NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: CAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP BE THE BEAUTIFUL BRIDE?

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By

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Dedicated to God Most High
Who makes all things possible – and beautiful
In His time
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Thanks to God Almighty whose invisible hand is deterministic in a wonderful way for His children.

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God bless my students in this College, my teachers in the Technical Teachers Certificate programme, my colleagues in the College, my fellow choristers, Knights of St. Stephen, Rotarians worldwide, all friends and well wishers for their well wishes.
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The Provost
Members of the College Expanded Management
Chairman of Occasion
Principal Officers of the College
Deans of Schools and Dean, Student Affairs
Distinguished Academics from the Academia
Special Guests
Royal Fathers
Distinguished Guests
Members of the Student Union Government
Members of the Abasiubong Family
My Dear Wife and Children
Gentlemen of the Fourth Estate of the Realm
My Dear Students past and present
Distinguished Friends, Ladies, and Gentlemen

Preamble
May I start this special intellectual journey by giving unreserved thanks to the Almighty God who makes all things beautiful in His time and in ways that are often beyond human comprehension. He has done it again and it is marvellous in our eyes. I also wish to specially note and appreciate the doggedness of my Provost, Dr. N. S. Oguzor who has a subtle way of insisting that a great thing must be done in spite of daunting challenges. Way back in 2005 when he became Acting Provost, he sponsored some members of the College Conferences and Seminars Committee to attend a similar event at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Umunze when Dr. (Mrs.) N. P. M. Esomunu took the exalted platform. Since then, he has insisted that he must host this activity which should mark the apogee for an academic in the College of Education system and tertiary educational institutions generally.

This being an ‘inaugural of inaugurals,’ permits me, Provost Sir, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, to dwell a little on the rationale and expected *modus operandi* of
Inaugural Lectures in this College. The first question one may ask is, what is an Inaugural Lecture? Traditionally, it is an occasion when one person is allowed to stretch himself or herself in the world of words, in the process stretching – if not stressing - listeners who must listen willy-nilly without the benefit of an opportunity to ask questions or even express an opinion good or bad. The lecturer nonetheless has an opportunity to justify his or her appointment as a Professor in a University or Reader in a College of Education. The lecturer also has the opportunity to launch or propagate a philosophical idea based on his/her research, experience, and world view as a way of contributing to knowledge as the bedrock of national and human development.

On a more formal level, permit me to quote extensively and verbatim from the Imperial College, London (founded in 1907) because it meets my understanding of what this exercise is about, and it is meet to note what they say, after all, they were there before any university in Nigeria. They state:

Imperial's Inaugural Lecture series provides a platform to showcase and celebrate the College's new professors. Each lecture represents a significant milestone in an academic's career, providing official recognition of their promotion to professor, bringing benefits to the lecturer, their Department, and Imperial as a whole.

For new professors, the lecture provides an opportunity to present an overview of their research career so far, update colleagues on current and future research plans, and introduce their research to wider audiences.

For Departments, the event is a chance to recognise new Professors and host a celebratory event to bring Department staff together. It also provides an opportunity for Departments to engage with broader audiences inside and outside the College, to establish new collaborations, strengthen existing relationships, and catch up with alumni.

For Imperial, the inaugural lectures represent an essential component of the College's public events programme. We would like to use them as an opportunity to engage with audiences with a broader interest in our research, including funders and decision makers from government, academia, and industry. We also hope they will help us create a wider awareness of the benefits of our research.

Who can give a lecture? All new professors, internally promoted or appointed externally, are given the opportunity to give an inaugural lecture after discussion with their Head of Department (Imperial College, 2013).

I have reproduced above to explain better, what this exercise is about and I believe what is put down above is applicable, mutatis mutandis, to all institutions of higher learning the world over (including the celebratory part). I readily agree in full with the second paragraph for instance: my presentation gives a background on my interest in entrepreneurship; then my experiences in teaching and research and publishing research papers on entrepreneurship; and finally the most recent development in my academic career - a branching into philosophy of education. My task therefore is to make a supreme effort in this work to establish a nexus among what may prima facie appear to be disparate fields, to wit, economics, sociology, business, philosophy, and philosophy of education. My hope is that you the listener and the reader, which should necessarily include policy makers and policy executors, will agree with my effort and put entrepreneurship on the driver’s seat in our drive towards national development.
I also need to point out what Imperial College, London states above with respect to who should present an Inaugural Lecture. Lecturers promoted to the rank of Professor internally, and those appointed from other institutions are qualified to present the lecture. The implication is that the lecture can be presented more than once. Thus a Chief Lecturer in a College of Education (Reader, as the Scheme of Service states) who has presented an Inaugural Lecture where he is and who is subsequently appointed a Professor in a University can deliver another Inaugural Lecture in the new location. In any case, the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omolu is degree awarding; when it becomes autonomous and awards own degrees, I will not need to present another Inaugural Lecture. So will other Chief Lecturers who have gone through what Professor J. A. Ajienka, current Vice Chancellor of the University of Port Harcourt (my Alma Mater) in his Inaugural Lecture describes as “Acts of the Professors …an occasion for self-proclamation in the Temple of the Intellect” (Ajienka, 2005, p. 2). There is also no need for another nomenclature since the purpose and method are the same.

It is also good to lay a form of groundwork on presentation. The format could be reading through the entire work, reason the programme provides as much as one and a half hours for the presentation without allowance for questions and answers. The lecturer could also use the power point approach. A mix of the two is also acceptable. It is this third option that is employed in this presentation. To my wonderful colleagues who will come after me, I can only remind them of the words of our elders: life is like a market; when an individual is through with buying and selling, he or she goes away. However, no person goes away with the physical market; they move themselves and their articles of trade, leaving behind the fundamentals – the market as a socio-economic fact. What we have today has to be regarded as the minimum standard or the floor; future presentations can only travel in the upward direction.

The topic of my Inaugural Lecture is, National Development: Can Entrepreneurship be the Beautiful Bride? This presentation is an argument for a review of Nigeria’s national thinking on the socio-economic development process. I argue for a positioning of entrepreneurship as the locus of development effort at the national level. Although in a globalized world academic thinking should be universal, Nigeria is used as the focus with the understanding that the position herein is applicable elsewhere particularly in developing countries which should better be described as poor countries, or at best, the old but more appropriate term ‘less developed’ countries. Describing them as ‘growing’ countries would probably tell a better story, only that given the direction and pace they are going, one has no idea when they will mature – if ever. These countries need to choose entrepreneurship as the beautiful bride that is expected to become the great and fruitful wife and mother of tomorrow. Please join me in this intellectual journey.

I

INTRODUCTION

Background

If we fall back on history, it is clear that a faster route to massive socio-economic development of nations came about through activities in the parish of entrepreneurship. The first mass and massive socio-economic development event in modern history took place during the Industrial Revolution in Europe of the 18th century. It was based on private sector investments. Even feudalism and mercantilism were private sector-driven. In the late 20th century, Chinese governments recognized this fact and thus tactically
moved away from centralized economic management. The subtle but real permission granted private entrepreneurs for a period of about three decades made it possible for that country of over one billion people to overtake Japan and become the world’s second largest economy in 2010.

A critical issue in the development of businesses from the era of industrial Revolution to date is the role of human capital. In all cases of rapid economic growth of nations, human capital development – in ordinary parlance, education – always took centre stage.

A former World Bank Chief Executive, Mr. J. D. Wolfensohn is so convinced that education is the core of any development effort that he states, “No country has succeeded without educating its people; education is the key to sustaining growth and reducing poverty” (2000, p. 67). Ito (1997) agrees, and submits that several studies of the rapid development of the famed ‘Asian Tigers’ - South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore - point to the fact that the basis of their growth has been the emphasis on human capital development. There can be no doubt that in the 21st century, any country that hopes to achieve rapid socio-economic transformation has to tread the path of entrepreneurship or stay at the bottom of the ladder as a Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC). A necessary even if not a sufficient condition to tread on this path is human capital development via entrepreneurship education.

HIPC's are 39 developing countries with high levels of poverty and debt overhang which make them eligible for special assistance from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Although Nigeria is not one of the 34 African countries in this unfortunate group, she ranked 156th out of 185 in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2011 Human Development Index (HDI) in spite of being the world’s 6th largest exporter of the unsustainable resource known as crude oil. HDI is a standard international comparative measure of well-being and quality of life using three indices - life expectancy, literacy, and standard of living. To stay away from the HIPC group and to achieve rapid national development, I argue that a more sustainable approach would be entrepreneurial nationhood by making entrepreneurship the cornerstone of the National Policy on Education (NPE) and going ahead to practicalize it.

Key Concepts

In line with the position of the Greek sage, Aristotle, it is best to start a discussion with the definition of terms or words. In Latin (which is the language of the Papacy and incidentally is being reintroduced into the British curriculum), Aristotle expressed it thus: “initio disputandi est definitio nominis.” We hereby define three key terms used in this work.

National Development – this work sees national development as the ability of a nation to continually improve the welfare or quality of life of its people in indices such as education, economics, health, recreation, longevity, and so on.

Entrepreneurship – is the art, science, and act of generating business ideas, developing them, and managing them successfully. An entrepreneur, who is the basis of the concept of entrepreneurship and the person or organization or group that drives entrepreneurship, is that agent of change that has the characteristics of innovativeness, ability to organize and manage resources, the staying power, readiness to take risks, and the profit drive.
Philosophy of Education – this refers to intellectual efforts that dwell or facilitate a reflection on the nature, aims, and problems of education. At the national level, the philosophy of education is part of the national policy on education which is a policy framework that spells out the direction, thrust, and emphasis that a nation places on the process of educating its citizens.

Country Profile - Nigeria.

The United Nations Children’s Fund (2010) describes Nigeria as a ‘fragile’ nation because of insecurity, crises, and poor governance. A report by the World Bank (1996) opens with the disturbing words, “Nigeria presents a paradox. The country is rich but the people are poor.” A former United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in President Bill Clinton’s administration, Dr. Susan Rice (currently the United States Ambassador to the United Nations) re-echoed this in what has turned out to be a famous aphorism, “Nigeria is too rich to be poor and too poor to be rich.” Such conflicts and contradictions epitomize the world’s 6th largest exporter of crude petroleum, the so-called ‘black gold’ and the 10th on the chart with the largest proven reserves.

