2014), include dry cleaning or laundering services; manufacturing of soap and cream; interior and exterior decorations; catering and restaurant business; snack business and nourishing drinks; dye and dry or batik; bread baking; soft furnishing such as headrest, arm rest, throw pillows; bead making bags, flowers vase, necklace and earring bead curtains; tailoring and fashion designs so on. These business enterprises will in turn employ many unemployed and other unproductive resources like idle capital and abandoned land.

3. Improved Economic Growth

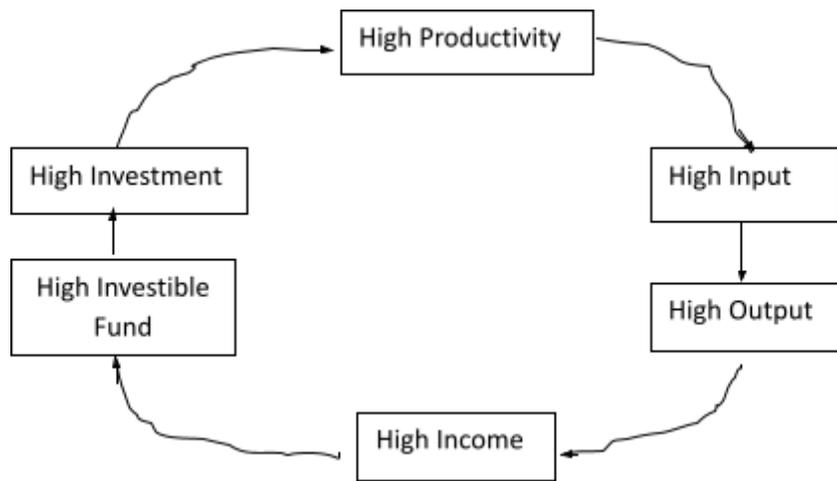
A nation that witnesses a steady improved economic growth will have a drastic reduction in the problem of poverty. Economic growth can be described as “an increase or an expansion of the national income and the volume of goods and services in the economy”. Entrepreneurship education can bring about economic growth through the establishment of various types of business enterprise and enhance the use of information and communication technologies, which further enhance job creation.

4. Effective utilization of Domestic Resources

Poverty in Nigeria can be drastically reduced if locally produced cash crops and other resources are well utilized by the various large and small scale industries set up by renowned entrepreneurs in Nigeria. Effective utilization of local resources in the production of goods and services in Nigeria will go a long way in reducing the nation's over dependence on imported goods and enhance the nation's balance of payments.

5. Increase in productivity

High productivity entails the desire to produce more goods and services using minimum labour, money and time. Poverty is alleviated when the attention is now focused on high productivity which is achieved through management expertise of entrepreneurs who are the products of entrepreneurship education. High productivity requires more input, which will pave way to high output and more income will be realized. This will compel the entrepreneurs to invest more and produce more by acquiring more input. This consequently leads to high output and a circle of economic buoyancy and prosperity becomes apparent.



Circle of Economic buoyancy and prosperity (Designed by the author of the paper)

6. Crime Reduction in Nigerian Community

The various nefarious and social vices being perpetrated particularly by many unemployed youths have their roots in poverty. Employment generation through a viable entrepreneurship education will go a long way in curbing social ills such as insecurity, drug addiction, idleness, prostitution, bunkering, kidnapping for ransoms or moneymaking rituals and so on, being witnessed in various communities in Nigeria.

The Socio Religious and Economic Impact of Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

The business enterprise is an undertaking which usually involves capital investment and risk so that there are chances of success as well as of failure. The main forms of organization are the sole proprietorship, the partnership, the limited liability organization, private and public companies and cooperative association (Olupona, 2007). The entrepreneurship economic in Nigeria is so large parts of its development strategy. As Nigeria has an economy built on the trade of oil. The entrepreneurship economy has now become part of the economy that the country is looking to develop to increase its wealth. This is because the price that Nigeria sell its crude oil cannot compete with the price from places in the Middle East and does not have the great international relationships. As the country's economy continues to grow the entrepreneurship earning has become stronger making huge money from the small industries and

changing the face of industry in Nigeria is one of its main desires. It is done by creating other opportunities that can help to develop the country so that the model is sustainable without oil. This dependence in natural resources does not help the economy boom and creating industry that does not stabilize and vibrant. Industrialization however, is “the process of building up a nation’s capacity to convert raw materials and other inputs to finished goods and to manufacture goods for other production or for final consumption” (Afolabi, 1995).

The private sector in Nigeria account through the entrepreneurship consists about 75% of GDP in the colonial era and first post-independence decade and about 80% of GDP before the introduction of SAP. Also the sector contributed up to 80% of modern sector employment in the pre-SAP era and is one major source of gainful employment in Nigeria. The contribution of the private sector to gross capital formation was 75.01% in 1970, 86.55 in 1971 and 80.9% in 1981. However, the percentage share of gross investment declined significantly in the 1980s failing to 18.3% in 1982. 11.2% in 1987 and 20.4% in 1991. Since 1992, there has been very significant improvement in the private sectors, contributing to grow investment. More so, the private sector dominates the consumption component of aggregate demand in Nigeria (Adesanwo, 2017).

