
EFFECTS OF CHRISTIAN ENTREPRENURSHIP ON BUSINESS EDUCATION YOUTH AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effects of Christian entrepreneurship on business education youths and nation development. It revealed both positive and negative effects on youths, the progress made by some African countries in formulating policies that will enable them to empower youths in Africa through the following means; education training, empowerment, science and technology. Others are population, health, social services, sports recreation and culture. This paper uses historical survey in analyzing and evaluating the views of various authors in an attempt to inform researchers, business educators, scholars on current reasoning on the issue of effects of Christian entrepreneurship on business education. Conclusion and recommendations were made such as that youths should be given recognition of fundamental human rights such as freedom of political, cultural and religious expression as stipulated in the constitution of both national and international. Youths should be empowered. Youths should be in formulation of policies concerning them. Government should always give listening ears to the youths' problems.

Keyword: religious, entrepreneurs, individual, profitable, business, God.

INTRODUCTION

According to Ihekwoaba (2007), religious entrepreneurs are individuals and groups who establish and operate profitable businesses under the guise of religion. The religion may be any of the existing religions of the world or a new one discovered by the religious leader, as a new product for sale to religious customers. The religious entrepreneurs carefully study the needs of people and they propounded theories which match the expectations of their customers and at the end, they extract their profit. Religious entrepreneurs are different from genuine religious preachers who promote the service and worship of God through religious services. However, the authors strongly uphold the fact that there still exist religious leaders who truly serve God in truth and in deed. They are different from profit seekers, religious deceivers and religious entrepreneurs.

Youths are classified as those whose ages are between 16 and 30 years respectively. Under this group, the youths are faced with so many challenges such as drugs related abuse, prostitution, kidnapping, robbery etc. Under this stage, it is very difficult to handle the youths as they feel they can take decision for themselves. They are always ready to do things in their own ways. Any attempt to control them will be highly resisted.

Okon (2001) referred to youth as people from age fifteen through twenty-five years. There are some young people who start their youth as early as twelve or thirteen and some of them may continue their youth to age thirty.

There are many young Nigerians today who are neither psychologically adolescents nor sociologically adults. They could be found any where in this country and we really don't know the name we should call them since they are neither teenagers nor adults (Okon, 1988). It is defined here in social rather than in biological term. Nigerian society and Nigerian education should definitely be concerned about these young people. The Nigerian people should genuinely understand the feelings and behaviours of today's youths in order to adequately help them overcome the obstacles in the path of growing up. It is important to note that the young people have seen what is going on in our society politically, socially, economically etc. They have also seen the examples and behaviours of adults in a variety of settings. Their experiences with adults in general and the trend of events in our country have helped to shape their personality and what they might become in future.

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According to Ihekwoaba (2007), the emergence of religious entrepreneurs has turned worshippers away from the real word of God and from the true meaning of religion. Their preaching diverts attention from true worship of God to crating confusions, diverting truth, instilling fear, making false promises and turning the promises and turning the promises of God into promises of men-of-God.

It makes worshippers accept cheap means of salvation and prosperity promised by religious entrepreneurs, instead of hard work, consistent belief and having patience for the will of God.

- (a) Some religious entrepreneurs were former magicians, gamblers, fortune tellers, 419s, un-successful politicians, medicine men and fraudsters who have refined their methods of operation and adopted religion as a new method of doing business.
- (b) Some of them give false testimonies in buses, churches, mosques, public places to convince victims that they have repented.
- (c) The economic activity of the nation tilts towards going to religious houses instead of going to farms and factories, listening to men of god instead of the word of God and praying for prosperity instead of working for prosperity.
- (d) They deceive the youth, the poor, the sick, disabled and the uninformed that they have powers to convince god to bring blessings of prosperity.
- (e) The youth, the lazy and the un-informed are swayed to abandoning genuine religious organizations and rushing to religious entrepreneurs who make false promises of hearing, speaking and doing the work of God.
- (f) Religious entrepreneurs condemn older religions, doctrines, and preaching of existing churches, mosques, and project their thinking to buyers of cheap prosperity.