UNICEF (2005) put Nigeria’s population in 2005 at 128,709,000 of which the under 18 age group constituted 66,211,000 or 51.44%. This is a sizeable proportion that should attract specific policies to cater for them, of which education should be the most important. Rather, only 3% of Federal Government expenditure on the average went to education between 1993 to 2004 as against 26% recommended by UNICEF. The organization also recorded that the share of national income that went to the lowest 40% of the population between 1983 and 2003 was 13% while the highest 20% of the population carted home 56% of the nation’s wealth. Life expectancy was a low median of 43 years. Nigeria’s population has since grown to about 170,123,740 as indicated by CIA Fact Book (Theodora, 2012).

UNICEF also indicates that for the period 1993-2003, the proportion of Nigerians on income of less than $1.00 per day was 70%. By 2007 it was put at 71%. The United Nations Population Fund (2006) states that the per capita gross national income (GNI) of Nigeria was $900 in 2003 while that of neighbouring Ghana was $2, 190 and that of South Africa was $10, 270. Although Nigerians are, according to politicians of the day, said to be reaping the ‘dividends of democracy,’ poverty on a wide scale is still very evident. It is probably this realization that informed the institution of the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) by the Federal Government a few years back. The PAP, evidently an aspect of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), paid out N3, 500.00 to some youths from a budgetary allocation of N10 billion in the year 2000.

Prior to the PAP, related programmes included the Directorate for Food, Roads & Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI, launched in 1986), the National Directorate for Employment (NDE, established in 1986), Better Life Programme (BLP, from 1987), the Family Support Programme (FSP, from 1994), and Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP, from 1997). To solve the problem of finance that has been a major constraint in self-development for many Nigerians, special banks were established by the Federal Government. These included the Peoples Bank of Nigeria (PBN, established in 1989), Community Banks (CB, established in 1990) and earlier, the Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB, now with ‘rural development’ added to make it new and improved). The banks and FEAP were expected to focus on provision of credit facilities for the development of cottage industries while NDE was to concentrate on training and subsequently, provision of loans to ensure that those trained start their own businesses.

While these programmes were well intentioned, they often ended up being mired in controversy emanating from mismanagement of funds. The programmes appeared to
alleviate the poverty of the managers or administrators rather than that of the target group - the poor, and particularly the youths. Rather than palliatives therefore, I propose that a more sustainable approach would be to train and equip Nigerian youths to enable them develop their own businesses. This would, through a multiplier processes, be more beneficial to the national economy than handouts.

II

EARLY FORAY INTO ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Provost sir, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, much of my writing style in this paper is of the literary format. Not only has God blessed me with the ability to write and the chance to publish a total of twenty one literary works in the major genres of prose, poetry, and drama as well as sub-genres of children literature and fables, I also hold the opinion that ‘hard’ issues up to particle physics and related others can be communicated to lay people in a literary (flowing) style.

Permit me therefore to dwell briefly, using the literary style, on the exciting but exacting world of business, which is the practicing field for entrepreneurs. My flirtation with entrepreneurship dates back to 1968 when I found myself holed up in my mother’s village of Afia Nsit Udua Nko in Nsit Ibom Local Government Area (LGA) of Akwa Ibom State. I was forced to stay at home by exigency of the Nigerian Civil War, since the high school I was attending – Ibibio State College in Ikot Ekpene - had been shut.

Market days are wonderful days in any village in Ibibio land and daily markets are extremely rare. Markets as physical realities where exchange of goods and services take place are also sociological meeting points: locations for impromptu or pre-planned meetings for good or for ill; places to meet old friends and make new ones; places to plan, and, or discuss details of everything from the religious to the sociological, from the reverent to the profane; and places to seal or cancel deals. Whoever could not attend a market had a compelling reason not to. Due to a multiplication of social events however, the market at present does not hold as much complexity and relevance as the past, up to the 1980s.

I found myself selling kola nuts in Udua Nko, the largest market in the village and villages contiguous to it. Starting with a pod of kola nuts from a tree in the family compound of Elder J. I. E. Akpan (my maternal grandfather), I screamed in excitement when one month after commencement, my savings box revealed a princely sum of two shillings in denominations of half pennies, some one pennies, a three pence, and a six pence.

My trade in kola nuts ended when my siblings and I moved to our father’s village of Oboyo Ikot Ita in the same LGA in the later part of 1968 as the Civil War was marching through what is now Akwa Ibom State. What I cannot recall was how the wealth I had accumulated went, given the fact that everything was verily profit, as there was no initial private capital outlay.

My next direct involvement in entrepreneurship was in 1979 at Ogoja where I had served as the Agricultural Extension Officer in charge of the Agriculture Division. With savings from my salary of N368 per month as a university graduate, I was able to set up a grocery store I tagged “Drive in Shopping Centre.” A distant relation ran the shop. A few months after the door was thrown open, the door was shut again – permanently. Why did it fail? On hindsight, I can advance the following reasons:
i) A number of items in the shop were of a fanciful nature and not of immediate use to the catchment area. The first problem was thus that of poor choice of stock.

ii) The poor choice of stock could have been mitigated if the quantity and variety of stock were reasonable. The problem here was cash constraint, something that extended into my next foray into private business more than two decades later.

iii) Part of the reason for the cash constraint was heavy investment in the physical look of the shop.

iv) The ‘minder’ (he was not a paid attendant) lived in the room adjoining the shop, had no job, and had just gotten himself a wife. It was evident that as goods were sold, the proceeds – capital and profit – were used for food and other domestic needs.

v) The shop was not in a busy neighbourhood and thus, sales were ‘not fast.’

vi) Given the source of start-up capital, even when prospective buyers indicated their items of interest, there was no money to buy them or money to replace things sold and income used as personal drawings by the minder.

It was no wonder that about three months after the door was opened to admit customers, a spot check revealed that what was left in the shop could not be sold because they were not in high demand; what had been sold had no corresponding cash backing to facilitate re-stocking; most wonderful yet saddest, the minder had no explanation for the gap between sold stock and cash. The lessons I learnt are lessons that more than 50% of micro business operators the world over learn when it is too late, for as the Small Business Administration (SBA) of the United States of America (USA) has established from research, at least 50% of small businesses shut down within the first year of operation (Longley, 2013). Some of those valuable lessons include but are not limited to:

a) The problem associated with low take-off capital and disproportionate expenditure on physical outlook of the outlet than in stock. This was the principal cause of the collapse of community banks in Nigeria and this continues to hunt the new generation of that concept, now known as micro finance banks. I had an experience, not only as a consultant for the sponsors of four community banks but as the proprietor and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Oboyo Community Bank Ltd.

b) Poor choice of product to sell.

c) Poor location of business.

d) Use of relations to run a business and generally, the need to be very careful of employees.

e) Poor record keeping habit and ignoring frequent stock-taking.

f) Absence of business plan or feasibility study.

Longley (2013) quoting a book by Michael Ames on “Small Business Management,” lists the following as some of the challenges that small businesses face particularly at inception:

1. Lack of experience
2. Insufficient capital (money)
3. Poor location
4. Poor inventory management
5. Over-investment in fixed assets
6. Poor credit arrangements
7. Personal use of business funds
8. Unexpected growth

Gustav Berle adds two more reasons in “The Do It Yourself Business Book”: 
Another attempt at business management was in 1991 when I resigned from a well-paying job in Nigeria’s premier merchant bank, Icon Limited (Merchant Bankers) to go into full time business with emphasis on business consultancy and publishing. Armed with three incorporated companies in general commerce, consultancy, and publishing as well as N700.00 (seven hundred Naira) from my last salary, I realized a princely sum of N300,000.00 (three hundred thousand Naira) by the end of 1992. Unfortunately I invested virtually the entire amount in publishing two magazines – the Price Monitor and Hotels & Tourism Guide. The Price Monitor was a compendium of prices and developments in the Nigerian economy. After three issues with dozens of adverts based on promises to pay, the last edition titled “Lights Out – The Rising Cost of Electric Bulb” proved prophetic. A dream business publication remains a dream to date. The Hotels & Tourism Guide was also a compendium that aimed at information dissemination on hotels in Nigeria, their location, fares, facilities, and so on.

One most interesting thing that happened in this third attempt at small scale business management was my encounter with one Chief Awofeso, an indigene of Ijebu-Ode, who was my Landlord at Lagos. I had adopted him as my father after the burial of my father, Elder A. B. Ubong in 1990. When I requested from him a shop to start a business in 1992, he exclaimed without preamble or hesitation, “My son, you are going to fail!” I asked him why, and his response was, “You have no business experience and no business training. Look at your Igbo brothers, before they go into business, they must undergo a long period of apprenticeship.” When I told him that I had already resigned from my job, he reluctantly leased a store in one of his numerous storey buildings at Lagos to me. The shop, located at Pedro, served as my situation room, business centre, and newsroom for the magazine publishing arm.

Six months later, I went back to him to report my progress. He enquired from me the number of staff on my payroll. When I told him I had seven, given the need to cover Lagos for information gathering, he exclaimed, “My son, I told you that you are going to fail. You don’t need more than two staff at this early stage.” Six months later, I paid off five of my staff, retained two on ad hoc basis, shut down the publishing arm, and finally headed to Akwa Ibom State to manage the take-off phase of a mortgage bank as a consultant.

The two critical lessons from Chief Awofeso were that one needs hands-on experience to be able to manage a business and that business training – or the wider aspect – business education which I have been teaching in the last eleven years in this College, may not be a sine qua non for business success, but it can make a huge difference.

One would have thought that the raw experiences at entrepreneurship would have been enough to keep me away from another attempt. On the contrary, there is a pull which entrepreneurship has to those who are attracted by it. After successfully managing the mortgage bank for three years, I withdrew my services and went back to private business, this time trading and consultancy. Based on my unsavoury experiences, I hired just one staff, a brilliant and hardworking young woman. She sold the goods, typed the documents, ran errands, handled public relations, and kept the books as necessary. What was the problem with this fourth attempt?

I had invested my personal savings in the beer and soft drinks business, a line my father had excelled in. I started with Champion beer worth N50,000.00 and also paid for 40 crates of coca cola. The drinks business requires large capital outlay because profit margin is very low. As the business progressed, I found out to my chagrin that the proceeds of sales did not amount to more than N5,000.00 a month; meanwhile the staff
was earning N2, 500.00 a month. Although I did not pay for the space, a number of family expenses had to be met: children had to eat and when sick, receive orthodox treatment; school fees had to be paid; electricity bills had to be paid and the debilitating issue of multiple taxation by the three tiers of government had to be taken care of. At the end of the day, the profit from a pitifully small capital outlay could not even cover my personal expenses. The lessons there were that small scale business persons need some personal amount of money to meet personal expenses so as to keep them from tampering with business funds - both principal and working capital. No amount of business expertise or goodwill can save a business with a small capital and therefore small turnover and profit when the owner has fixed personal overheads and must lean rather heavily on the business proceeds. The raw personal experiences of that brief period was chronicled in an anthology of poems titled “Perils” dedicated to my wife who stood by me during those perilous days. The prologue to that collection reads:

  Necessity tarries not for want
  For what must be, must
  Things happen in their due season

What is necessary, such as hunger or ill-health, does not wait until the pocket is full. Once an entrepreneur leans too heavily on the business to meet family or personal expenses, the red light begins to blink.

