Politics: A Negation of Entrepreneurial Mindset of Youths in Kwara State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The ever increasing rate of political thuggery and other vices by youths at the expense of entrepreneurial skill acquisition (E.S.A) prompted this researcher into investigating the factors militating against the entrepreneurial mindset of youths in Kwara State. The study adopted survey research type. The population consisted of all artisans in Kwara State. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 20 trades, and 40 tradesmen (artisans) from each of the three Senatorial Districts of Kwara State, giving a total of 120 trades-men. However, only 100 of them cooperated fully with the interview in this study. Two research questions were generated this study. The instruments used for this study consisted of an 8 Researcher-Designed Trades-men Questionnaire (RDTQ) for the problems facing trades-men, and also a 7 Researcher-Designed Trades-men Questionnaire on the way out (RDTQWO) that were conducted based on oral interview.

The content validity of the instruments were done by two social science experts, while for the reliability of the instruments, the questionnaires were subjected to test re-test techniques of five weeks interval. The scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics which gave us 0.71 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The two research questions were analyzed using Frequency Counts and Percentage Distribution.

The findings revealed that youths' interest in motor-bike commercial operation as well as preferring white-collar jobs to E.S.A respectively highly constitute major hindrance to E.S.A. Other problems include governments' lukewarm attitude about youths' E.S.A., as well as the socio-political environment of the youths that does not encourage E.S.A. Equally problematic are some youths earning their living through praise-singing the politicians, and also parents who prefer their wards to be 'white-collar-jobly" inclined by going to school only instead of incorporating E.S.A. along side Western Education. But very relatively low is the discovery about the negative attitude of some tradesmasters against any-would-be apprentice.

In line with the findings and conclusions of this study it was recommended that the governments should make it as a matter of policy to encourage E.S.A. among youths if artisan gap is to be filled, as well as empowering youths to be self-reliant. As a matter of policy, it was also suggested that political thuggery among youths must be stopped by the politicians who never use their own children or family members for such an act, among other suggestions.

Keywords: Politics, entrepreneurial mindset, youths, thuggery, unemployment, social engineering and artisan gap.

INTRODUCTION

Politics is the authoritative allocation of value in a society, it is also social relation that involves who gets 'what' 'when' and how?- thus indicating co-operative interaction between the individual and the group (Kastony, Nwoly and Ophoe 2000). But for Nnali (2001), he views politics as power play and struggle to gain access to a particular position at all costs,

whereby indigenes of a particular region organize themselves for the purpose of governance to ensure security, economic development of the ruled and their society.

A keen observation of the definitions of politics raised above could make one to infer two broad categories of proponents; those that perceive politics as the process associated with the governance of a polity and those who perceive politics mainly as a game of power struggle, graft and selfishness. Both the conclusion and the meticulous observers of the latter influence would come to this hapless condition after experiencing decades of political trauma and woes. The political scenario in Nigeria now has become more alarming and frustrating when paradoxically the cure turns out to be the poison that kills the patient. One would have thought that the higher the number of literate persons in politics, the better the quality of political manoeuvering and dispensations in Nigeria, but this premise has regrettably been faulted in Nigeria (Ntta, 1997).

One recognizes that there is a significant positive correlation between literacy and politics, implying that education goes a long way to enhance the quality of political structures within a nation, but lack of meaningful and purposeful education would truncate or determine the kind of political structure that would be played in a country.

The United Nations Economic and Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Labour Organization (ILO) research findings have revealed that the youths and children account for about 40% of the world population, while about 80% Nigerian youths are unemployed. The lack of gainful employment opportunities, meaningful education and channels to explore their talents and engage more meaningful with their communities often render the youths vulnerable to a variety of dangers such as poverty, crime, militancy, diseases and drug abuse which combine to push them towards the margins of the society (Chukwuma, 2006).

