

REPOSITIONING FINE AND APPLIED ARTS EDUCATION FOR COMMERCIALIZATION IN DWINDLING ECONOMY

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Abstract

The paper emphasizes the impact of commercialization of fine and applied art in this present dwindling economy in Nigeria. This expresses why most of the world has focused on commercialization and privatization as an opportunity to attract huge investment. The paper also examines the importance of commercialization of fine and applied art education in dwindling economy, various areas of commercialization in fine and applied art, Perspective and main thrust of Nigeria commercialization, and way forward. The paper therefore concludes that fine and applied arts is put in its right place, it will drastically reduce, the stress the country is facing in terms of employment, risk of violence, hardship, export oriented, tightened micro finance lending and decline in remittances and will guarantee peace and security needed. Since the country Nigeria will be able to take care of its citizenry. This therefore paper recommends that the enlightenment programmers should be mounted in the mass media to educate people on the benefit of commercialization, especially fine and applied arts subjects.

Since independence in 1960 successive governments in Nigeria have continued to pursue the policy of the establishment of PES inherited from Britain as a way of promoting economic growth and better living standard of the people in the country. Public enterprise were established among others, essentially to promote services that maybe difficult for the people or group of individuals to provide either due to the sensitive nature of such enterprise (Nwokomma 2005).

However, with the dwindling of Nigeria economy, fortune from the sales of oil and gas in the international market dropped. Nigeria's earning from the oil and gas (petroleum) sector dropped sharply, as the revenue from the sales of crude oil dropped from 1.114 trillion down to 1.86trillion in the 2015 fiscal year, as the data from the central bank of Nigeria had revealed. The 1.114 trillion decline, represent 18.35 percent of Nigeria's 2016 budget estimate of 6.07 trillion and is attributed to the low price of oil in the

international market which saw the price of commodity dropping to as low as \$30 per barrel. The central bank of Nigeria statistical bulletin for the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2015 was 1.859 trillion, the country's crude revenue from the 2015 fiscal year dropped by 37.47 percent from 2.973 trillion recorded in 2014 (Eboh 2016). An oil drop has both direct effect through trade and indirect effect through growth, investment and changes in inflation (world bank 2015). After several years of unsuccessful efforts to reform the PES sector in Nigeria, the need for commercialization and privatization heralded a new era of opportunity to attract huge investment and increase efficiency which would no doubt underpin growth in the Nigerian economy (Chigbue 2007). As a matter of fact, fine and applied arts as self reliant career has the capacity to boost the economy of this country in this present dwindling economy.

Definition of Concepts

Commercialization

Cambridge dictionary (2014) defines commercialization as the means of organizing something to gain profit. Indeed, commercialization is the presentation of a product or commodity to market for earning profit or process of turning something into commercial activity.

Dayan (2004) stated that commercialization is as presenting a new commodity or service to the market. Commercialization is also as a process which begins from technology, market

insight and ends to stable function of the product proportional with the market. (Jolly 1997). The Australian Government (2003) described commercialization as the process of transforming ideas, knowledge and inventions into greater wealth for individuals, businesses and the society at large. Commercialization is the subset of the broader process of innovation. It is driven by market and profit with firms and others seeking to gain a positive return on investment in research, licensing, product development and marketing including through creation of competitive niche market. Degree no.25 of 1988 provides the legal frame work for the implementation of the government programmes of commercialization as the integral part of the on-going restructuring of the national economy. Under the decree, commercialization is considered as the re-organisation of enterprises wholly or partly owned by the federal government and such commercialized enterprise shall operate as profit making commercial venture without subvention from the federal government.

Fine and Applied Art

The word art is a visual representation of human thoughts, feelings and ideas. For instance one can represent his thought by drawing or painting. Drawing is a part of fine art that mainly serves all artists alike. It is the basic skill requirement for proficiency in all visual art form.

The webster dictionary defined fine art as the art concerned with beauty rather than utility, such beauty as in sculpture, painting and other applied art

Ewule (2001). Fine art is also seen as an art of utility. Rumes and schrisked (as cited in Ewule 2001) describe the word 'fine', as literally connoting academic art or as the appreciation of beauty. They see applied art as the practical rather than theoretical art. It is used to connote useful art such as interior decoration, ceramics, wood work, glass, metal work, textile, rugs embroidery, leather work and needle work. It can also be referred to as arts for commercial purposes. The work of pottery are purely capable of both fine and applied arts. Wangoje (1990), described fine art as being both the process and the product where serious and concrete assemblage of ideas and feelings about the world are put together and concretize. Mbahi (1999) also identified arts as a means of passing skills from one generation to another by the process of enculturation to ensure continuous existence of knowledge and skills.