The story does not end there. I became a staff of the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku in 1999. I was assigned by Professor A. M. Wokocha, then Provost of the College to the desk of Director of Consultancy. Let us assume that I became an entrepreneur in that capacity; this is described as ‘intrapreneur,’ which means someone with the characteristics of an entrepreneur serving in that capacity within an organization. My experience as the Director of Fecet Services Limited, the commercial arm of the College was not radically different from my previous experiences, except that the risk associated with wrong decisions (personal and corporate) was cushioned by certainty of receiving salaries at the end of the month.

One aspect I must highlight in this fifth outing is low capital base. The pilot College Bookshop could not be sustained because the take off capital was too low to make it really profitable in spite of the fact that the College community virtually cried out for a bookshop. The current attempt is a runaway success because we sell staff books and pay after sales rather than buy to sell. Low working capital was the basic problem of the College Guest House although in spite of the severely limited working capital base, we recorded a reasonable level of success. The transport service was successful for we were able to buy a bus from the PTF bus we had; our problem was that the College was forced to lean on our takings because of ‘zero allocation’ with respect to overheads from the Federal Government, the College’s financier. I appreciate Dr. S. E. Onuebunwa, then Deputy Provost and Chairman of the Consult Board for his support in this fifth attempt at entrepreneurship.

Provost, Chairman of Occasion, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I have taken you on a journey on personal and live attempts at entrepreneurship for four reasons. First, to establish my long and sustained interest in the concept of entrepreneurship and the rarefied world of business of which this paper is about. Second, to underscore the simple truism that business education, or at least business training, is very important for success in entrepreneurship. Third, to highlight the fact that there are several reasons for the frequent failures in businesses, and in particular, small scale businesses that policy makers should take into cognizance in designing policies to assist in small business development. This is because the world over, it has been recognized that all economies are based on the operations of small scale businesses. They are important for the following reasons:
1. provide bulk of employment opportunities,
2. meet the needs of the grassroots,
3. are the bases for innovations, creativity, and venture capitalism,
4. make the greatest use of local raw materials and other inputs,
5. form the mainstay of every economy.

Fourth, to argue that Nigeria, nay all developing countries need persons ready and willing to take the risk for their long term good and for the national good. It is based on such usefulness that governments all over the world pay particular attention to entrepreneurship development particularly at the small scale level. It is the reason this work submits that for accelerated national development particularly in the world’s underdeveloped countries, entrepreneurship should be at the driver’s seat rather than at the owner’s corner or worse still, in the boot.

III

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Considerable intellectual effort has been advanced in the direction of establishing the link between entrepreneurship and economic development. The Global Economic Monitor (GEM), a research organization supported by the Babson College, Massachusetts, USA and the London Business School, London, is devoted to the study not only of the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development but also on how entrepreneurship can be cultivated particularly in developing countries. An annual study of up to 42 countries is carried out by GEM and the results published for world consumption.

Hisrich and Peters (1998) hold that the link between entrepreneurship and economic development arises from the fact of increasing per capita output and income as well as “initiating and constituting change in the structure of business and society” (p. 13). These authors indicate that in many countries, rundown areas or communities have been energized through entrepreneurship programmes.

One of the pioneering and greatest names in entrepreneurship was Professor Joseph Schumpeter (1883-1950), an Austrian-American economist. Schumpeter extolled entrepreneurship and used the famous phrase “creative destruction” in his analysis. He argued that entrepreneurs play a critical role in capitalist economies by way of stimulating business through financial investment and innovation. Entrepreneurs create new products, services, and methods as they innovate and in the process, destroy old products, services, and methods. This pushes forward the development process. Samuelson and Nordhaus (1998) note that Schumpeter challenged the glorification of perfect competition at the time, arguing that the essence of economic development is innovation and that monopolies are the wellsprings of innovation in a capitalist economy.

Entrepreneurship appears to have worked wonders in developed countries. Strom (2011) reviews the place of entrepreneurship in the developed world and declares:

We know that innovative entrepreneurs - those who bring new products and processes to the market - are disproportionately responsible for the breakthrough or ‘disruptive’ innovations that change our daily lives and allow for the rapid improvement in standards of living that developed countries have experienced over the past century, and also disproportionately responsible for job growth in industrialized economies.
In developing countries, Strom (2011) is not as confident as he is in the statement above. He notes that in developing countries, the problem is “more complex” because of the common approach of using developed country paradigms as bases of analysis. He recommends in his conclusion:

While there will never be a ‘one size fits all’ public policy solution, continued research examining the relationship between entrepreneurship and growth and policy prescriptions to promote an innovation driven, entrepreneurial economy are a big step in the right direction.

In the process of examining the place of entrepreneurship in economic development, Naude (2011) sees three groups of nations – the developed, the emerging economies, and the developing countries. For the first group, he submits:

Global development is entering a phase where entrepreneurship will increasingly play a more important role. There are at least three reasons for this, each particular to certain types of countries. Firstly, in the West, the managed economy of the 1970s-2000s, characterized by reliance on big business and mass production, has given way to a so-called entrepreneurial economy. Here knowledge-driven goods and services are now more flexibly provided by smaller firms, and the emergence of a creative class requires a less interfering but more facilitating state.

In the emerging countries, most notably the ones described with the acronym BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa - Naude (2011) notes that “impressive growth has been driven by a veritable entrepreneurial revolution. The need in these economies to sustain growth through sustainable access to resources, knowledge, markets, and low-carbon industrialization puts a premium on innovative entrepreneurship.” In the third group, Naude (2011) declares:

Finally, in the least developed countries, where aid dependency is high, donors have been shifting the emphasis in development cooperation towards private sector development … In many of these countries, including resource-poor North African countries, populations consist of many young people who see little prospects of gaining employment with decent wages. Promoting youth entrepreneurship here has become a vital policy objective of many development organizations and donors.

Naude (2011) concludes in the study sponsored by the United Nations University’s World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) in Helsinki, Finland that entrepreneurship has the capacity to spur economic growth and that economic development and entrepreneurship work hand in hand even if the later could generate some unhappiness in the populace along the line. Renjith (2009) simply concludes that “the development of entrepreneurship is inevitable in the economic development of a country. The role played by entrepreneurship development can be expressed in the following words ‘economic development is the effect for which entrepreneurship is a cause.’”

Ahiauzu (2010) has done some work on what should be the role of entrepreneurship in the economic development of Nigeria. First, he quotes Dejardin (2000) who asserts that “an increase in the number of entrepreneurs leads to an increase in economic growth” (p. 286). This is supported by Morrison (2000) who declares that “Throughout history, entrepreneurship has been found to be important and meaningful in society at points of transition, for example, traditional to modern, modern to post-modern, and state-controlled economies to free market” (p. 290). Asc (2006) as also quoted by Ahiauzu (2010) asserts that there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth while Henderson (2007) states:
Entrepreneurship is increasingly being recognized as a primary engine of economic growth. By combining existing resources with innovative ideas, entrepreneurs add value through the commercialization of new products, the creation of new jobs, and the building of new firms. The Global Economic Monitor indicates that nations with higher levels of entrepreneurial activity enjoy strong economic growth. In short, entrepreneurs are the link between new ideas and economic growth (p. 2).

It is pertinent to state that the writer quoted above, Z. Asc, is the Chairman of the GEM Consortium, a world-wide research organization on entrepreneurship. The annual researches by GEM have consistently shown a positive relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth. It is also pertinent to mention that economic growth, while not synonymous with economic development, explains about the same thing. Economic development is an extension of economic growth in that the latter is interested in the diffusion of the benefits of growth to citizens while the former looks at changes in socio-economic indices in society (upward changes) such as the Gross Domestic Product (total value of goods and services produced within a country at a point in time) or Gross National Product (total value of goods and services produced by nationals of a country irrespective of where they are).

Ahiauzu (2010) presents information on Total Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) tests and comparisons that show that Africa produced the country with the highest national level of entrepreneurial activity in 2003. This country was Uganda and although that country is still poor, such an index placed it among the nations with very high growth potentials. Finally, based on his analysis, Ahiauzu (2010) states that one can “confidently conclude that entrepreneurship and economic development are largely inseparable, especially in developing countries” (p. 293).

With respect to Nigeria, he submits that because of absence of valid empirical evidence as well as the sustained euphoria generated by crude oil revenues, the role of entrepreneurship on economic development in the country cannot be established. However calls on policy makers, political leaders, and business leaders to encourage a national debate on “a truly Nigerian economic system based on our traditional value systems and philosophies, which will be applied to enable the Nigerian people to better understand the processes involved in providing a truly supportive environment for enterprise development” (p. 293).

The best system, Ahiauzu (2010) recommends, is “an entrepreneurial state that is first concerned about the development of a collective entrepreneurial consciousness at all levels of society” (p. 293). The development of an entrepreneurial consciousness, this work submits, should be by way of enshrining entrepreneurship in the National Policy on Education as Nigeria’s primary national philosophy of education. The “collective consciousness” is seen in the context of this work as neoteric-Calvinism, in which all citizens of the future are made to develop an entrepreneurial outlook fostered in the formal and non-formal school system (Ubong, 2012).

Entrepreneurship Education

It is the opinion of Oranu (1998) that “if there exists any one fairly universally accepted objective of education, especially occupational education, that objective is that of self-reliance.” One branch of education which is capable of developing self-reliance in learners is business education which Nannasy (1970) in Esene (1997) defines as that aspect of education which provides the knowledge, skills, understanding, and attitudes which learners require for effective performance in the business world as producers or consumers.
Entrepreneurship education is part of entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship development this work posits, involves the selection of persons with requisite and identifiable entrepreneurship skills for development and equipping them with management techniques to enable them optimally manage businesses either for self or for others. Identification of persons with skills is a key ingredient because not all persons that are interested in going into business are entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs have special characteristics such as innovativeness (Amaewhule & Eni, 1994) and risk taking (Paul, Ickis, & Levitisky, 1989). To be added to these is tenacity or staying power, because the world of business is so volatile that only those who can solidly manage the swings - booms and recessions - end up as successful businesspersons. Such persons can be found at the high or low strata of a society. However for entrepreneurial education to be effective, a minimum level of education is a sine qua non because illiterate or semi-literate persons may find some business management terms and principles difficult to comprehend. The minimum entry qualification for artisans should be the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC); for craftsmen, Junior Secondary School Certificate (JSS3); while technicians should enter for training with the Senior Secondary Certificate (SSCE).

