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Artisanship Disconnect: Declining Technical Apprenticeship and Artisan Service and the Implications for Nigeria's Future Development

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of the entrepreneur being the prime cause of economic development in every nation, palpable and consistent decline in technical apprenticeship practice and artisanal products and services in Nigerian cities and suburbs constitutes a bad omen for socio-economic development. This study used visits spread over 5 years to the supply side, represented by farms, street technical workshops, lube bays, artisan villages and artisan pools in some cities and their suburbs, to establish the decline. Questionnaires completed by the demand side, represented by a cross section of the society, corroborated the findings from the visits, while extra-questionnaire probing interviews helped to establish the causes of the decline and its implications for Nigeria's future development. Simple statistical tables and percentages were used for analysis of data. Recommendations were given for possible reversal of the trend.

Key words: Artisanship, declining, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Visits spread over 5 years (2005-2009) to the supply side of artisanal products and services, represented by farms, street technical workshops, lube bays, artisan villages, artisan pools in the five State capital cities and suburbs of the Southeast Nigeria, revealed a palpable decrease in technical apprenticeship practice and artisanal products and services. Artisans are ageing and younger people are not taking their places. This situation has generated the fear and concern that, in the next two decades, artisans might disappear almost completely from the development landscape of Nigeria.

Against the backdrop of the schumpeterian theory, which provides that the entrepreneur is the prime cause of economic development, the rapid disappearance of technical labour skills and services is a bad omen for the country's future development, since master artisans are entrepreneurs. Yet, development theoreticians and practitioners appear oblivious of this serious problem, as there are no concerted and concentrated researches and policy regarding this ominous development challenge.

This study is an attempt at academic enquiry into this development challenge and its implications for Nigeria's future development. It sought to ascertain and investigate the decline of technical apprenticeship and artisan service, the causes and some serious implications of artisanship disconnect for Nigeria's future development, as well as make some recommendations aimed at reversing the trend and forestalling the imminent dangers. The questions formulated to guide the study were (1) do artisans and technicians occupy important positions in national development? (2) Is technical apprenticeship and artisan service declining in Nigeria? (3) What are the causes of the decline? (4) What are the

implications of the decline for the future development of Nigeria? (5) What can be done to reverse the trend? The rest of the paper is structured as follows: definition of terms, literature review, methodology, results and discussions, implications for future development, recommendations and conclusion.

Definition of Terms

According to Wikipedia (2009), an artisan (from Italia: *artigiano*) is a skilled manual worker who crafts items that may be functional or strictly decorative, including furniture, clothing, jewelry, household items and tools. The term is also used to refer to the craft of hand-making food products, such as bread, beverage and cheese. Manufacture by hand and with hand tools imparts unique and individual qualities to artisanal products, in contrast to mass-produced goods, where everyone is nearly identical. Artisans traditionally work in media, such as wood, ceramics, glass, common and precious metals, basketry, textiles, esparto grass and leather. Merchants and artisans originated as servants of the rulers. Artisans employ creative thinking and manual dexterity to produce their goods. They were dominant producers of goods before the Industrial Revolutions of the 18th and 19th Century Europe and North America, respectively.

The term, artisan, was applied in medieval times to those who made things or provided services-not to unskilled labourers. Artisans of the middle ages were divided into two distinct groups: those who operated their own businesses (masters) and those who did not (journeymen and apprentices). The master artisans were influential among the artisans and enjoyed a higher social status in their communities. In modern sense, many people erroneously regard the two groups as workers.

Artisan potter, also known as Studio Potter, is a skilled person who crafts and fires hand-made pottery from raw clay. Artisan potters create a wide variety of wares, from functional to purely decorative, or a synergistic culmination of both. Artisan potters often make objects that reflect their personal esthetic or sense of value. In this sense, they elevate even the simplest piece, such as a raku teacup, to an art form.

