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CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION: THE WAY FORWARD TO\\ARD ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SD(J'S) IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper revisited the issue of creativity and innovation in Nigeria and argues that the process will be a panacea for the alarming rate of kidnapping, terrorism, violence, armed robbery, unemployment and other social vices which are threats to the peace and security of Nigeria. The paper discussed the importance of employing creative and innovative ideas by young graduates of Nigerian tertiary institutions. It explained how the process would enhance economic growth and diversi$cation and be a lasting solution to unemployment. The paper also discussed how lecturers could educate their students on the needfor self-reliance after graduation. The paper recommended that students should incutcate in themselves the need for creativity and innovation for self employment, national sustainability and economic growth. Also,

government should provide grants to encourage young graduates to be more creatIve.

KEYWORDS: Creativity, Innovation, Sustainable developments goals (SDGs) .

INTRODUCTION

Creativity and innovation are considered to be overlapping constructs between two stages of the creative process; both are necessary for successful enterprise (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Creativity takes place when a person takes a new solution to a 3roblem that he is faced with. This definition contains two elements: the first one rs

the problem solution and the second is new and innovative solution to the problem solver. Innovation refers to the implementation or "transformation of a new idea into a new product or service or an improvement in an organization or process" (Haye, 2006, P. 253). Creativity and innovation are tools of economic growth and means of achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria. It is inseparable from entrepreneurship, which is in turn manifested in the act of starting up and running a business enterprise

It is obvious that unemployment, insecurity and kidnapping are some of the major problems ravaging Nigeria is image. It is a known fact that no nation will develop if a larger population of its citizens are not educated and it is education that helps youths to be creative and innovative and helps a nation to efficiently harness its available resources for national greatness. Simon (2000) supports the idea that individuals must develop in-depth domain expertise to be creative. He explains that it can be concluded with confidence that creative output is linked to the amount of time a person is actively engaged in a creative domain.

The world today is undergoing multidimensional transformations that affect technological innovations, economics, social, cultural and political development of human communities particularly those of developing societies like Nigeria. Education in the generic and global context is an instrument par excellence for social and economic transformation. The second international congress on Technical and Vocational Education held in Seoul, Korea identified challenges that would inform changes in education worldwide as:

- Population growth and rapid urbanization
- Poverty and lack of skills for income generation and
- Low participation rate in technical and vocational education (Obioma, 2011)

Creativity and innovation are concerned with the acquisition of knowledge that is castable, unfalsifiable, verifiable. This write up is a concise investigation into the possible influences of creativity and innovation as a way out of the alarming rate of social vices in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The paper investigates how creativity and innovation can be a means of achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria. It focuses on investigating how to harness the relevant skills, which include knowledge and understanding about facts, principle and theories of creativity and innovation which are obtained through talent, experience and training in the field.

The challenges facing African economies will require fundamental chang= i: -_-_e way universities train their students. Part of the problem arises from the tradlduni_separation between research carried out in most of the National Research Institutes and universities and there is little or no connection between the two in most Ahjean countries. There is much speculation and belief that problems resulting **&om** modernization through creativity and innovation are growing faster than the solutions they intend to provide for the society. This is because the attitudes, needs and values of people collectively and individually are influencing the use of existing technologies thus resulting in the constant need for change or improvement, Moreover, students need to believe that creativity is determined by motivation and effort to a significant degree. Most people have the potentials but they never realize that persistent effort to develop that potential is likely to be successful (Juma, 2014).

The Concept of creativity

It is argued that creativity is not required solely in the domain of certain sectors or departments, or only in the development of new products or services, but is needed at every level of every type of organization. Creativity is seen as going beyond new products, new services and new improved processes. Therefore if one can "better organize (one's) day or write a report in a new or more effective way, then this is every bit a creative act" (Heye, 2006, P. 253).

Arising from Heye's position, most creativity programmes such as brainstorming and other idea generating techniques address only few of the sources of creativity and show modest positive outcomes.