There are both positive and negative effects of religious entrepreneur of youth in Nigeria.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS

Religion Entrepreneur pastors will first in the church introduced dancing and powerful songs in an attempt to influence, motivate and arouse the interest of members with this

member are automatically carried away. This is an opportunity for the religion entrepreneur pastors to demand for financial donation.

1. Eager to get rich quickly as false pastors preaches prosperity only.
2. Some Pastors riding flashing cars and wearing expensive clothes. Therefore, the youths who are already influenced would want by all means want to acquire this by all means and cost.
3. Youths are being honoured and celebrated when they donate large sum of money in the church even when the youths are 419s, armed robbers, or ritualists, yet they are accorded high respect.
4. Some youths connive with some pastors to dupe others.
5. Much emphasis is been placed on money collection through different levies.

Offering time, blessing time, this period is always characterized with different spirit moving songs and praises targeted at arousing the individual's spirit such that even if one is depositing all the money one has, it is considered as a normal thing. The pastor preaches the message "the more you give, the more you receive, and also it is better to be a giver than to be a receiver. Considering the fact that business involves buying and selling of goods and services, it therefore means that those who have served diligently without paying hug sum of money will not receive much blessing from God like those who paid hug sum of money. The men of God have deviated from the norms of Jesus Christ who formed religion. This therefore, negates the Holly Bible (2004) Mark 16 verse 15 which says "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature". Though, it is good to give to build the house of God willingly but must not be through threat, force or tricks.

According to Ihekwoaba (2007) some religious fanatics preach what they do not believe and practice the opposite of what they preach in order to get money. In the Bible, for example, Judas Iscariot, the closest neighbour to Jesus Christ, sold his master Jesus Christ, for thirty pieces of silver and delivered him to the Jews for crucifixion.

POSITIVE EFFECTS

1. The youths are taught morale, dressing code, how to stay away from the sin.
2. Youths are taught to be better and transparently honest in all their dealings.
3. To have respect for elders and constituted authority.
4. To be better citizens.
5. To stay away from crime.
6. To admonish youth that wealth is vanity upon vanity as we are strangers hear and whatever the wealth you acquired one day you will die and leave them.
7. To love one another.

We would like to summarize here by saying that the religion entrepreneur has created more damage to our youths than good, having taking into consideration the crime being perpetrated by Nigerian youths such as bribery, stealing, raping, kidnapping of rich people, violence in oil rich region in Warri and Port-Harcourt in Nigeria, comparing this to the number of churches in Nigeria that are counted in millions.

PROGRESS MADE BY SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES ON YOUTHS POLICIES THAT WILL EMPOWER YOUTHS IN AFRICA

Botswana

According to Dabesaki (2006), the government of Botswana formulated a National youth policy to address youth problems, which was adopted by parliament in August 1996. The policy is a guideline to all stakeholders dealing with youth issues. The policy document defines youth as those between the ages of 12 and 29 years of age. The general objectives envisaged by the government are to advise on matters pertaining to youth development, to mobilise, guide, encourage, plan, initiate and facilitate youth activities, to publicise the national youth policy and mobilise resources for research are part of their objectives.

Young people are to be involved at planning, decision-making and implementation levels of development programmes. The culture and Youth department is under the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. It is envisaged that young men and women will be given every opportunity to reach their full potential both in their individual capacities as well as active citizens of society. Within the government of Botswana, UN system projects on youth have undertaken a number of reforms to address the most urgent issues facing the youth population. Over 60% of the population is under the age of 30 years and 43% is under ages 15. With regard to reproductive health, resource centres are to be developed in selected districts and NGO's involved in HIV/AIDS prevention are to be supported. The youth Department gets an annual budget of P6.1 million from the government and the national youth council gets its annual budget of P1.8 million from the government in form of a grant for the council to disburse to Non-governmental organisations in the country.