Artisan jewelry dates back to 7,000 BC, when gold and copper began to be sculpted to adorn the human form and the practice continues today. Artisan hand-made jewelry is prized for its uniqueness, variety and beauty. The broad spectrum of artisan jewelry provides satisfaction to royalty, rock stars and everyday folk. Thousands of jewelry artisans exist around the globe.

Quilt-maker artisans or quilt artisans are called quilters. They are mostly women who make quilt, especially in their houses. Quilt making is traditional folk art worldwide, including South Asia, where traditional quilts are called Ralli quilts.

All artisans share the following core characteristics: (1) fun-loving, optimistic, realistic and focused on the here-and-now; (2) priding themselves in being unconventional, bold and spontaneous; (3) making playful mates, creative parents and troubleshooting leaders; (4) excitability, trusting their impulses, wanting to make a splash, seeking stimulation, prizing freedom and dreaming of mastering action skills.

Artisans have the natural ability to excel in any of the arts, not only the fine arts (such as painting and sculpting), or the performing arts (such as music, theatre and dance), but also the athletic, military, political, mechanical and industrial arts, as well as the art of the deal in business.

Artisans are most at home in the real world of solid objects that can be made and manipulated and of real-life events that can be experienced in the here-and-now. Artisans have exceptionally keen senses and love working with their hands. They seem right at home

with tools, instruments and vehicles of all kinds and their actions are usually aimed at getting them where they want to go and as quickly as possible. Thus, artisans will strike off boldly down roads that others might consider risky or impossible, doing whatever it takes, rules or no rules, to accomplish their goals. This devil-may-care attitude also gives the artisans a winning way with people and they are often irresistibly charming with family, friends and co-workers.

Artisans want to be where the action is; they seek out adventure and show a constant hunger for pleasure and stimulation. They believe that variety is the spice of life and that doing things that are not fun or exciting is a waste of time. They are impulsive, adaptable, competitive and believe the next throw of the dice will be the lucky one. They can also be generous to a fault, always ready to share with their friends from the bounty of life. Above all, artisans need to be free to do what they wish, when they wish. They resist being tied or bound or confined or obligated; they would rather not wait, or save, or store, or live for tomorrow. In the artisan view, today must be enjoyed, for tomorrow never comes.

A master artisan is an entrepreneur, willing and able to take business risks for gainful purposes. He has a strong desire to be independent, to work at something he enjoys (rather than settle for the security of a steady income), to operate at his pace and for prestige and to be recognized (Eneh, 2007a). An entrepreneur, according to Joseph Alois Schumpeter (1883-1950), an economist and political scientist, disturbs the equilibrium of the stationary state, is the prime cause of economic development and is responsible for the innovation and technological change of a nation, as well as makes things work in the economy of the country (Dees, 2004).

In line with this theory, it is the entrepreneurs, such as artisans and technical services providers, including the fine art workers, performing artists, caterers, printers, metal workers, wood workers, auto workers, garment workers, construction workers, electrical/electronic workers and others, that drive the economic development of the nation.

Enterprises are mainly responsible for the German economic miracle after World War II to recover to a position these days as the third most powerful economy in the world. Also, using enterprises, the Asian Tigers have become strong economic powers (Eneh, 2007b).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artisans constitute about 30-35% of the population and create much of the beauty, grace, fun and excitement the rest of the people enjoy in life. Artisanry and technical skills and services are critical to the development of nations. Skills acquisition is key to grassroots empowerment (Akosile, 2007). Adaptive skills develop both the personality and manipulative skill capability of youth (Abassa, 2003; Unoarumi, 2009). They rescue street youth, ghetto youth and the destitute from gangsterism, drug abuse, crime/violence and other vicious involvements (Umar, 2008) that mar the social, cultural and economic development of countries. They address unemployment by providing youth with self-sustaining job skills (API SmartBrief, 2007).