The sector distribution of private economic activities in Nigeria reflects the fact that the Nigeria private sector is still heavily natural resources based. Agriculture is the most important sector in terms of employment while industry account for most exports. Though, manufacturing still accounts for as 10% of GDP and less than 5% of exports. Its contribution to employment is also less than 6%. In fact, the manufacturing sector is yet to make a meaningful impact on real industrialization in Nigeria. Most of the manufacturing enterprises in the country are mainly the light assembly type and mainly dependent on imported raw materials and components. The build of industrial output is in final consumer goods. In addition, “inter-industry” linkages are weak, thus undermining the possibility for a multiplier effect on the economy and there is little transfer of technology (Obadan 1993). In other words, international relations have been poor in Nigeria. These are now getting better and there are many more countries across the globe that are willing to trade with Nigeria than there were a decade or so ago. This has started to boost the economy but with no major shift in industry oil has left economy down more than international relations.

Entrepreneurship and Church on Moral Building

Ethics as a term, derived from the Greek word ‘ethos’ which meant ‘character’, “behaviour” or “conduct”, “community thought”, temperament and other human qualities. In the ethical view, Greek scholars identified ethical concepts (Principles, standard) that could be used to judge or evaluate human personality, character, words, work or performance, relationships and institutions. The concepts included patriotism, labour, justice, fairness, prudence, purposefulness, lawfulness, peace, tranquility and moderation. Others were self-discipline, self-control, self-regulation, self-restraint, courtesy, generosity, reflection, obligation, freedom, restriction, goal, goodness and happiness. Moreover, ethical principles of behaviour which enable people to judge or make decision about action and people as either good or bad, correct or incorrect, accurate or inaccurate and so on. Thus ethical judgment is the ability to make decision about situation (Dzurgba, 2005).

The growth of business or entrepreneurship in a modern sense began in the twelfth century A.D. The great trading epoch of Western Europe developed simultaneously in the cities of Italy, Southern Germany, Flanders and France. Gradually entrepreneurship (enterprise) continues to grow until it was unprecedentedly boosted when Britain invented mechanical means of production and distribution of goods and services. There was a change from hand implement

to machines age or discovery extended enterprise to the continent of Asia, African and the Americans. This was the beginning of multinational or transnational corporations and foreign trade. Economic ideas on values, price formation, foreign exchange, taxation, customs, trade restrictions, free trade, price control trade privileges commercial law and national wealth developed rapidly (Dzurgba, 2007).

More so, Max Weber made a striking attempt to establish the influence of Christian ethic; on the development of the capitalist business in Western Europe. The theological information from which Weber draw its conclusion that Christian ethics contributed to the rise of capitalism in Western Europe came from John Calvin's economic theology. The doctrine of "Calling" or "Vocation" held that all jobs in every given society were divine opportunities in which to glorify God. Success in business was held as an evidence of God's grace and blessing. According to this economic theology, frugality, thrift, industry and hard-work were forms of moral or acceptable to God. It encouraged the collection of interest on loans and provision of capital for new business enterprises.

In other words, for a re-orientation in moral conduct and eco-political practices in Nigeria, Nigerians should recognize the fact that, in every society, there is bound to be a mixture of personalities from various social backgrounds and influences. Hence, we should avoid delinquents, deviants, refinances, and hoodlums, thugs, arsonists, cheat, thieves, burglary, robbers, assassins and corruption. It equally implies also a change in moral perception, conscious, reasoning, decision, choice and action. As a result, it would be possible to achieve maximum production and distribution of goods and services in Nigerian economy (Orita, 1999)

Conclusion

Conclusively, the step of reducing the reliance on white collar job by the Christian organizations as the main source of income with the programme of privatization has encouraged investment in the enterprise sector. Provision of a viable and properly managed entrepreneurship education in Nigerian Church or Christian institutions will not only assist greatly in ameliorating the problem of unemployment among the youths in the society, but will also minimize the various crimes or moral vices often committed by most Nigerian youths. The issues of poverty can be effectively eradicated through a viable and properly managed entrepreneurship education which must be made available to the young generation. Capital should be provided by the church as an incentive for the trained entrepreneurs to enable them establish their business enterprises that will make them live a meaningful life in the society.

Recommendations

Towards effective introduction of entrepreneurship for job and Christian life system in Nigerian society, the following recommendations and submissions are made

- It is highly imperative to make the curricula of Christian entrepreneurship education more programtic and have built –in-job training programmes which will enable the youths to acquire relevant entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment
- Regular capacity building programme on entrepreneurship education should be organized for instructors in Christian schools. Also, they should be sponsored to attend conferences and seminars or workshop to acquire more knowledge for effectiveness in disseminating entrepreneurial skills to the learners

- The government can be co-opted to encourage the directorate of employment, micro-finance Banks and other Non-Government organizations to provide the capital base (fund) for the takeoff of small scale business owned by the products of entrepreneurship education.
- The entrepreneurship education curriculum should be incorporated into all post-primary and tertiary institution in Nigeria to reduce unemployment rate. This will further assists the youths to practically acquire entrepreneurial skills that will enable them initiate, establish and run their own private businesses after graduating from the school.

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