Innovation

In today's competitive world, innovation is critical to the survival and success of creative people and innovation is a life line for companies such that if it is lost, the organisation is doomed to destruction because the speed of global economic growth, great demand and limited supply will heat upthe level of competition. Innovation is specific action for entrepreneurship, a means by which entrepreneurs have the opportunity to make their ideas become marketable. This means that they have to contribute to accelerating change. Entrepreneurs combine creative ideas with market opportunities and actively pursuing an entrepreneurial opportunity to reality with the launch ofthe business (Feizbakish, 2003),

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have come to fill the gap by expanding the MDGS agenda to meet the context of the world in the area of human right capabilities, growing in inequalities both with and between countries, as well as **the**

urgency of addressing the concern for climate change treatment, the eco system and hum&rity. By calling for a broad and inclusive involvement of the various stake holders to take part in the determination of the next development agenda to replace the MDGS, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) deliberately called for a process that would join together development concerns to sustainability issues from RiO+20. The result was the adoption of 17 SDG's and 169Targets by UNGA on the 25" of September, 20 1 5 (Justice, Development and Peace Commission, 2016).

Innovation is any effort used to implement creative thinking and put it into practice in order to modify an existing product and create a favourable weather that will bring about economic growth. Creativity and innovation by definition involve the creation of something new which, according to Barringer and Ireland (2006), "is central to the entrepreneurial process". Creativity and innovation are considered to be inseparable from entrepreneurship, which is in turn manifested in the act of starting up and running an enterprise. Pretorius, Millard and Kruger, (2005) maintain that "creativity is clearly part and parcel of the entrepreneurial skills required to
successfblly start a venture. Entrepreneurs and their start-ups are considered to be important agents of innovation" (Bosma & Harding, 2007) not simply in terms of the products and services they provide, but also in terms of the technologies and processes they utilize.

We are living in an era when the speed of innovation in the fields of science, culture, technology and industrialization is more accelerated than any other time in the history of mankind. Entrepreneurship has been identified as an engine of economic and social development in this period that can lead to growth abd development, increase productivity and create jobs. However, the concept of entrepreneurghip is merged largely with concepts such as creativity and innovation.

The Correlation between Creativity, **Innovation and Sustainable Development** In Nigeria today, creativity and innovation promote and sustain economic development through motivation and divergent thinking that create different solutions to many unemployed youths. In most cases, entrepreneurship has always been associated with creativity and innovation which are necessary and interdependent. Therefore, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be achieved in Nigeria through entrepreneurship which requires a special kind of creativity in the entire process, from initial idea generation to finance sale which all require creativity and innovation. '

Creativity has to do with self confidence, a practice that can be guided by imagination, personal motivation and passion for ones' work. Creativity has to do

with discovery; that is, an idea of doing something in an uncommon u-av nhlch c= be discovered through research. It is also a fUnction of knowledge and ideas **utah** can be correlated to create new and innovative products. Innovation is **tIn** transformation of creative thinking into a new product or service.

In view of this disourse, creativity and innovation are determined by motivation and effort to a significant degree, because most people have the potentials but never realize that persistent effort to develop those potentials are likely to be successful.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are: end poverty in all forms everywhere; end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; ensure healthy live and promote will-being for all ages; ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, fall and
productive employment and decent work for all; build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; reduce inequality within and among countries; make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystem, sustainably manage forest, combat desertification, and halt and reserve land degradation and halt bio diversity loss; promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; and strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize global partnership for sustainable development
(United Nations, 2014).

Sustainable development goals can be achieved through creativity and innovation which will be a means of rapid economic growth and a panacea for alarming rates of unemployment and other social vices. However, sustainable development goals was introduced to fill the gap of unfinished agenda of MDG's so as to sustain themomentum generated while addressing the additional challenges of inclusiveness, equity, urbanization and further strengthening of global partnership.

Schumpeter's Innovation theory

The term "innovation" means something unusual. None of the first precursors of innovation has been as influential as Schumpeter. According to him, consumer preferences are already given and do not undergo spontaneity. It means that they cannot be the cause of economic change. Moreover, consumers in the process of economic development play a passive role. In the theory of economic development and further works, Schumpeter (1939) described development as a historical process of structural changes, substantially driven by innovation which was divided by him into five types :

1. Launch of a new product or a new species of already known products;
2. Application of new methods of production or sales of a product (not yet proven in the industry).
3 Opening of new market (the market for which a branch of the industry was not yet presented);
4 New industry structure such as the creation or destruction of a monopoly posrtron.
5 . Acquiring ofnew sources of supply ofraw materials or semi finished goods.