Vocational and technical skills enhance the relevance and functionality of individuals in the society, promote their economic survival and vibrancy and thereby, play a vital and indispensable role in the development of the society (Uwaifo, 2009). Skills acquisition boost labour market by empowering unskilled, poor and unemployable youth for sound social living, thereby, curbing restiveness, crime and poverty (Aminu, 2009), Skill acquisition is an antidote for idleness and makes for self-reliance (Ogbodo, 2009).

The skills of strategic staff of an organization are core capability that determines enterprise success and a nation's comparative advantage. Job skills are primarily acquired through four media, namely, education, formal vocational training, short training courses and accumulated career experiences (Encyclopedia.com, 2003). Technical apprenticeship training is an age-long indigenous approach to manpower development, which has implications for schooling and out-of-school programmes (Obidi, 1995).

Artisans and craftsmen in Thrissur (Kerala) worked round the clock to give finishing touches to a wooden, modern and ethnic temple to be shifted to the United States of America in December 2009. The magnificent structure is 26 feet high, made of teak, decorated with eight domes and to cover a total area of 1,000 square feet (DNA, 2009).

In recognition of the important role of artisans in development, the Oakland Artisan Marketplace was established 10 years ago to support local artisans and spur Oakland economic development (Allen, 2009). To encourage artisans, Neighbourhood artisans for neighbor gifts programme was mounted to celebrate a neighbor and a neighbourhood artisan with one affordable package (Casey, 2009).

In recognition of the importance of job for all, the Nigerian governments have always had both policy and structure for the creation of a pool of artisans and entrepreneurs among the unemployed through skills acquisition (Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), 2009). By establishing secondary school laboratories, Trade Centres, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, Vocational Education departments and Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES), Nigerian governments also provided for the integration of skills into school programmes for the creation of middle technical manpower. To justify the establishment of a skill acquisition centre as part of the University of Nigeria programme, it was noted as follows (CEDR, 2009):

- Due to lack of qualified teachers and facilities, the secondary school curriculum fails to empower school leavers in practical science and technology skills. Hence, most Nigerian streets were littered with robust youths, often secondary schools graduates and drop-outs, engaged in motorcycle transport and street hawking because they lack requisite skills
- Besides the tolls of the road and the street dangers faced by these vulnerable youths, they are often accused of incessant robbery and assassination crimes often witnessed in most States of Nigeria, hence they are banned from operating in some cities in this country
- SIWES has been marred by funding difficulties, student truancy, industrial placement shortfall, inadequate monitoring and supervision and incongruence between university curriculum and industrial production practices
- There is the need to promote entrepreneurial culture, skills acquisition, self-employment, economic independence and self-actualization

Nigerian governments also encouraged workers to undergo various in-service training and trade tests for skills acquisition and self-improvement. The governments also provided for out-of-school skills acquisition programmes. In the 1960s, the East and West Regional Governments established the Farm Settlement Programme for making modern farmers of school leavers. In the late 1970s, the FGN embarked on Crash Programme which provided some Nigerian youth with short-term skills training in advanced countries, thereby creating room for adoption of technologies. To address unemployment engendered by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the Babangida-led federal government established the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the National Economic Reconstruction Fund

(NERFUND), the People's Bank and the Community Bank in the 1980s. Other government interventionist measures to tackle unemployment include the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) (Eneh, 2009a).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Preliminary visits spread over 5 years (2005-2009) were paid to the supply side of artisanal apprenticeship, products and services, represented by farms, street technical workshops, lube bays, artisan villages, artisan pools (*ogbonmanu*, Igbo) and art galleries in the five State capital cities and suburbs of the Southeast Nigeria to establish a palpable decrease in technical apprenticeship practice and artisanal products and services. Two different questionnaires were used in the first quarter of year 2010 for eliciting information on declining technical apprenticeship and artisan services in Nigeria, the causes of this decline and the implications for Nigeria's future development. Questionnaire I, titled declining technical apprenticeship and service and its causes targeted the supply side of technical apprenticeship training and artisanal services, constituted mainly by the Organized Private Sector (OPS) operators, reached through various professional groups, such as the associations of tailors, welders, auto workers, barbers/hairdressers, etc. Questionnaire II, titled effects of declining artisan service on Nigerians and the implications for the country's future development targeted the demand side of technical services, represented in the study by a cross section of the society (traders in the market, workers in the public and private organisations and students/staff in the academia).