Background Literature on Polities as A Negation of Entrepreneurial Mindset of Youths

At its base or rudimentary level, literacy has to do with the ability to read, write and compute in a given language. In this context, Nzuoke (2006) technically describes literacy as a code of visual representation of an aural/oral communication in a particular language. Nzuoke states further that in 1962, during the world campaign for universal literacy, UNESCO came up with the oft-quoted comprehensive definition of literacy that a person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group and community, and whose attainments in reading, writing and (a)rithmetic (3rs) makes it possible for him to continue to use these skills towards his own and the community's development and for active participation in the life of his country (UNESCO, 1962:18)

In pursuance of the above assertion, Nigeria's national policy on education (FGN, 2004), prescribes a six year secondary education, given in three years of junior secondary school (JSS) and three years of senior secondary school (SSS). It also spells out the broad objectives of secondary school education as "preparation for useful living in the society and for higher education". However, the JSS forms part of the 9-year continuous basic education which includes six years of primary education. During the basic education years, students offer all the subjects of the curriculum and are exposed to both academic and vocational subjects. However, Ibah (2011) posits that by the time the students transcend from the junior secondary school to the senior secondary school in the past, the norm was to channel the students into education streams that emphasize either academic content or vocational skills. The academic content of the curriculum prepares recipients for tertiary education with little

no job related content but which will make them office staff or administrators in future, while the vocational skills content include a wide range of subjects with work-based content that would make individuals self reliants. By inference, the embodiment of educational system packaged by the Nigerian's National Policy on Education is Entrepreneurial driven.

Entrepreneurship education therefore, is a radical training given to students to enable them acquire skills, ideas and management abilities necessary for self-reliance (Agboola and Ademiluyi, 2011). Similarly, Ogundele (2011) sees entrepreneurship as an act of starting a business, arranging business deals, and taking rules in order to make project through the skills acquired. It is this entrepreneurship that has served as the economic force that transformed the United States of America (USA) into the most powerful economy in the world which has been responsible for USA's astronomical growth in various sectors over the last 200 years (D.C. Children and Youth, Investment Corporation 2001).

In a similar vein, Chukwuma (2006) posits that countries like the United Kingdom, Norway, Netherlands, Denmark, France, Egypt, Tunisia, among other nations of the world have, for a long time been teaching entrepreneurship in their school systems and have all produced specific and separate national entrepreneurship education strategic documents as their programmes are dovetailed into their national development plans. Lending credence to Chukwuma (2006), Akinola (2003) opines that throughout the world entrepreneurship has become a very important phenomenon necessitated by globalization, and that, irrespective of country, having the right mix of knowledge and skills is now critical for everybody to create positive attitude including young people. But these young people of Nigeria have grossly being made unproductive citizens by the Nigerian learned politicians who give them motorbikes that were turned into commercial operation venture. In spite of occasional differences, acquisition of entrepreneurship education by these teaming Nigerian youths should be characterized by individualism, an awareness of one's limitations, strengths and sensibilities; a sense of objectivity and the a greater understanding of our own tradition and values and those of other people all which should ginger a conscious commitment to individual and community development.

Studies by Akinola (2013) have shown that Nigerian politicians in general and Kwara State in particular have since the inception of the present Republic (about 15 years ago) been wooing and inducing the youths (praise-singers) with motor-bikes and who in turn converted them into commercial use, thus making the motor-bike commercial operators go home daily with, but ephemeral sustainable amount of money. Based on this quick and daily income for the youths of Kwara State, Ejike (2011) asserted that entire Nigeria including Kwara State has lost about 82% of its youths who are supposed to be apprentices to motor-bike commercial operation, as no youths learns one trade or the other thus creating artisan gap as a result of governments' nonchalant attitude towards entrepreneurship skill acquisition (E.S.A). The youths no longer think creatively, all experiences and knowledge gained in school for entrepreneurship are now being overshadowed by quick and daily income activity, thus making them to believe that other nations of the world are the inventive breed while they, (Nigerian youths) are the consuming breed who seek to consume even more than the inventors (Aneke, 2011).

Similarly, Ibah (2011) contented that Nigeria society generally does not encourage ESA among the youths, but rather, the politicians would cajole, use and hoodwink them with a pittance, sent out in the cold to risk their lives as thugs, while the politicians and their families watch the blood bath through a tiny hole in their sophisticatedly protected safe-haven, yet, the youths prefer political thurggery for pittance as a result of joblessness. In other development, Ejike (2011) posits that the Nigerian politicians, in spite of all the resources,