Nigeria

According to Dabesaki (2006) the government of Nigeria formulated its first youth policy in 1983, reviewed in 1989. The last time it was reviewed was in 2001 based on social justice equality of opportunity and respect for human rights while emphasising hard work and entrepreneurship, self-reliance and selflessness. The policy defines youth as those between the ages of 18 and 35 and recognises the fundamental rights such as freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of association and right to security of life and property as stipulated in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Young Nigerians are expected to promote and defend democracy, eschew ethnic and religious bigotry and to be actively involved in the promotion of National unity and development. Young people are to be empowered to be responsible citizens, who fully realise their potentials and positively contribute to the overall development of Nigeria. The policy identifies target groups such as students in post- primary schools, students of tertiary institutions, out-of school, unemployed, underemployed, female adolescent, youth with disabilities and or health problems, youth in crime and related problems and the talented/gifted youth. They are to be helped to be gainfully employed, acquire entrepreneurial skills and have vocational and educational training. The policy objectives are to involve youth in decision making at all levels of government in all matters affecting them and to seek and offer solutions to youth problems such as drug abuses and addiction, teenage pregnancy,

sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, cultism. The country is in the planning process towards reviewing its youth policy in 2006.

INNOVATION FOR YOUTHS

According to Folias (2008) there is needed to reinforce and promote innovative enterprise ideas developed by young people for the growth of the Greek economy. Among other things, Folias (2008) stated, while creativity is the birth of a set of new ideas and inspiration, innovation is the application of creative ideas in practice, the creation of a commercial product from an invention. This ascribes added value and is the foundation on which the ability of an economy to be renewed and evolve is based. It is the basis for competitive, extrovert economies and enterprises and the creation of new job positions.

South African Council of Churches Youth Forum (SACCYF)'s submission

According to Pule (2008) the representative of SACC Youth Forum, said that the council of churches forum had identified certain core issues that directly affected young people. The aim of the Bill should be to identify skills development and ensure that there was access for young people to a number of opportunities, in particular, entrepreneurial opportunities, in order to create a better life for them.

In terms of the structure of the Agency itself, it was necessary to reconcile the history of the UYF as based on a business model and the NYC as a policy advocacy structure in government. He made comparisons with other countries, noting that Namibia had a ministry of youth affairs. Australia had also made special provision for youth by an inter-ministerial council that dealt with education and empowerment. The Forum submitted that South Africa should establish something on the lines of a council for youth activities and affairs, including the responsibilities of training, development and business opportunities for the youth, which should interact directly with the stakeholders, who would mainly be young people as individuals or organizations representing them.

The Department of Arts and Culture had a youth directorate established in 2008. Each and every Ministry should have such a youth directorate, and such directorates should be represented in the Council for Youth Affairs that the Forum proposed. It was also essential that the proposed structure of the NYDA should be able to engage at provincial and local levels as well as at the national level. The Forum proposed that the proposed structure should be moved away from the Presidency. It would be ideal to establish youth directorates within every ministry, and a council that would be able to interact directly with Parliament.

Pule (2008) again stressed the need for direct interaction with young people, whether as individuals or represented by their organizations. The National Youth Development Agency must be a structure that could interact directly. He stressed that the functions of Clause 6 must be implemented but the structure changed to allow interaction at provincial and local governmental levels.

Mbele (2008) stated that the NYC had not met its obligations with regard to youth development. Secondly, despite having developed the National Youth Development Policy, it had taken too long to achieve adoption of the policy. Thirdly, its interaction with civil

society had been insufficiently structured. Fourthly it had had limited resources; and had viewed itself as an advisory body, not an implementing agency. It had had limited interaction with Parliament, as had been indicated tacitly by the Presidency itself. Youth development initiatives had occurred haphazardly within State departments, because not all State departments had youth directorates, with many only having a youth desk or some ad hoc function related to youth development, which was also often equated to skills development only.