There is indeed a strong relationship among education, entrepreneurship, and economic development. Thinkers such as William Petty, Montesquieu, Henry Thomas Buckle, and John Keats have even noted the affinity between Protestantism and the development of commercialism (Kim, 2007) and a study using the perspective – literacy – found a strong correlation between literacy induced by Protestantism and economic growth. Kortayev, Malkov, and Khaltourina (2006) empirically established a strong correlation between early introduction of literacy and capitalist development. This is also the position of Bosma, Kent, Autio, and Lewie (2007) and the various research publications of the Global Economic Monitor (GEM) over the years.

Entrepreneurship, Work Ethic, and Capitalism

Recently, it occurred to me that each morning as I pass by the entrance to Pipeline Road from Ahoada Road, Omoku and opposite to one of Omoku’s unauthorized garages (alias motor park) I see a young man that is operating a tyre vulcanizing service. He is there before 7 am seven days of the week and works or sits around till 6pm. I asked myself, if this same young man is offered a job as a motor tyre vulcanizer in the Local Government Council or Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, what would be his likely work ethic? My mind told me that he would report for work by 9am, spend an hour and go for breakfast; return after two hours, work for one hour and go for lunch that will last till 2pm or the rest of the day. If he is queried for absenteeism, he would accuse his boss of trying to get him out of a government job which is his right, and threaten to ’swear juju’ for the boss. Two issues come to mind from this case.

First is that entrepreneurship verily promotes a better work ethic than paid employment. This was the thinking in 16th century Europe when Calvinism developed in Switzerland. John Calvin (1509-1564), a French theologian, founded the Calvinist movement in his capacity as the head of the Genevan Academy. Calvinism was a reformist movement that broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and came after Lutheranism. It emphasized strict moral codes as well as doctrines that hung on the central concepts that God is supreme, man is depraved, and in spite of such depravity, some persons are chosen to enjoy the kingdom of God based absolutely on grace and mercy (Barry, 1998). It was this strong belief in a select few as predestined by God that made Calvinists to seek to know while still alive, whether they were in the favoured group or not. One way of determining this was to excel in ventures or ‘callings,’ which included business. The frugality, described by Monter (2012) as “Calvinist austerity” that
was emphasized made them to shun ostentatious consumption and rather reinvest business profit. This is regarded as having led to the development of capitalism.

German philosopher and social scientist Max Weber indicates that certain branches of Protestantism supported worldly activities dedicated to economic gain, seeing them as endowed with moral and spiritual significance. This recognition was not a goal in itself; rather it was a byproduct of other doctrines of faith that encouraged planning, hard work, and self-denial in the pursuit of worldly riches (Allan & Allan, 2005). In The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Max Weber put forward the thesis that Calvinist ethic and ideas influenced the development of capitalism in Europe (Ritzer, 2009).

Weber in essence held that certain types of Protestantism, and in particular Calvinism encouraged rational pursuit of economic gain by way of entrepreneurship. Such activities had positive moral and spiritual significance while affecting the development of capitalism (Bendix, 1977).

The Philosophical Foundations of Entrepreneurship

There are several underlying principles or philosophies that inform the concept of entrepreneurship. Philosophy in antiquity was based on two principal schools of thought - idealism and realism. Idealism, generally identified with Plato, holds that there can be no true knowledge based on sense experience as what we see are but copies of what is in the spiritual and can only be known through mental processes. Realists on the other hand believe that the world is real and can be known through sense experience.

Of particular relevance to entrepreneurship is pragmatic realism which includes experimentalism. Okoh (2003) indicates that “Pragmatism stresses action and doing and maintains that imaginative theorizing must be supported and controlled by the outcome of active experimentation” (p. 36). Pragmatism, an offshoot of empiricism, is the dominant educational philosophy of the USA, having been canvassed by philosophers C. S. Peirce, John Dewey, and William James. Pragmatism is behind the mammoth growth in entrepreneurship in the USA that has made the country the number one economy in the world. This feat was achieved because of liberalization of the economic sector. In the era of strict state control when entrepreneurship was suppressed, China remained a poor economy.

Humanism has a relationship with entrepreneurship, which leads to self-reliance. Entrepreneurship emphasizes individual action that will lead to self-determination and self-sufficiency. Mautner (2000) presents two viewpoints on the concept of humanism from two language groups. The English-speaking world from the 19th century saw humanism as a non-religious worldview “usually based on a belief in man’s capacity for self-cultivation and self-improvement, and in the progress of mankind” (p. 256). Contemporary philosophy in the French-speaking world sees humanism as “a conception of man as an autonomous being, capable of self-determination, together with the assumption that an individual’s choices can make a real difference to a society or to a course of history” (p. 256). Both self-cultivation and self-improvement are aspects of entrepreneurship.

Another philosophical foundation of entrepreneurship is individualism which makes the individual its focus and so starts "with the fundamental premise that the human individual is of primary importance in the struggle for liberation" (Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 2011). Natural rights and freedom are the substance of these theories. Classical liberalism (including libertarianism), existentialism, and individualist anarchism are examples of movements that take the human individual as a central unit of analysis.
Economic individualism is central to entrepreneurship because it canvasses economic independence. Liberalism is another philosophical principle that is germane to entrepreneurship; it is the belief in the importance of the freedom of the individual. Liberalism is also regarded as a set of ideas in social and political thought that emphasizes the value of individual right, freedom of choice, and freedom from interference while the role of the state should be limited to the protection of such rights (Mautner, 2000).

Libertarianism is a related concept, an aspect of political philosophy that advocates the maximization of individual liberty and the minimization or even abolition of government (Vallentyne, 2006). Viewpoints on libertarianism range from pro-property to anti-property, and from minarchist to openly anarchist (Zwolinsky, 2008) as well as egoism (Ridgely, 2008). Libertarians hold that resources may be appropriated by those who discover and develop them even without the consent of others.

The philosophical foundation of entrepreneurship would not be complete without mention of the concept of laissez faire which is of French origin with the simple meaning “let (the people) do.” In essence, people should be allowed to do for themselves what they would although within the ambit of the law. Scottish economist Adam Smith used this concept in his thoughts on the role of the ‘invisible hand’ of the market. David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill, both British economists, developed Smith’s laissez-faire theory further. State control of economies have continued to the contemporary time; however, the “basic individualist appeal of the laissez-faire philosophy … still exists today in the emphasis placed on the profit motive and on individual initiative in economic progress” (Encarta Encyclopaedia, 2008). Initiative and the profit drive are two important characteristics of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs.

IV

ARE ENTREPRENEURS BORN OR MADE?

Permit me at this juncture, Provost, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, to introduce some level of ‘nuanced’ philosophical discourse. First, Aristotle in Politics and expanded in Nichomachian Ethics tells us that man can be made good by education, the ‘good’ coming in various forms that have the ultimate focus of attainment of individual happiness. Thus education can play a central role in the development of the individual for attainment of individual and group goals.

Is entrepreneurship an innate or in-born characteristic in the human individual or is it acquired? Can it be both in-born and acquired? Angeliki Frangou is a Greek billionaire who has made a fortune in the shipping business. In an interview in Cable News Network (Anderson, 2013) she stated without hesitation, “Shipping is in my DNA.” She was referring to the fact that she is from a long line of shipping magnates in Greece. It is related that this woman borrowed $2 million to buy an old ship in the 1980s. She now runs a fleet of about 100 ships in the Navious Group that is worth $4billion (about N640 billion). This raises the question whether entrepreneurs are born or made (and whether I have entrepreneurship in my DNA, given the fact that my father was a businessman till he died and I have refused to stop attempting to run a business in spite of set backs).

There are three perspectives that can be briefly discussed here:

1. The tabula rasa argument. If a child is born on a null intellectual tablet, then whatever a child knows after birth is courtesy of what is written by self and others on that blank slate. Thus even the activity of grabbing and squeezing a particular part of the female body which can generate nutrient from day one is regarded as impulse, not knowledge.
The tabula rasa argument was put forward by British philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) who espoused the theory in his magnum opus, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* published in 1690. This work is regarded as having signalled the birth of empiricism although Francis Bacon is said to have mooted the idea earlier.

A child’s system is regarded as a blank slate of which experience imprints knowledge and innate conceptions have no place (Encarta, 2008). The Lockian position is regarded as the classic ‘nurture’ argument: everything a human being knows is a product of experience - this is regarded as the basis of empiricism of which John Locke is regarded as founder and chief proponent. Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711-1776) also espoused this philosophy.

The flipside is rationalism, canvassed by French philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650), Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), and German philosophers Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) and Christian von Wolfe (1679-1754). Rationalists argue that reality can be established through reason without recourse to experience. German philosopher Immanuel Kant attempted a synthesis recognizing knowledge as deriving principally from experience while intuition or reason can be structured into experience.

Some neuroscientists particularly those of the distributive school appear to disagree with the blank slate concept. Nicolelis (2011) argues that the brain “accumulates evolutionary and individual life history” (p. 26); based on this, he argues that the Cartesian (René Descartes’) assumption that the brain is a passive interpreter or decoder of signals external to it is against research evidence. René Descartes was a prolific French philosopher of the 17th century.

The tabula rasa concept can also be questioned on the basis of genetics. The gene is the basic unit of heredity found in the cells of all living organisms that ensures transmission of characteristics from one generation to the next. The controversy as to the level of contribution between genes and environment continues although newer studies are looking at the possibility of existence of a particular gene that affects intelligence for instance. However, others such as muscle strength or musical achievement seem to require contributions from both genes and the environment. If a person is born with the alleles for great athletic or musical potential, for example, those talents will not develop without practice. A child may be born with the alleles for potentially high academic intelligence, but lack of stimulation and limited exposure to new experiences in early childhood may keep the child from actualizing that potential (Encarta, 2008).

The question is: if genotype affects intelligence and genes of any individual is taken from two parents, how come all the offspring of a pair of parents do not display equivalent capabilities? Meanwhile the tabula rasa argument appears to be interesting when the law of excluded middle is brought into the field of play. This law of thought holds that anything must either be one thing or the other; it is either A or not A. Human beings cannot come into the world without any in-built traits and at the same time come in with some in-built traits.