Dwindling Economy

According to explore dictionary, dwindling is to become smaller and smaller, shrink and waste away. Dwindling economy therefore refer to economic recession. It is the period when the income generated is not up to expenditure (Fabunmi & Isah 2009). Dwindling economy can mean an economy which is experiencing negative gross domestic product (GDP) for two consecutive quarters. GDP measure the value of goods and services produced within the confines of a country by both national and non-national resident in the country (Ebereonwu 2009). The economic crises,

down turn, economic recession and dwindling of the economy all means the same thing. Academic American encyclopedia (2001) defines dwindling as'' A condition in which a nation's economic activity; that is, the production and consumption of goods and services declines''. It further says that it is a period when the growth of a nation's economy slows to a halt or even declines slightly. In any event, both capital investment and consumer spending to decline during this period as well as the wholesales, employment and personal income. Dwindling economy can also be described as an economy which has declining aggregate demand, contracting employment, rising unemployment, sharp fall in business confidence and profit including a reduction in investment spending, reduced inventory levels and heavy discounting, falling demand for import, increased government borrowing and lower central bank interest rate. The economic meltdown which is projected to be most severe in developed countries is anticipated to have ripple effect on middle and low income countries via declines in the demand for manufactured exports plummeting tourism expenditure and drop in foreign direct investment (Wikipedia, 2009). Therefore, dwindling economy can be said to be the period when nothing is moving positively well when the citizens and the government are struggling to survive, when crime, death. Hunger, unemployment and debts are on the high side in the country.

Commercialization of Fine and Applied Arts in the Present Economy of Nigeria

Commercialization as the re-organisation of enterprise wholly and partially owned by government, in which such enterprise shall operate as profit making commercial ventures without subvention from government. Oladimyi (2000) states that art business is still lucrative in Nigeria. Meaning that many Nigerian artists are making a living through art without stressing the government on their so called white collar job. Odewale (2005) supports the view when he said that practitioners and people who engage in fine and applied arts do so for economic reasons. Oloide (2011) also adds that art is the only profession that has authority entirely imposed itself at daily physical or practical needs of the people. Amadi (2011) supports the view by saying economically art has been the frontier of the development of any nation. Already, artists are economy developers by a way of being self reliant as well as in labour employment. Because fine and applied art is a skill oriented profession, many that went through formal and informal learning both end up being self reliant as well as giving others employment and also training others in various careers it offers.. Elebute and

Odokuma (2016) opine that artisans and craftsmen always abhor the monopolization of the government patronage, credit and other business opportunities by the bourgeoisie and formal economy that is mainly reserved for people with education and formal skill. However wages increase in the formal

economy has been fitted, some of them who had participated in the organized workshop and had become well known in their choice of craft when commercialized fine and applied art it will make the country to be known through the wealth it will yield to the country. Oladunmiye (2000) adds that fine and applied arts education has increased the quality of life of an average Nigerian. Denga (1989) supports the view by saying that looking for a job, art is a job itself. Mbalu (2000) also agrees the view by saying that it has been fully acknowledged as the basis of every human function, and handmaid to education in general. Effective teaching, efficient design and technical proficiency in production are all wholly dependent on the skill acquired in art. A society without art is incomplete and unwholesome, meaning that commercialization of fine and applied art in this present dwindling economy will be of great benefit as it will produce men and women who are ready to manage the industry or to be self reliant through self employment. Opara (2013) opined that fine and applied art in Nigeria provide an avenue for survival in every ramification. In a self reliance career, one must make a living to survive the poor economy and also help the country from its stress especially at this dwindling economy phase.

Dwindling Economy in Perspective

Araoye (2009) in Strauss-khan (2009) states that the global economy is at a critical juncture. "Advanced economies are already in recession at the financial market dislocation and deleveraging that

has driven and unfolding strains on the global economy persist". The combination of financial stress and lower or negative growth in advanced economies is increasingly impacting emerging market economies, particularly countries that need access to capital market.

Onucheyo (2001) predicts the fall in oil prices, when he pointed out in the 21st century that nuclear, solar, geothermal and other energy sources will be sufficiently developed to meet most of the world's cultural economy. Onucheyo maintains that Nigeria's economy will not be dependent on oil, but development related human resources.

Dwindling period is a period of decline in the economic activities spread across the country lasting more than a few months and it is normally visible in the real GDP Growth, real personal income, employment, industrial production and wholesale-retail sales. It is also viewed as the period of 1.58 percent rise in unemployment within a year interval. National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). The British prime minister in 2008 at a two-day conference on failure of global finances, confessed that the current global finance situation was the 'biggest', most complex and most delicate economy challenge of our life time. He urged world leaders to see the crises as an opportunity to create a better future for all as he called for greater investment in technology and education. He also warned government against "make-work" schemes and instead advocated that they should invest, empower and encourage (Blair 2009).

In reality, dwindling economy is not new to Nigeria. The country has been experiencing dwindling economy since 1980s only that currently the economy is too bad when compared to 80s, the exchange rate has affected naira when measured with other currencies of the world like pounds and dollar in the exchange market. The naira has been plummeting steadily against all other currencies on the international exchange rate.