Hill-Lewis (2008) conceded that institutions had received unqualified audit reports. However, there had been 'an element of goal displacement'. It must not be assumed that an entity that had spent 99.5% of its budget was necessarily successful. It was necessary to ask if it had met its objectives in that expenditure. Mr Hill-Lewis's argument was that it had not, and he did not apologise for using the word 'failure'. An unqualified audit report did not in itself make an entity's programme successful. UYF had started to operate just as a bank. There were some 15 million members of the population formally classified as youth, the vast majority of whom were unemployed and living in poverty. The National Youth Development Agency was without question a priority. That alone merited quarterly reporting to Parliament.

YOUTHS POSITION

Democratic Alliance (DA) presentation

According to Hill-Lewis, (2008), Western Cape leader of the Democratic Alliance Youth, the proposed legislation to establish the National Youth Development Agency was welcomed, saying that it would be placed in a much better position to meet the needs of the nation's youth than the two existing organisations. Hill-Lewis (2008) stated that the new institution must, in principle, be founded on inclusivity and must focus on unlocking opportunities for youth to participate in economic growth. Hill-Lewis (2008) firmly asserted that the National Youth Development Agency should be located within the Presidency for the purpose of oversight, monitoring and regulation. The Democratic Alliance believed that there was a need for a new administration with a new vision and sense of mission to fulfil the mandate of youth development in South Africa. The National Youth Commission and the Umsobomvu Youth Fund had failed and must be disbanded. It was the DA's belief that the President should give political leadership, Parliament should exercise oversight and the National Youth Development Agency should implement its particular programmes and policies from the budget allocated by the Presidency.

The process of establishing the National Youth Development Agency should be open and transparent and give opportunities to all youth irrespective of political affiliation and race. It should be based on the model of the 'open opportunity society', which envisaged empowering individuals to drive their own solutions rather than depend on the State.

The failure of the existing institutions could be traced to divisions caused by basing all programmes on connection to the ruling party rather than on openness to all young South Africans to participate. In addition, the focus of the existing institutions had had an urban bias, with rural areas being neglected. The NYC and UYF had not been visible enough. The majority of young people were struggling with high unemployment, high rates of drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, and crime, which the two existing organisations had also not addressed.

Young people were tired of institutions that promised much but delivered little. Appointments to positions of leadership had not been made on merit. This had caused problems within the institutions to escalate.

Hill Lewis (2008) said that some of the existing legislation was good, but there were questions around effective implementation. The National Youth Development Agency must have members in provinces and municipalities, as well as in Mayoral offices. These members must be visible and effective. The Minister responsible for youth issues must be held accountable. The National Youth Development Agency must be capacitated to ensure that all youth were treated equally and with respect, and supported financially, educationally and emotionally.

Hill Lewis (2008) reiterated that the DA would support the establishment of this Agency to replace the ineffective institutions of the past, which had not been inclusive and had called for this in the past. He noted that it should be straightforward to do business with the Agency and conflicts of interest must be avoided. Powers needed to be devolved to the local level. Incompetent and incapable people in key positions would render the Agency as much of a failure as its predecessors. He said that the Board should be appointed by the President, and the Chief Executive Officer should be appointed by the Board. The Agency should report on a quarterly basis to the Presidency and work within sustainable budgets that should not be diverted to large salaries and celebration functions. The Agency should work to promote an 'open opportunity society'. He noted that the consultation process was now comprehensive and asked that the last paragraph of his written submission, which had expressed concern on that issue, be withdrawn.