Schumpeter argued that anyone seeking profits must innovate. That will cause the existing supplies of productive means to grow. He also believed that innovation is considered as an essential driver of competitiveness and economic dynamics. Furthermore, he believed that innovation is the center of economic change causing a gale of "creative destruction" which is a term created by Schumpeter in capitalism, socialism and democracy.

According to him, innovation is a process of industrial mutation that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one.

He further described development as historical process of structural changes, substantially driven by innovation. He divided the innovation process into four dimensions: invention, innovation, diffusion and limitation. Then he put the dynamic entrepreneur in the middle of his analysis. The possibility and activity of entrepreneurs, drawing upon the discoveries of scientists and inventors, create completely new opportunities for investment, growth and employment. In his analysis the invention phase or the basic innovation has less of an impact, while the diffusion and limitation processes have a much greater influence on the state of an economy.

Drawing from Schumpeter's theory, creativity has to do with application of new methods of production which takes place when a person or a firm takes a neR solution to a problem that he is faced with. This can be achieved through knowledge. understanding about facts, principles and theories of the matter that can be achieved through talent, experience and training in the field.

Innovation has to do with launching of new products; it can also be seen as adoption, assimilation and exploitation of a value added novelty in economic and social spheres that has to do with renewal and enlargement of products, services and markets.

Moreover, the theory laid more emphasis on economic development which correlates with the first goal of sustainable development which is "End poverty in all forms everywhere". Poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today. Therefore, creativity and innovation are means of achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria, especially in the areas of youth employment, sustainable and economic growth.

Conclusion and the Way Forward

In line with what has been discussed in this paper, the increasing complication of modern economics causes the necessity fora higher rate of economic integration. Knowledge based economies today are dependant by a dynamic technological progress. The introduction of creativity and innovation no longer depends on individual personalities but involves the co-operation of many different actors. Although there are some problems associated with creativity and innovation, its educational value is highly instructive. However, insufficient funding of the educational sector in Nigeria seems to be the major impediment to the success of creativity, innovation and sustainable development goals. Currently, one of the contributing factors is to transform the face of economic, social and industrial world view of a country as entrepreneurial activities. The study concludes that creativity and innovation are keys to achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

In the light of what has been discussed so far, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should make entrepreneurship education to be 70% practical at both secondary and terti4ry education levels in order to encourage creativity and innovation
11. Government should also provide more financial grants through the Graduate Internship Scheme (GIS) to encourage young graduates to be more creative, that will be a panacea for the alarming rates of unemployment, insecuritY,

kidnapping, poverty and other social vices.

iii. Proper attention should be given to putting the required infrastructure available on ground for proper promotion of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria in order to boost creativity and innovation.

iv. National Entrepreneurship Commission should be established, with good creativity policies.

v. The commission should have a monitoring team that will facilitate and encourage creativity and innovation in all educational institutions across the country.

vi. Government should provide steady power supply to aid creativity and lnnovatron

vii. Students should also be among the beneficiaries of the soft loans given by Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDAN) through the Bank of Industry (BOI).

viii. In addition to the implementation strategies earlier discussed, there is need

for workshops, in-service training and short courses to be designed and introduced for both lecturers and business communities on how to bring creativity and innovation into practice. This measure will help catch the attention of young learners to improve their capacity to create positive change in their environment.

ix. Students should also inculcate in themselves the need for creative thinking and innovative skills

x. The measurement ofoutcomes and progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) will be key to ensure continuous momentum, to attract broad support for these efforts and to provide transparency, accountability and identify new opportunities to support poverty eradication programs.

xi. Government should constitute a precondition for the adoption of the sustainable development goals agenda at the national and international levels that will influence capacity building, job creation, poverty eradication and economic growth

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