2. Chance entrepreneurship – In a number of cases that may not be documented, some people go into business development because they have no other option. Two cases easily come to mind. First, a person that suddenly finds himself or herself out of paid employment for whatever reason other than planned retirement, could decide to venture into the business world if paid job options are not available particularly in the current world where jobs are so few and are in fact becoming fewer even in the most economically developed countries. Spain for instance is witnessing 25% unemployment rate among youths who have energy and drive. Rather than rot at home or join demonstrators, a person can decide to use available resources and venture into business.
Second, is the case of women whose husbands are well to do and would prefer if their wives stayed at home to take care of their children. A woman that abhors laziness can request the husband to open a shop in the family garage or build a kiosk in the premises to enable her run a small grocery or personal service business such as hair dressing. Both cases can be regarded as chance entrepreneurship because the persons did not see entrepreneurship as a way of life originally. Persons in this group may drop the business idea if a job becomes handy.

3. Entrepreneurs born, and made - One of the laws of thought is termed the law of excluded middle. The law states that anything must either be A or not A, that is, given two contradictory propositions – “A” and “not A,” it must be either one or the other. For example, in the two propositions, “There is an Inaugural Lecture at the Multipurpose Hall” and “There is no Inaugural Lecture at the Multipurpose Hall,” one must be true and the other untrue. Traditionally this implies a two-parameter (true-false value) in logic. Jan Lukasiewicz, a twentieth century logician extended this understanding to include a third value – ‘possible’ – now described as ternary or multivalued logic.

Given our proposition “entrepreneurs are born, not made” or the alternate, “entrepreneurs are made, not born,” the subject is ‘entrepreneur’ in the two cases while the predicates are “born, not made” and “made, not born” respectively; the two are contradictory propositions. In the first instance, by the Kantian model, the two propositions are synthetic \textit{a posteriori} which implies that the predicate concept is not contained in the subject concept and justification of the proposition relies on experience. If the ternary model is introduced, a third variant can be adduced: “Entrepreneurs are born, and made.” This is a synthetic \textit{a posteriori} proposition. We can, with this modified proposition, argue:

a) That entrepreneurship can be natural or innate to the individual. This would run against the \textit{tabula rasa} principle enunciated by John Locke. However, as already argued, research has indicated, even if not confirmed, that human beings at birth appear to start life with some learned behaviours. This might agree with our traditional believe in reincarnation.

b) That entrepreneurship can be induced through various ways, and in the context of this paper, through education.

c) That a) and b) can be regarded as possibilities, that is, entrepreneurship is innate, and can be induced, in which case a person that is born an entrepreneur can have the skill honed say, through education. We adopt this third option in this paper.

It is important to note the role of the conjunction ‘and’ in the proposition. In grammar, a conjunction is a connecting word or something that has simultaneous occurrence; in logic, it implies a compound statement as in a proposition in which the parts are true only if both parts are true individually. Thus the proposition ‘A’ and ‘B’ is true if A and B are true individually. This implies, from our modified proposition, that for “entrepreneurs are born and made” to be true, the “entrepreneurs are born” and “entrepreneurs are made” must both be true. If we accept the argument put up by Nicolelis (2011) and the argument that men are made good by education, we can accept the proposition that all human beings have innate in them, the entrepreneurship traits and that such traits can be sharpened or developed through education, specifically, entrepreneurship education.
ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR WHOM?

Provost, Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen, I have consistently argued that entrepreneurship is an activity for every person who has the mental and physical capacity to venture into something new and pursue same to fruition and conclusion given the fact that entrepreneurs can be born and made. In this context, entrepreneurship in the business sense is open to any one who is ready to take risks by developing and running a business idea. A few groups and cases are however discussed herein because of the need for focus given the fact that not much emphasis has hitherto been placed on them (men for instance are assumed to be the kingpins in the business world and thus may not require much emphasis).

Entrepreneurship for Women

It is necessary to dwell on this group because empowering women is empowering families and the whole society, much more than men. It is also important because generally speaking, the potentials of this group are lost or very poorly developed in most societies. Women are involved in business undertakings but in poor societies, they are predominantly in micro businesses such as petty trading and small scale farming.

Entrepreneurship is not expected to be gender sensitive although it appears that a strong bias still exists across the globe against women entrepreneurs. Cable News Network (CNN) has for some time been running a series on distinguished women particularly in the business world. One edition (CNN, 2013) focused on Güler Sabanci who is running the Sabanci Holding, a $25 billion (about N4 trillion) family business in Turkey. This very successful lady who runs a highly diversified business group that includes manufacture, services, and banking as well as a private university and a museum of arts narrated her experience as she tried to attend a dinner for bankers in London in 1985. She was denied entry because the forum has been regarded as an all male club. Meanwhile London is often regarded as the world’s leading financial centre.

Ball, McCulloch, Jr., Frantz, Geringer, and Minor (2002) writing on sexism in countries with respect to participation of women in the work force and in business, state:

Acceptability of women as full participants in the work force ranges from improving acceptability in the United States and Western Europe to almost no acceptability in many countries. While sexism is far from being eliminated, the United States has seen large strides in the status and acceptability of women in business. In other countries, however, laws, customs, attitudes, and religious beliefs continue to act as extremely hostile barriers to women in business (p.418).

This situation is confirmed by Todaro and Smith (2003) and the World Bank (2008) among others. The Nobel Prize laureate in Economic Science, Professor Amartya Sen in reviewing the poverty situation among groups described the female group in Asia and Africa as “missing women.” What is of prime concern to us in this work is the status of women in business not just as employees and managers but as business proprietors. What, one may ask, is the primary reason behind the bias against women for, even in the United States, it is President Barak Obama that signed an Executive Order to equalize the pay of men and women in the country in 2009? Hitherto, women professors for instance were earning less than male professors and the same situation obtained in other sectors of the economy.
Ubong (2003) went back to the story of creation from the biblical standpoint to attempt to explain the genesis of the problem. In a paper titled “The gender controversy, biblical account, status of women, and their empowerment” he submits that the discrimination against women is as old as creation based on the biblical position that God first created the male species of human being and no one knows how long it took the Creator to come out with the female species given the fact that a thousand years in God’s sight is like just one evening. Nor are matters helped by the fact that woman by revealed truth came from just one rib of a man, and that Adam was given the privilege to give names to animals and plants before Eve arrived, the understanding here being that only a very mature being particularly in prehistoric time could have been able to name scores of animals without confusion or repeating names.

Wokocha (1995) is of the opinion that “culture is women’s number one enemy in Nigeria.” This is in line with the position of Ball et al (2002) earlier quoted. The World Bank (1995) states that in Nigeria, there is “feminization of poverty” in which the capacity of women to participate in the development process are constrained by systematic factors such as laws, customs, and denial of access to basic technologies and other resources that can conduce economic production. Nwosu-Izuwah (1999) describes the tendency of the society and women themselves to limit women to certain courses of study and vocations as “limited feminine fields.” Interestingly, a study by Obi and Ali (1995) revealed that girls interviewed prefer male bosses to female bosses whether in the public or the private sector.

The problem of constraining women is so strong that the younger generation of the female gender is affected. In a study by Ubong (2001) on the attitude of female science students towards private participation of girls in business, it was found that a majority of those surveyed in the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku indicated their disinclination to adopt entrepreneurship as a lifetime engagement. A statistical test showed preference for employment vis-à-vis business by the girls that filled the questionnaires. Their reasons included fear of “stress” associated with business management, uncertainty associated with raising capital, and lack of knowledge of business management. The study however found that business education formally or informally could encourage girls to go into private business.

What is the way forward for women in entrepreneurship particularly in developing countries, when as Ubong (2005, 2006) submits, peace in the home would likely result from women that have their own sources of income? Is it sufficient to merely pontificate or go on advocacy only?

Several approaches have been used to encourage women to go into private business. In the USA, the Small Business Administration has a special programme for women entrepreneurs. Under the Women’s Financing Section, loans below $50,000.00 are guaranteed to qualified women in the context of the Women’s Business Ownership Act of 1988. This implies that a specific law is in existence in the USA to encourage women participation in business, something that developing countries should learn from. The SBA also provides micro loans to women ranging from $100.00 to $25,000.00. Given the fact that finance is the about the most daunting problem confronting women entrepreneurs, direct action is required if women participation in business is to be made a general practice.

The idea of microfinance was started by Professor Yunus in Bangladesh in 1986. His first target group was women, who were given loans as small as $2.00 to start microenterprises. Experience has shown that repayment rate particularly among women borrowers range between 95% and 100%. Professor Yunus and the Grameen Foundation won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2006 for his work with women and other small borrowers.
In Nigeria, Ubong (2005) has suggested empowerment of women through entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship development consists of identifying persons who have the characteristics of entrepreneurs, training them, giving them access to enabling facilities such as business credit and marketing, monitoring, evaluation, and retraining as necessary. The following stages are relevant:

i) Preliminary processes – programme development, to include identification and analysis of all issues involved in business development for women including costs and benefits of effort.

ii) The Home Front – reorientation of the families and the society at large towards accepting women entrepreneurs without the negative feeling for instance that traveling and meeting people to transact business could affect their fidelity and marital status. Employees (men and women) have to learn to accept women entrepreneurs as bosses. Obi and Ali (1995) as already noted, indicate that in a survey, it was found out that business education students (including girls) who were interviewed would rather not have women as bosses in organizations including business establishments.

iii) Training – well-articulated programmes for training of women entrepreneurs have to be designed. They should include theory and practice of business. For girls, the normal school environment should suffice. For adult women, out-of-school, conducive atmosphere is preferable. For instance, the Boston Center for Adult Education (2001) in the USA provides a relaxed and enjoyable setting for learning. The Center offers more than 500 courses in a wide range of subjects and specialties. In Canada, the Center for Entrepreneurship Education and Development (2003) of the Province of Nova Scotia runs an integrated curriculum that “works best when it is developed in an environment outside the traditional classroom. This allows for the freedom of individualized learning and facilitates the link between the educational process and economic reality.” These are in contrast to the Nigerian situation where ‘adult education’ classes hold in dilapidated primary school classrooms and town halls.

iv) Support Services – this involves the provision of business enhancing services such as feasibility studies and business consultancy generally, credit facilities, market information, and access to business inputs, among other things. It also recognizes the need for periodic retraining and extension services at the incubation stage of the businesses and periodically given the rapid changes in the society in terms of tastes and preferences, technology, information, and related issues.

v) Monitoring, Mentoring, and Evaluation – sustained visits to new businesses in particular could help in managing emerging challenges that if not stitched in time, could lead to a loss of nine. Mentoring implies attaching specialists to specific entrepreneurs for hands-on management activities.