The above factors about the economic crises pose a great danger to the general welfare of the people and the need for commercialization of fine and applied art, vocational, technical, science education, business education and any other skills acquisition course that can yield money as profit when duly commercialized in this country. The current main source of financing development effort in Nigeria is from oil revenue which is contributing at least 90percent of the country's foreign exchange earning. So depending solely on the oil and gas sector is unhealthy for the country since we have no control over the price and output of oil (Akinseide 2015).

Way Forward

Nigeria needs to move away from oil to art practice, agriculture iron and steel industry, chemical and revamping the machine tools industry. The need to change the structure of the economy to a path of sustainable growth requires learning some lessons from other nations (Akinsende 2015). Barro (1998) states that the Asia reputation and economy suffered

between early 1960s and 1970s because of financial crises and economic recessions. He remarks that by 1998, there were significant increase in productivity due to the following:

Contribution of technological progress to economic growth

Large increments in public health, elementary education and technical vocational education and development of human capital, characterized by highly educated and skilled work force who specialized in areas where Hong kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan had competitive advantage. Their economic success stories made them to be known as “ four Asian tigers”. This economic miracle should serve as a role model for other developing economy like Nigeria.

These nations were able to move from the third world status to first world in a few decades. Singapore for example laid solid foundation for the acquisition of basic skills. There was increased emphasis in improving the level of skills and quality training systems in traditional art practices in various communities. Seng (2012) adds that Singapore strengthened industrial training system and had growing concerns on how to expand and have quality of technical skilled personnel needed by the new emerging industries. As a matter of fact, commercialization of fine and applied art in the present dwindling economy will help elevate the present economy to a better level since fine and applied art is a career that equips people with saleable skills with which they can secure paid jobs or become self reliant or both and at the same time give others employment in

different areas of its careers. It also develops creativity in youth and also develops them into different areas of development (www.Novedu.ng 2009).

Commercialization Areas in Fine and Applied Art in the Present Dwindling Economy

There are different areas of interest that can be commercialized in fine and applied art especially in this present dwindling economy. They include:

Print making maybe in various industries.

- Industrial designers.
- Product designers.
- Painting of art works for different purposes.
- Curator in museums and galleries.
- Management and administration (gallery and commercial art shops management).
- Multimedia management (skill from fine and applied art can be transferred to multimedia management and creation).
- Illustration as to create graphics, cartoons and illustration for publications such as book cover, newspapers and magazines.
- Costume and fashion designer as a skill learnt in fine and applied art and clothing designing can yield money for the individual and the country.
- Art historians /educators are also careers that can be commercialized
- Ceramics. can also be commercialized since the ceramist whether in local use of media or in use of modern technology can be productive to the country

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➤ Sculpture; There are many works of commercialization by the sculptor who deals with cement to perfect cement works of any kind

Mbalu (2001) also pointed out possible job opportunity in art as:

- Advertising artist.
- Architecture.
- Ceramics
- Cosmetology.
- Fabric designing.
- Fashion designing.
- Medical illustrating.
- Indigenous art

While indigenous art and craft are listed as follows:-

- Carving
- Poetry
- Basket weaving
- Batik, tie and die.
- Calabash decoration e.t.c

Therefore with numerous areas of commercialization in fine and applied art in this country, it will only take critical thinking, abilities and willingness to learn and apply the skills so that material and human resource will be utilised as a way to deliver the country from its dwindling economy. There is a saying that the downfall of a man is not the end of his life, Nigeria's dwindling economy will not be permanent.

Zayyad (2012) states that the main thrust of Nigeria commercialization programmes are as to :

Provide enhanced operational autonomy at enterprise level.

Evolve a more results- oriented and accountable management based on performance contract.

Strengthen financial accounting controls at enterprise level.

Upgrade the management information system of the affected enterprise.

Ensure financial solvency of the public enterprise through effective cost recovery, cost control and prudent financial management.

Remove bureaucratic bottlenecks and political interference through clear role definitions between the supervising ministry, the board of directors and management of public enterprises.

Conclusion

Fine and applied art when commercialized in this present economy will enable the country and its citizens to sustain themselves and save the whole country from the present sufferings as this will drastically reduce the stress the country is facing in terms of employment, risk of violence, hardship, export-oriented, tightened micro finance lending and decline in remittances and will guarantee peace and security needed since the country Nigeria will be able to take care of its citizens.

Recommendation

The government should encourage fine and applied arts, vocational/technical, technology education, all other self –reliant related subjects as a way of boosting the economy especially at this present dwindling economy. The revenue generating system in the economy should

be over hauled and commercialized to ensure efficiency and transparency. Enlightenment programmes should be mounted in the mass media to educate people on the benefit of commercialization, especially fine and applied art subjects.

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