have not created jobs or assisted the youths in securing better jobs or empowering them to be self-reliant. Whereas these politicians are aware that about 80% Nigerian youths are unemployed, yet about 80% available jobs in Nigeria are only meant for these politicians who never give the jobs out to the youths who depended so much on white collar jobs.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Having realized the magnitude of the problem confronting the Kwara State youths, the major concern of governments should be how to stem the ever rising tide of unemployment and achieve appreciable success in wealth creation and poverty reduction through entrepreneurial tenet in line with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals and Vision 20:2020 due to the fact that it is now realized that thousands of youths in Kwara State are entering the future with uncertainty.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is aimed at investigating why politicians induce Kwara State youths with short-time means of livelihood instead of empowering them via entrepreneurial skill acquisition to make them self-reliant.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1. Do trades-men have enough apprentices?
- 2. What can be done to encourage youths to be entrepreneurially inclined?

METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive survey type. The population consisted of all artisans in Kwara State. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 20 trades, and 40 trades-men (artisans) from each of the three Senatorial Districts of Kwara State, Nigeria, giving a total of 120 trades-men (artisans) who were orally interviewed. However, only 100 trade masters cooperated fully with the oral interview, and it was the result of these 100 respondents that were computed for this study. The randomly selected trades are:

1. Motor mechanics	11.	Vulcanizing	
2. Motor-bike mechanics	12.	Re-wiring and battery charging	
3. Bicycle repairing	13.	Welding	
4. Carpentary job	14.	Plumbing	
5. Bricklaying	15.	Tying and dyeing	
6. Gold smithing	16.	Radio-television repairing	
7. Black smithing	17.	Watch repairing	
8. Sewing	18.	Shoe making	
9. Fashion designing	19.	Rewinding	
10. Furnishing job	20.	Painting	

The instrument used consisted of a fifteen researcher-designed questionnaire that were conducted based on oral interview. The questionnaire has two sections A and B. Section A has 8-item questionnaire while section B has 7- item questionnaire. The questionnaire items

in section A elicited responses on problems facing various trades masters in relation to youths' apprenticeship in Kwara State, while questionnaire items in section B elicited responses on suggestions about how to checkmate artisan gap that is considerably rearing its ugly head in the socio-economic lives of youths in Kwara State.

Two social science expects judged the content validity of the instruments. For the reliability of the instruments, the questionnaire items were subjected to test re-test techniques of five weeks interval after the first oral interview. The scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics, and resulted in 0.71 at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The data collected from the study were analyzed using simple frequency counts and percentage distribution as shown in the tables below:

Research Question 1: Do trades-men have enough apprentices?

Table 1: Frequency Counts and Percentage (%) Distribution of Problems Facing Trades-men in Kwara State.

S. No.	Problems	Frequency	%
1.	Trade masters do not allow youths apprenticeship	2	2%
2.	Youths are more interested in motor-bike commercial operation	99	99%
3.	Parents want their wards to go to school instead of striving for entrepreneurial skills	72	72%
4.	Governments do not encourage youths to learn any trade work.	88	88%
5.	The socio-political environment does not encourage youths to learn any trade work	78	78%
6.	Youths prefer white-collar jobs to entrepreneurial skill acquisition.	99	99%
7.	Some youths prefer political thuggery to entrepreneurial skill acquisition	53	53%
8.	Some youths earn their living from praise-signing the politicians	76	76%

Results in table 1 above show that 99% youths are interested in motor-bike commercial operation popularly known as "Okada" and white-collar jobs respectively than entrepreneurial skill acquisition (E.S.A.). Next in rank to the above is 88% vote against the governments (Federal, State and Local) that do not encourage or enforce entrepreneurial skill acquisition on youths. Next to this is socio-political environment that does not encourage youths to strive towards acquisition of entrepreneurial skills which ranks 78%. Next in rank is that some youths earn their living through praise-singing the politicians, thus ranking 76%. Next to this is that parents want their children to go to school instead of striving for both academics and entrepreneurial skill acquisition which ranks 72%. 53% of the respondents agreed that many youths prefer political thuggery (that would provide them daily bread) to entrepreneurial skills acquisition. Only 2% of the respondents agreed that the attitudes of some trades masters do not encourage youths' apprenticeship.

Research Question 2: What can be done to encourage youths to be entrepreneurially inclined?.

Table 2: Frequency Counts and Percentages (%) Distribution of what can be done to Encourage Youths to be Entrepreneurially Inclined.