**Entrepreneurship in Educational Institutions**

I had the opportunity of serving as the Agricultural Extension Officer at Ogoja, Cross River State in the days of Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) programme of General Olusegun Obasanjo. As an insider, I regard it as one of the most successful government mass mobilization cum participation programmes in Nigeria to date. Public, and indeed private sector and even personal projects must be viewed against the backdrop of articulated objectives. OFN *per se* did not aim at providing food for all Nigerians directly, as its successor, the Green Revolution via Basin Authorities purposed. OFN aimed at sensitizing Nigerians to the need for increased food production by all Nigerians. Thus individuals who were not professional farmers were encouraged to own farms - at least gardens - at their backyards and unused plots. Organizations were directed to run farms on unoccupied plots within their premises. I still recall the several hectares of crops
run by the Prisons, Obubra which disappeared as soon as President Shehu Shagari ‘abolished’ OFN.

This is mentioned here because all educational institutions as organizations should run agricultural enterprises. This would not only impact, even if at a low level, on the level of food availability and security, but could generate interest of youths in agricultural enterprises. This applies to all other income-generating enterprises. It is pertinent to state, as we were taught in primary school, that little drops of water make an ocean.

A monograph by Ubong and Wokocha (2000) extensively discusses the issue of internally generated revenue in tertiary educational institutions. That monograph lists possible business investments in schools and developed a model of flow of business investments for use by schools. Some institutions are deeply involved in business ventures, and I believe they are the better for it, for the rationale for such businesses are several, and as listed by Ubong and Wokocha (2000) include but are not limited to:

i) practical hands-on training for staff and students that could motivate and prepare them for private entrepreneurship.

ii) acting as avenues to absorb students on industrial work experience scheme (SIWES) and even provision of permanent employment for graduates of the institutions.

iii) Generation of revenue for internal operations.

We are aware that the University of Benin runs a table water production plant and a vibrant guest house among other businesses. The Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku recently commissioned a table water plant aside from training consultancy, block moulding, and shortly, roofing sheet business.

Out-of-School Group - Skills Acquisition

A more reliable approach to poverty reduction is through education, and specifically, business or vocational education, which includes skills training. This is in line with the experiences of other countries of the world, particularly the emerging or newly developing countries in Asia. It is also in line with the Chinese saying that if a man is given a fish, he is fed for a day; but if he is taught how to fish, he is fed throughout life. Thus development efforts should focus on skill development and human capital formation rather than on provision of direct consumption goods or consumption assistance via poverty alleviation hand-outs.

Industry-academia partnership, as in the case of the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku and crude oil producing companies need to be encouraged or possibly legislated. There could also be a three-way linkage among industries, institutions, and government in what is known as the triple helix model. This cooperation arrangement has been found to be useful in many countries (Klofsten, Jones-Evans, & Scharberg, 1999; Kankonen & Niemenen, 1999; Bunders, Broerse, & Zwekhorst, 1999).

Two of the apparent post-training problems associated with skills acquisition in Nigeria include lack of follow-up and lack of material assistance for trained persons desiring to establish their own businesses. Every programme should have built in facilities for monitoring, evaluation, and retraining while assistance in the form of credit, marketing information, personnel matters, record keeping, and related management issues should be in-built in every skills programme. The recent introduction of a mentoring programme by Addax Petroleum for graduates of skills training is a good one and should be encouraged. The company is even experimenting on part disbursement of take-off funds so as to limit misuse of bulk funds advanced to the youths that are expected to use what they have been given to go into business development for self and others.
Very importantly, there must be proper policy coordination and consistency. Some of the problems of development in Nigeria include policy conflicts and policy instability. The Small Business Administration is an organ of the Federal Government of the United States of America. It coordinates matters related to small and medium scale enterprises and ensures policy consistency and stability. Developing countries such as Nigeria require such powerful organs to be able to stabilize the system (Ubong/Nyanabo, 2006).

**Youths**

The primary focus of this presentation is the youth who are correctly regarded as the future of every nation. Chan (2005) tells us the way many governments are handling entrepreneurship education given its crucial nature. He submits:

… some governments are rethinking the way the young are educated by infusing creative thinking and innovation in their nation’s educational curriculum. In the same vein, they are putting much emphasis on the need to train future entrepreneurs through infusing entrepreneurship components within the educational option, especially at the tertiary level. Some countries have taken this initiative to a higher level by introducing entrepreneurship education at elementary school and encouraging them to be future entrepreneurs when they are of age.

Ubong (2001) suggests that a more sustainable approach to poverty reduction if not elimination is through encouraging youths, particularly those with identified entrepreneurial skills to go into private business particularly in science and technology because these have natural potentials for business development. He therefore calls for reforms in the educational curriculum to prepare students for self-reliance.

**Children**

Although Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget’s developmental stages recognizes age twelve as concrete operational stage during which children can engage in abstract thinking and mathematical reasoning which means they can handle business issues, it does not appear that it is right to expect children, at least the normal ones, to go into private business. Piaget’s theory does not in any way give parents and guardians the permit to send their children to the market to sell goods, particularly selling on the streets. Meanwhile, how many adults do we see weeping on the road as a result of loss of sales proceeds, whether the child genuinely lost the money or used it to buy food for self?

The International Labour Organization (ILO) fixes age twelve for light work in paid employment and 16-18 years for hazardous jobs. Unfortunately in developing countries, Odaga and Henevel (1995) state that “child labour is indispensable to the survival of some households, and schooling represents a high opportunity cost to those sending children to school” (p. 17). I argue that even at age 18, a young adult should be in school rather than in employment, and certainly not in private business that is suffused with uncertainty as well as mental, physical, psychological, and emotional hazards. What is more, the dangers involved in micro businesses such as street trading where cases of rape, abduction, motor vehicular accidents and other mishaps are not difficult to come by. Ubong (1999) has detailed the perils of street trading, the dilemma of parents involved in it, and the legal issues in it in Nigeria and the world at large. Children should be kept in school until they are mature enough to face the rigours of the business world. Free education and scholarships should take care of those unable to meet the financial expectations of school life.
Scientists, Technologists, Technicians

Ubong (2002) notes that it is evidently more reasonable to employ an engineer to head a technical organization than graduates of non-engineering or science disciplines. This is apparently the reason behind recruitment of engineers to head many of such organizations in Nigeria including the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC), Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), radio and television networks, and so on. However, it is necessary that such persons have in addition to technical knowledge, management skills in areas such as accounting, marketing, personnel, and so on. This is also why such persons go for management courses that lead to Master in Business Administration (MBA), diploma in business related courses, and several management workshops and seminars.

In a study by Ubong (2002) a statistically significant difference was observed with respect to engineers and technologists who hold the opinion that business training is necessary for successful operations as professionals and those who do not. It was also ascertained that most engineers and technologists in Nigeria have received no formal management training before heading organizations or departments in organizations. This is probably one reason many technical companies both private and public experience growth and profitability challenges. Out of 50 respondents comprising 29 COREN registered engineers, two architects, 6 technologists, and 10 technicians, the following were observed:

1. 94% indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between knowledge of business management and engineering functions.
2. 42% said they felt a sense of inadequacy in management positions whether in employment or in their private business engagements.
3. A wide disparity exists with respect to perception of critical areas of business knowledge for engineers. This ranged from 40 respondents for management to six for ability to prepare profit and loss account. The major areas of deficiency include budgeting, interpreting financial statements, finance and banking, and appreciation of audit reports.

Ubong (2002) therefore recommended that in designing the curriculum for science and technology, business education courses such as accounting, management, marketing, finance and banking should be recognized. The University of Nigeria (2010) another alma mater of mine, has many entrepreneurship courses in technical/vocational education programmes. I am aware that the University of Port Harcourt is designing a curriculum that will recognize the critical role of entrepreneurship in tertiary education. Other institutions of higher should consider this.

The Niger Delta Region (NDR)

Outside Nigeria, the NDR is known more for youth restiveness and kidnapping of oil company workers than for anything else. With increased security being arranged for oil company workers, the NDR youths have since turned attention to less financially endowed Nigerians probably with Omoku currently taking the lead position. Probably if the youths had something to engage them, they would leave the business of stealing human beings in spite of the huge financial returns in so short a period and concentrate in more sustainable engagements. Ubong (2002) holds the opinion that encouraging young persons in the NDR to go into private business is more sustainable than the Poverty Alleviation Programme which has been but a palliative on poverty. It is critical for
Nigeria to recognize the special case of the NDR with respect to the difficult physical terrain and the effect of oil exploitation and exploration on the land and the people.

What’s in a Name? Role of Schools and Institutes

Is there something in the name of an educational institution that can ferret out entrepreneurship in an individual generally and youths in particular? Or is it that some institutions provide the right environment that is fertile for the growing of the entrepreneurial spirit? I think it is both but more of the later. Jerry Yang (born 1968) and David Filo (born 1966) were graduate students of electrical/electronics in Stanford University, California, USA when they started Yahoo that has encircled the world. The company’s earnings in 2012 was $4.9 billion while assets stood at $17.1 billion in the same year. That was about 58% (that is a little more than half) of the 2012 Federal budget of Nigeria, Africa’s most populous nation. Goggle was founded by Larry Page (born 1973) and Sergey Brin (born 1973). Both studied at Stanford University when they developed the idea that the world now basically depends on for all sorts of information from the social to geographical (Goggle Earth). Stanford University is incidentally located near Palo Alto where the famed Silicon Valley (centre of computer technology) is based. The university was founded in 1885 by Leland Stanford, a railroad entrepreneur and his wife Jane.

Harvard University is the oldest higher educational institution in the USA. It has on its alumni list several US Presidents including the current, President Barack Obama who studied at the Harvard Law School. Our primary interest here is on the mega entrepreneurs that Harvard has fostered. Mark Zuckerberg (born 1984) is regarded as the youngest self-made billionaire in history, at least, as at now. He conceived of, and developed Facebook from 1984 while he was a student at Harvard. Bill Gates (born 1953) studied at Harvard where he engaged himself in electronics before developing Microsoft. He started as early as seventeen years of age and has been on top of the world’s richest list for many years. The current Chief Executive Officer of Microsoft Corporation is Mr. Steve Ballmer (born 1956). He studied at Harvard and is currently rated the world’s 9th richest person by Forbes 400.

University of California is in the business region where computer engineering reigns. Steve Wozniak (born 1976) of Apple Computers studied there. The co-founder’s story is more fascinating; Steve Jobs (born 1955) had to drop out of high school because his parents could no longer afford the fees. It is said that he used to squat with his friends in the hostel. He went on to revolutionalize the personal computer business.

The most current rave in the world of e-business is 17-year old Nick D’Aloisio of the United Kingdom whose development of summarization application known as Summly was bought by Yahoo for $30 million this March 2013. The boy is still in secondary school.