National Education, Health & Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) (National Youth Commission branch) presentation

Nehawu (2008) said that although it was not intended to "rewrite the Bill" the labour movement wanted to make an active contribution. It felt that the preamble of the Bill should allow a process to involve workers in the Bill's development, especially where employees had more questions than answers. The uncertainties of NYC and UYF employees should be answered. The appointment of the board of directors should take the form of a provincial resubmission at a national level. To have a two-tiered National Youth Development Agency – national and provincial – would delay implementation of programmes. It had been a limitation of the National Youth Commission that the provincial commissions had not reported adequately to the National Commission. There should be a nine member board of directors, composed of nine provincial representatives and the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, whose appointment should be by way of a separate process. The Chief Executive Officer should be appointed by the board of directors rather than by the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and he should report to the board.

Nehawu (2008) did not see any need for the provincial boards and recommended that they be dissolved. A national structure was needed that had provincial and regional offices for implementing decisions made at a national level.

Northern Cape Youth Commission presentation

Bezuidenhout, (2008) Chairperson, Northern Cape Youth Commission, said that there was general consensus on the need for a National Youth Development Agency as a unitary structure, with resubmission at all levels of government, including at the district level. He said that this was a gap in the proposed legislation that should be filled. The private sector and civil society should be a key focus area for the Agency. There should be a targeted approach to project implementation, with attention given to defining the different spheres as local level.

The Northern Cape Youth Commission was fairly satisfied with the thrust of the proposed Bill, but suggested some clarification in the objects of the Bill, and some changes, such as the inclusion of resubmission at district level as mentioned above. He suggested that the Chief Executive Officer should form part of the Board and be appointed by the Board, and not the President. There should be continuity. There should be voting rights at the level of the board. He said that there need be no separation between executive and other staff in the context of the proposed legislation. He agreed with other presenters that the provincial boards should be removed. The State of the Youth report should be a three-yearly report, as an annual report would not do justice to the subject. He suggested that the National Youth Development Agency should function as a separate vote within the Presidency to give it flexibility and influence in its budget process. There should be a mechanism to ensure sufficient oversight in Parliament. There should be space for provincial variations and dynamics, with local level implementation. There should be a triennial youth summit for reporting purposes. Finally, arrangements should be made for a smooth transition.

Umsobomvu Youth Fund presentation

Diseko (2008) Board Member, Umsobomvu Youth Fund, said that It was important to eliminate all possibilities for ambiguity and to cater for the interests of employees affected by the merger of the two institutions.

Kekana (2008) the Chief Executive Officer, UYF, explained the salient features of the presentation. He noted that in the Bill itself there was a confluence of functions which the Fund hoped would be addressed. He hoped that past problems would not be repeated. Government expenditure on youth development was very small, while there was a huge attrition rate in education and that amounted to wasted expenditure. It was remarkable that there was more expenditure on youth development of young prisoners than on the development of youth who were at school or unemployed, or to sports development.

Details would be needed of the financial support required to ensure effectiveness of the new Agency. There should be due consultation with the private sector, labour and civil society, and these sectors should be able to nominate board members. In addition, there must be compliance with all important applicable laws. The process should take into account the impact that it would have on the Fund and on the Commission, and consultation should continue after the hearings. These issues, such as were pointed out by the Northern Cape Provincial Youth Commission chairperson should not be insurmountable.

CONCLUSION

It is hereby concluded that the youth should be assisted in so many ways such as through training and capacity-building. There should be personal and skills development of young people. Development of entrepreneurial spirit and provision of loans to young people. Skills training in the local community for young people who have dropped out-of-school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The authors recommend as follow:

1. That youth should be given recognition of fundamental human rights such as freedom of political, cultural and religious expression as stipulated in the constitution of both national and international.
2. Youths should be empowered.
3. Youths should be in formulation of policies concerning them.
4. Government should always give listening ears to the youths problems.
5. To enhance the entrepreneurship development of low income youth through the provision of micro-finance, training and policy advocacy.
6. Promotion of brotherhood and national unity; to increase members' awareness on issues such as drug abuse and its side effects, to encourage youths to participate in the preserving and cleaning of their environment, to help needy students, to mobilize all concerned towards their self fulfillment and greater participation in development efforts; to work with the department and ministry of youth and sport, non-government organizations, etc.

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