S/N	Suggestions	Frequency	%
1.	Motor-bike for commercial purpose has no future, only ephemeral	99	99%
2.	Youths should rely less on white-collar jobs	90	90%
3.	Governments to out law use of motor-bike for commercial purposes by the youths	98	98%
4.	Politicians don't use their children for political thuggery, and so, youths must not allow themselves to be used as one	100	100%
5.	Parents should advise their wards on the importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition just as they do to education	100	100%
6.	Entrepreneurial campaign should be intensified by the governments should artisans gap be closed,	98	98%
7.	Politicians should not give motor-bikes to youths to induce them, rather they should encourage them on E.S.A.	61	61%

Results in table 2 above show that 100% of the respondents favoured youths not to allow themselves to be used for political thuggery as well as parents to advise their wards on the importance of entrepreneurial skill acquisition as they do to education respectively. Close to this is the notion that motor-bike commercial operation by youths has no future (99%). Next to the above are 98% respectively about governments to ban use of motor-bike for commercial purposes by the youths and entrepreneurship campaign to be intensified by the government, if artisan gap must be closed. Next to the above is the respondents' decision that youths should depend less on white-collar job (90%), while 61% of the respondents posited that politicians should not induce youths by giving them motor-bikes, but rather, they should encourage them on E.S.A. to make them self-reliant.

DISCUSSION

The results of the data from this study showed 99% youths are interested in motor-bike commercial operation and white-collar jobs respectively than E.S.A. This finding is in agreement with Akinola's (2013) studies that have shown Nigerian politicians in general and Kwara State politicians in particulars have since the inception of the present Republic (about 15 years ago) been wooing and inducing the youths (their praises-singers) with motor-bikes who in turn, due to joblessness converted the bikes into commercial use, thus making the motor-bike commercial operators to go home daily with sustainable amount of money, and Ejike (2011) that the Nigerian politicians, in spite of all the resources, have not created jobs or assisted the youths in securing better jobs or empowering them to be self-reliant, whereas these politicians are aware that about 80% Nigerian youths are unemployed, yet about 80% available jobs in Nigeria are only meant for these politicians who never give the jobs out to the youths who depended so much on white-collar jobs. Governments not encouraging or enforcing entrepreneurial skill acquisition on youths as a matter of policy (88%) is next identified problem. This is in consonance with the assertion of Ejike (2011) that entire Nigerians, especially Kwara State has lost about 82% of its youths who are supposed to be

apprentices to motor-bike commercial operation as no youth learns one trade or the other, thus creating artisan gap as a result of governments' nonchalant attitude towards entrepreneurial skill acquisition (E.S.A.). Socio-political environment of the youths that does not encourage youths to strive towards E.S.A. (78%) is also another identified problem and as it has been rightly said, Ibah (2011) contended that Nigerian society generally does not encourage E.S.A. among the youths, but rather, the politicians would cajole, use and hoodwink them with a pittance, sent out in the cold to risk their lives as thugs, while the politicians and their families watch the blood-bath through a tiny hole in their sophisticatedly protected safe-havens. Some youths earning their living by praising-singing the politicians (76%) is another problem. This is in conformity with Ibah (2011) that Nigerian society generally does not encourage E.S.A. among the youths, but rather, the politicians would cajole, use and hoodwink the youths with a pittance, sent out in the cold to risk their lives as thugs, while the politicians and their families watch the blood-bath through a tiny hole in their sophisticatedly protected safe-havens, yet, the youths prefer political thuggery for pittance as a result of joblessness.

In another development, it was discovered that parents want their children to go to school instead of striving for both academics and E.S.A. (72%), is in line with the position of Ibah (2011) that the academic content of the Nigerian Junior schools curriculum prepares recipients for tertiary education with little or no job related content but which will make them office staff or administrators in future. Another identified problem is the youths preferring political thuggery to E.S.A. (53%). This finding affirms Ibah's (2011) contention that youths prefer political thuggery for pittance as a resulted of joblessness.

Another identified problem though very low, is the attitudes of some trade-masters who do not encourage youths' apprenticeship (2%). This finding negates Akinola's (2013) globalization discourse that throughout the world, entrepreneurship has become a very important phenomenon necessitated by globalization, and that, irrespective of country, having the right mix of knowledge and skills is now critical for every body to create position attitude including young people.