What are the common features in these success stories? First, those mentioned started at a very early age, generally, teens and early twenties. Second, they are predominantly in the computer hardware/software/information business. This is smart for we are in the information age and information – hardware, software, accessories - simply sell. This is different from what I stocked at Ogoja that were not the market’s favourites. Third, the general business line is knowledge-driven, which is what is trending in the world of the twenty first century. Fourth, they developed their ideas while at school, and went on to commercialize them. There is no doubt that several grand products and services that never were are gathering dust in offices of higher educational institutions in Nigeria. Fifth, the schools provided the right environment for creativity and productivity while the young entrepreneurs received encouragement from the business world.
D’Aloisio for instance has received several million dollars from venture capitalists or angel investors to develop his idea. The attitude of Nigerian business persons appears to be geared towards short-maturing, high yield business ideas. Seventh, there is strong evidence of cooperation among those that pioneer the creations. Eighth, governments show interest; for instance, President Barack Obama granted audience to Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook.

What lessons for Nigeria, nay developing countries particularly in the area of facilities in educational and research institutions? How many universities in Nigeria have the facilities that encourage even doctoral candidates to carry out basic research? Many Nigerian universities do not have a room dedicated for graduate students to stay together and share ideas; graduate students just look for any empty classroom to rush in and rush through lectures and vacate for undergraduate and diploma students. And how would the institutions have when the sponsors are paying lip service to education? The Federal Government for instance spends less than 3% of annual budget on the entire education sector. Neighbouring Ghana which is now the education Mecca in West Africa spent 21.38% of 2010 budget on education as indicated by World Bank (2012) data.

Research institutions make considerable impact on product development that end up in the factories and market stalls. Bell Laboratories in New Jersey, USA has, between 1937 and 2009 produced seven Nobel Laureates in Physics. The results of research from that lab of course end up in the factories and include motion picture systems, transistors, solar cells, lasers, telephone, and electrical systems. I am aware that the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture at Ibadan has developed several agricultural products and systems. One wishes they are commercialized and publicised.

It is however pertinent to state that being in a high-tech institution is very important but not the last word or a sine qua non for success as an inventor or entrepreneur or inventor-entrepreneur. Thomas Alva Edison did not invent the incandescent bulb that we take for granted today; but he was the person who developed the practical, and therefore commercial version in 1887. He started at age 18 in 1863 and by the time he died in 1931, he held a world record of 1,093 patents. He started from his father’s garage and grew to the stage of building the world’s first commercial research laboratory.

Meanwhile, as Edison’s sun was going west, Professor Albert Einstein, a German-American physicist, who began to dream of great scientific ideas at age 16, completed his general theory of relativity in 1915 and changed the world, for his work has so many applications including being the basis of the hydrogen bomb. Professor Einstein is someone that I have always been fascinated about, among other things, because his great discoveries were based on thought and desk research while he was a Clerk at the Patent Office at Bern, Switzerland where he had no benefit of a laboratory or observatory. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1941 and more physicists have won the Nobel Prize in Physics based on his research and publications.

VI

THE WAY FORWARD

Provost, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I hereby present some of the approaches that could lead Nigeria and other poor countries towards entrepreneurial nationhood. These range from the broader issue of an incisive review of the national policy framework to more specific issues in specialized areas. It is important to start something in spite of prevailing circumstances.
Review of the National Policy on Education

Evidently, the best approach to entrepreneurial nationhood for Nigeria is through entrepreneurship education that cuts across the entire spectrum of the education system from primary school to university as well as in the informal system. Actualizing this will imply a definitive national philosophy of education that emphasizes self-reliance with entrepreneurship at the core. Professor J. D. Okoh has also made a national call to Nigerians to orientate their minds to the “The risk of an educational system without a philosophical base” (2005). Ubong (2012) has therefore suggested a review of the National Policy on Education (on-going, by the Nigerian Educational and Research Council, NERDC) towards new national goals on education that can be actuated as follows:

i) Teaching and practice of entrepreneurship at all levels of the education system, with the practical aspect expressed though vocational subjects at the primary and secondary school levels. At the tertiary level, the curriculum of all courses should include key aspects of entrepreneurship as all courses have the potentials for business development. It is pertinent to point out that poetry is part of the curriculum in medical schools as it has a bearing with medical practice in spite of the fact that a prima facie case would put the two subjects poles apart.

ii) Use of English Language as the first medium of instruction from pre-nursery while the mother tongue should be taught as a subject. It is the opinion of this writer that Nigeria’s number one challenge in the education sub-sector is English Language (Ubong, 2009). The mother tongue (MT or LI or whichever), should be taught for purpose of group consciousness and integration. No child should be allowed to forget his or her roots; but for educational purposes, English Language must necessarily be taught and taught properly from the child’s first day at school. The Nigerian child should be able to think and reason in English quite early. This is the path of realism if Nigerians are to play the field appropriately and optimally in the 21st century and beyond. The national policy on education of the State of Singapore has the very first aim of education as being to give children ‘a good grasp of English Language.’ (Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2005). Mother tongue and Mathematics take the second position. Can we compare Singapore (one of the Asian Tigers) with Nigeria? In spite of its importance in the educational system and in national life, the standard of spoken and written English in Nigerian schools is appalling. There is therefore an urgent need for a special programme for the development of teachers of English Language in Colleges of Education and Universities for the foundation levels of the education system. This would involve tuition-free programmes with special allowances to encourage the students and teachers.

Appropriate Technology for Accelerated Growth

As this paper winds down, the most pertinent question that should agitate the mind is, given the fact that developing countries are operating in a century where technology is virtually everything, from food to health, from marriage to worship, from delivering a baby to burying a centenarian, from exploring the depths of the earth to the entire galaxy, what approach should Nigeria use? A colleague was in India recently for medical check up. This developing country, currently regarded as ‘medical Mecca,’ has since done away with the traditional scalpel in performing surgery. In the case of cancer for instance, while the most sophisticated laboratories in the USA are still battling for a
cure and the Venezuelan President Ugo Chavez recently succumbed, Indian specialist hospitals we are told, aggregate cancer cells from any part of the body to one location, then put in a tube and bring out a lump, leaving the patient without the tale-tale long scar that tells of the surgeons blade and weeks of mind-bending pain. Should the ‘poorer’ developing countries go hop-step-and-jump to that level?

In a paper I presented at the Nigerian Academy of Education Conference in 2003 at the University of Port Harcourt, I suggested that typewriters must be abandoned in favour of computers. A Professor in the group requested to know if my village (Oboy Ikot Ita in Akwa Ibom State) enjoys electricity supply “24/7.” The paper simply fell apart at that stage as the bottom had been cut off. When I remember the fragmented pieces of land in my village of which half has currently been sliced off courtesy of the Federal Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs that has acquired half of the village for a housing estate that will benefit only the upper class of our nation, the idea of mechanized agriculture becomes a pipe dream. What, then, is the way forward if entrepreneurship is to play the catalytic role by sitting on the driver’s seat for accelerated economic development?

In an empirical paper I presented in 2012 at the United Nations 2nd World Conference on Technology and Development at the Ecolé Polytechnic de Lausanne, Switzerland, the following conclusion was drawn:

Results revealed the perception of those currently using modern technology: cutting edge technology would aid the development of Nigeria - used here as a typical poor country - yet, abandoning local technology would reduce the speed of economic development. Conversely, improving local technology would accelerate economic development. The paper sees appropriate technology for accelerated socio-economic development as essential technology defined as basic technology that characterizes a system or people’s way of doing particular things. Poor countries would be better served if local technology is moved upwards in a pyramidal form. At present, the paradigm is that of an inverted pyramid where cutting edge technology is planted in virgin locations that have no base. In essence, the starting point in technology transfer from North to South should be the determination of the acceptance-rejection framework of the beneficiaries through research; and development effort should be holistic, encompassing economics, sociology, psychology, education, and technology.

In the computer cum information age where all of life virtually revolves around modern technology, we need technology; however, we can start with what we have and grow. No doubt we cannot do without technology. I also argue that entrepreneurship may not be the panacea, but it is the best starting point particularly at the small and medium scales.

**Teacher Quality**

Nigeria’s NPE (FRN, 2004) has rightly quoted Professor Babs Fafunwa who held that no nation can rise above the quality of her teachers. Low quality teachers, *ipso facto*, imply low quality and low level of development. The reverse also holds, as economists say, everything being equal. Teacher quality should be improved constantly through long and short courses in institutions and organizations. These could be part time or full time, in-plant or off-plant (Ubong, 2003) and through practicum (Ubong, 2002). We appreciate the work of the Addison Wokocha-led Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) in the drive for professionalization and sustained improvement of teaching for the general good. More grease to your elbows and that of your team, sir.
Entrepreneurship Development

Under entrepreneurship for women, the issue of entrepreneurship development was discussed; entrepreneurship development is a complex of activities in a process from programme design through training and provision of support facilities to monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up support or mentoring. There is the crucial need for the right environment that would promote fecundity and catalyze action. The School of Business Education of this College has this semester commenced a new approach to business education practicum: students are encouraged to develop products and services of interest to them with the aim of getting them into long term engagement in that product or service as entrepreneurs. Our guests are invited to see some of these products on display today along with works of arts from the Department of Fine and Applied Arts of this College. Who knows, we may one day have the Bill Gates of Microsoft fame; the Steve Jobs of Apple computers fame; the Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook fame, all in their teen or twenties and in school when they first developed their products that the world cannot do without now. We may even have an indigenous Rembrandt. We are aware, and are proud to mention that students of the Department of Chemistry of this College successfully developed a novel solution for battery charging. Others built a prototype of a crude oil refinery. These require encouragement; reason I had earlier said something about the triple-helix model which does not appear to be available in Nigeria at present.

Entrepreneurship Framework Conditions (EFCs)

GEM has outlined ten conditions that can promote entrepreneurship development in a society. These are: (1) Financial Support (2) Government Policies (3) Government Programmes (4) Education and Training (5) Research and Development Transfer (6) Commercial, Professional Infrastructure (7) Internal Market Openness (8) Access to Physical Infrastructure (9) Cultural and Social Norms (10) Intellectual Property Rights Protection. These conditions can be made possible in Nigeria to ensure that the nation works towards entrepreneurial nationhood.

Business Size

While one would wonder whether our argument that women be not consigned to small and micro businesses is about to be countered, I argue that starting small is better. Given the level of our technology and business knowledge and other resources, to start small and grow big is more ideal. Nigeria would not be out of sync with the experiences of other countries in this regard. Cambieri (2011) submits that “Family businesses are the backbone of Italy’s economy.” Many of the big names today started off as small scale family businesses; these include Pirelli and Olivetti among others. In the USA, small businesses remain the bedrock of this world’s largest economy, reason the Small Business Administration is directly under the Presidency and the US President appoints the Chief Executive of that agency.

Planning

We may wish to take our minds back to the era of the military rulership in Nigeria. The Military Governor of Rivers State, Police Commissioner Fidelis Oyakhilome started a scheme he tagged School to Land Programme. This was designed for young people in schools and out of school youths. It was a successful programme until the fields were ripe and harvest was due. It was then that the Governor went in a
motorcade to the Projects Development Agency (PRODA) at Enugu to seek information on ways and means of handling the bumper harvest from the youth farms.

This was, and sadly, is still not a surprise in a country where implementation of projects takes off before thorough planning. Ubong (2001) has decried for instance, execution of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme before planning was even thought of. Agriculture and indeed all businesses make sense in the context of sales. It is an unwise investment if products of production facilities are in the store to gather dust, be destroyed by scavengers, and in the case of agri-business, rot away. This is why Ubong and Oguzor (2003) made a call for a review of the national policy on agricultural products marketing boards in Nigeria. The marketing boards had their heydays in the 1970s and as is with most government programmes in Nigeria, fizzled away. The boards were abolished and replaced with nothing. This might be one reason the rubber estate at Akamkpa, Cross River State was shut down after more than three decades of very successful operations because a Military Governor took over the export of rubber sheets that was at that time experiencing a boom in the world market. He took rubber sheets on credit, sold, and never paid money to the company. Over three thousand workers had to get back to the job market.

VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Provost, Chairman of Occasion, ladies and gentlemen, I commenced this journey on parchment by craving your indulgence to take you all through my long journey in the world of entrepreneurship that has lasted for more than four decades. It has been more than four decades that included academic training, teaching and real life practicum.

I have laboured in this work, I hope successfully, to establish the fact that entrepreneurship is necessary for the individual and group development of our nation, nay all developing nations in today’s world, an activity that I have spent the last dozen years doing through my written works and teaching at the tertiary level mainly in the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku. I have also tried to discuss issues related to entrepreneurship and development.

Even at this concluding stage, it is apropos to mention that I believe in the philosophical concept of determinism, that is, that our world is ordered and to a great extent, things are pre-ordained. I also believe in the philosophical principle of free-will, that is, that whatever is the outcome in the life of an individual or group, to a great extent, should be affected by the orientation and effort of the individual or group. I am not sure philosophers have convincingly resolved the obvious contradiction of free-will in a deterministic world. Whichever school of thought one may choose to pitch his or her tent in this world of contradictions, I wish to assert that self-assertion is the path of wisdom and in fact prudence in a world that is still substantially characterized by the pristine principle of survival of the fittest.

I hold this opinion strongly: that in the drive for rapid and sustained national development of our country and indeed, poor countries of the world, entrepreneurship should be placed on the driver’s seat. Better still, it should be regarded as the beautiful bride that individuals and the nations must be prepared to spend much on – intellect, time, money, political will, honesty, dedication, sustained effort, and related human and material resources. If this is done, there shall be no regrets once the right mixture of resources is applied in a total quality management framework.

The beautiful bride shall become the great mother, wife, and nation builder. The beautiful bride shall become a virtuous woman whose qualities, mostly entrepreneurial,
are extolled in the Book of Proverbs chapter 31, verses 10 to 31 (THB): she seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands (verse 13); she is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar (verse 14); she considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard (v. 16); she perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night (verse 18); she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff (verse 19); she maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant (verse 24). The husband, children, and community are proud of her. These are my hopes for entrepreneurship and national development.

Thank you for attending and for listening. God bless Nigeria by giving the country discerning leaders and committed followers.

REFERENCES


The Holy Bible (KJV).


Brief Profile of Bassey Ubong

In the Birth Registry, Ebute Metta, Lagos, Bassey Ubong is recorded as arriving on mother earth on October 5th, 1954 to Elder and Mrs. A. B. Ubong.

He first attended school at Buea, Cameroon, when his father was serving as Clerical Officer in the Education Department at the time Western Cameroon was part of Nigeria. He still faintly remembers those perilous road journeys and has chronicled them in one of his novels, “Islands of Goodness” published in the United States of America (USA).

Bassey Ubong spent his early childhood with his maternal grandmother, Madam Matim Robert in his mother’s village of Afia Nsit Udua Nko in Nsit Ibom LGA of Akwa Ibom State. There he completed his primary education at Nsit No. 1 School. Just before the Nigerian Civil War, he attended the Ibibio State College, Ikot Ekpene of which one of the founding fathers was Hon. Obot Akpabio, Minister of Education, Eastern Region, and father of current Governor of Akwa Ibom State. He completed his secondary education in Lutheran High School, Obot Idim in 1971 and briefly attended Qua Iboe Mission Secondary School, Etinan for the higher school certificate programme.

In 1972, he was admitted to read Agricultural Economics at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka as one of the immediate post-war students. There he met Professor A. M. Wokocha who has not only been a colleague and friend but has become a mentor, guide, and a member of his family. The relationship has lasted for 40 years without a break.

Bassey Ubong graduated in 1976 with BSc in Agricultural Economics and earned the Departmental Prize Award as Best Graduating Student in that Department for that year. He still cherishes the photograph he took as Hon. Justice Adetokunbo Ademola, former Chief Justice of Nigeria handed him the award letter during the 1976 convocation. He repeated that feat as Best Graduating Student when he joined the Technical Teachers Certificate Programme of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku where he graduated in 2001 with TTCert in Business Education. He has been teaching in the Nigeria Certificate in Education programme of the College since 2001, handling economics, commerce, business communication, and for several years including years as Deputy Provost, entrepreneurship education.

Bassey Ubong holds the Masters in Business Administration of the University of Nigeria with specialization in Marketing, which he obtained in 1983. He worked in the civil service of the Cross River State, in two banks, and was also in private business as a business consultant and publisher. These engagements have been extremely useful in his present engagement. He joined the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku in
1999 as a staff of the Bursary, courtesy of Prof. A. M. Wokocha. He is currently the Deputy Provost of the College after having served as Dean, School of Business Education; Chairman, Committee of Deans; College Orator; and Director, Consultancy Services. He has been the Chairman of the College Conferences & Seminars Committee (now College Conferences, Seminars, & Research Committee) since 2003. Thanks to Dr. N. S. Oguzor and God Almighty he is in his second term as Deputy Provost of the College.

Qualifications in education aside from the TTCert (now Professional Diploma in Education, courtesy Prof. A. M. Wokocha, Registrar of Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, TRCN) include the Master in Philosophy of Education (MEd.) and Doctorate in Philosophy of Education (PhD). The man to thank for these two is Professor J. D. Okoh who has been a mentor and unflagging guide.

Bassey Ubong has as at date, 50 published journal papers, 16 chapters in books of readings, three chapters in conference proceedings, one textbook that he edited, and three monographs. Of these, papers published abroad include six in journals and four in books of readings, a total of 10 foreign publications. He is on the Board of Reviewers of three journals abroad, one in Bulgaria, one in Spain, and one in the USA. He is Editor, The Colloquium, a multidisciplinary, thematic policy journal currently being financed by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund; pioneer Editor of the Journal of Environmental Management & Education (JEME); and pioneer Editor of Journal of Contemporary Business and Education Review (JOCBER). As the Editor of APQEN publications, he established the Empirical Journal of Quality Education (EJOQUE) and is at present the Editor of Journal of Quality Education (JOQE) and APQEN Book of Readings.

He is in his third year as the National President of the Association for Promoting Quality Education in Nigeria (APQEN), a post he took over from Professor A. M. Wokocha in 2010 at Abuja. The Association is 25 years old this year. He was the Chairman, Local Organizing Committee (LOC) of the 20th edition of the Philosophy of Education Association of Nigeria (PEAN) Conference in 2002; member of LOC, Nigerian Academy of Education Conference in 2003 at the University of Port Harcourt; Chairman, LOC of APQEN Conference at the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt in 2007; Chairman, LOC, APQEN Conference, FCE (T), Omoku in 2008; and Chairman, District Conference Committee of the 2008 Rotary District 9140 Conference at Uyo.

In 2010, Dr. Bassey Ubong presented a paper at a seminar in the University of Edinburgh, Scotland sponsored by the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB) of which he is also a member. During the 2nd UNESCO Conference on Technology and Development at the Ecolé Polytechnique Federalé de Lausanne, Switzerland in 2012, he presented a paper on technology and development. This was sponsored by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETF). In 2011, he attended the 1st Summer Institute of the Association for Cultural Studies (ACS) at the University of Ghent, Belgium. He is currently a member of the International Board of Directors of the Association and a member of the Academic Committee of the 2nd Summer Institute to be held at Klagenfurt, Austria in July 2013. He became a member of the International Network of Philosophers of Education (INPE) with base in Oslo, Norway in 2009 and a member of the Philosophy of Education Society of the USA in 2013.

In the literary world, Bassey Ubong has published 21 books - 12 plays (three being Convocation Plays in this College from 2000); four poetry anthologies; two novels (both
published in the USA); and one science fiction for children also published in the USA. He is at present working on his third novel using an epistolary format. The plays are used in Nigerian universities for production and research up to the PhD level while the works of poetry and prose are used at all levels of the education system in Nigeria.

Bassey Ubong is a Knight of St. Stephen of the First African Church Mission and Grand Patron of St. Matthew’s African Church in his village of Oboyo Ikot Ita. He delights in the choir in his church and serving humanity in the Rotary Club where he is a Paul Harris Fellow, the subscription which was paid for by Honourable Justice Edemekong Edemekong, until recently, the Administrative Judge (Deputy Chief Judge) of Akwa Ibom State. He served District 9140 of Rotary International as Centennial Assistant Governor in 2005 and District Governor’s Special Representative for the charter of the first Rotary Club in Bayelsa State, the Rotary Club of Yenagoa which he did successfully in 2003. These came after serving as two-term President, Rotary Club of Uyo (1997/98 and 1998/99) and Charter (first) President, Rotary Club of Omoku (2001/2002).

In 2007 he was honoured at the national level with the Development in Nigeria Merit Award (DINMA) in Higher Education by People, State and Resources (PSR), Lagos. Other awards include Literary Pioneer in Akwa Ibom State by the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA), Akwa Ibom State Chapter, and “Good Resident in Ogbaland” by Ogba Projects International.

He has been married to Lady Inyang Ubong, a graduate of the University of Uyo and a professional nurse, for 32 unbroken years. They enjoy a large family and are expecting their first grandchild soon. God has been good.