On the issue of what can be done to encourage Kwara State youths to be entrepreneurially inclined, the content of Table 2 above revealed high suggestions that youths should not allow themselves to be used for political thuggery (100%) as well as parents to advise their wards on the importance of E.S.A. as they do to education (100%). This finding agrees with Ibah(2011) that the politicians would cajole, use and hoodwink the youths with a pittance, sent out in the cold to risk their lives as thugs, while the politicians and their families watch the blood-bath through a tiny hole in their sophisticatedly protected safe-havens; similarly the parental advice on E.S.A. for their wards agrees with the position of Ibah (2011) that the vocational skills content includes a wide range of subjects with work-based content that would make individuals self-reliant. Another high suggestion proffered was the notion that motor-bike commercial operation by youths has no future (99%). This finding connotes Akinola (2013) that Nigerian politicians in general and Kwara State in particular have since inception of the present Republic (about 15 years ago) been wooing and inducing the youths (their praise - singers) with motor-bikes who in turn concerted them into commercial use, thus making the motor-bike commercial operators to go home daily with, but ephemeral sustainable amount of money.

Another suggestion is that government should ban the use of motor – bikes for commercial purposes by the youths (98%) as well as entrepreneurship campaign to be intensified by the governments (98%) respectively, if artisan gap must be closed.

These findings negated Ejike's (2011) assertion that entire Nigeria include Kwara State has lost about 82% of its youths who are supposed to be apprentices to motor-bike commercial operation, as no youth learns one trade or the other, thus creating artisan gap as a result of the governments' nonchallant attitude towards E.S.A. by youths. Another suggestion is that youths should not depend so much on white-collar jobs (90%), this is in consonance with the findings of Ejike (2011) that the Nigerian politicians, in spite of all the resources, have not created jobs or assisted the youths in securing better jobs or empowering them to be selfreliant, whereas these politicians are aware that about 80% Nigerian youths are unemployed, yet about 80% available jobs in Nigeria are only meant for these politicians who never give the jobs out to the youths who depended so much on white-collar jobs. Politicians should not induce youths by giving them motor-bikes, but rather, they should encourage then on E.S.A. to make them self-reliant (61%) is the last suggestion, which agrees with Akinola (2013) that Nigerian politicians in general, and Kwara State in particular have since the inception of the present Republic (about 15 years ago) been wooing and inducing the youths (their praisesingers) with motor-bikes who in turn converted them into commercial use, thus, making the motor-bike commercial operators to go home daily with, but ephemeral sustainable amount of money.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings from this study have led to the conclusion that majority of the respondents were with the view that youths are more interested in daily income which is readily available in the motor-bike commercial operation (since the politicians who govern the nation have not created enough job opportunities apart from distribution of motor-bikes; and also, the youths prefer white-collar jobs to E.S.A. The governments not encouraging youths to learn trade work is also on the high side. Also very high identified problem is the socio-political environment that does not encourage youths towards E.S.A. as well as the youths making their living by praising-singing the political money-bags. Equally high problem is parents that want their wards to go to schools instead of equally striving for E.S.A. Averagely, it was conducted that some youths prefer to be political thugs to E.S.A., while low ranking goes for strict trades masters who, through their attitudes, do not encourage youths apprenticeship.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of these conclusions, the following recommendations were suggested: The three tiers governments, (Federal, State and Local) should make it as a matter of policy to encourage E.S.A. among youth if artisan gap is to be filled. The governments should also empower the youths to make them self-reliant. There should be a serious campaign against political thuggery having realized that no politician has ever engaged his/her own children or family members to be political thugs. Similarly, the governments should provide basic human needs such as housing, electricity, water, good roads, jobs, among others, so that the masses (youths) would not be easily carried away by worthless gratification from the politicians. It should also be entrenched as a nation, punishment for every politician who induces the youths (the future leaders) with pittance or motor-bikes instead of making them entrepreneurially inclined. There should never be sacred-cows in meting out appropriate punishments to culprits if artisan gap in Nigeria were to be filled, because it is a heartrendering paradox that must be halted due to its devastating effects on the youths of Kwara State in particular and Nigeria as a whole. Curriculum developers would need to incorporate and monitor very seriously entrepreneurship studies in the curriculum, thus gearing it towards increasing access to skill acquisitions for the youths as well as increasing the quality of education.

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