Six thousand copies of either questionnaire were distributed to the trade groups for completion by their members during their monthly meetings in their various locations in the State capitals. Some of them had to be reached in their workshops. This enabled the usually busy technicians and artisans to supply the needed information without much sacrifice on their part. Eventually, 4,340 copies of the Questionnaires I and 4,220 copies of the Questionnaire II were completed, giving a total of 8,560. After compiling the answers from the questionnaires, the heads of the associations were reached with probing extra-questionnaire questions (who, how, what, which, when, where and why) used where necessary to elucidate and resolve some volunteered answers to questions in the questionnaires.

Area of study was the Southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria, made up of five (out of the 36 States in the country): Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. Their capital cities are Umuahia, Awka, Abakaliki, Enugu and Owerri respectively. The people of the zone are the Igbos (Eneh, 2005). The choice of the Igbos for the study was informed by their generally acclaimed entrepreneurial dexterity. They are generally among the most entrepreneurial in Nigeria, engage in businesses more often than majority of other ethnic groups in the country and are trained widely on businesses. Accordingly, any conclusion from this study is expected to generalize measurably the reality of a typical Nigerian artisanship and entrepreneurial situation.

Statistical tables were used for analysis of data. A combination of the primary information on the effects of declining artisan services on Nigerians and secondary information gathered from published materials were used to establish the implications of declining technical apprenticeship and artisan services for Nigeria's future development. Attendant recommendations were given aimed at reversing the trend to forestall the imminent dangers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are summarised in Table 1-5, which are also discussed in the light of relevant literature and reports of earlier workers. Table 1 gives the socio-demographic data on respondents. Table 2 shows the trade distribution among the artisans, while Table 3 shows the academic/training qualifications of the artisans. Table 4 shows issues relating to, while Table 5 deals with, declining technical apprenticeship and service and the causes.

The respondents to Questionnaire I (Declining technical apprenticeship and service and the causes) consisted of 85% male and 15% female. Technical apprentices and artisan services providers were predominantly male. Further enquiries showed that the 15% females engaged mainly in garment, catering and hair dressing businesses, as against the harder professions of fine arts (painting and sculpture), printing, metal works, wood works, auto works, construction works, electrical/electronic works and others. This finding is line with earlier workers' reports that women were barred by customs and traditions in Nigeria from engaging in some trades perceived to be difficult for their fragile sex, such as commercial driving, palm wine tapping and others. Discrimination against Nigerian women informs social exclusion and the reckless violation of their rights leads to frustration, apathy, violence and lop-sided development and underdevelopment (FGN and UNICEF, 2001; Owo, 2010).

Table 1: Sex, age distribution, and marital status of respondents

	Sex		Age distribution				Marital status		
	Male	Female	Under-30 years	31-50 years	51-70 years	Above 70 years	Single	Married	Separated
Percentage	85	15	8	63	27	2	38	49	13

Source: Field work, 2010

Table 2: Trades distribution

Trade	Arts											
	Barbing/hairdressing	Garments	Catering	Fine	Performing	Electrical	Metal	Printing	Auto	Wood	Construction	Others
%	19	17	16	2	11	11	8	6	5	2	2	1

Source: Field works, 2010

Table 3: Academic/training qualifications of artisans

Qualifications	Degree	HND	OND	NCE	GTC	WASC/TC II	FSLC	None
Percentage	0	2	13	1	17	26	34	7

Source: Field work, 2010

Table 4: Duration of apprenticeship, period of training, duration of entrepreneurship, and accomplishments by artisans

	Duration of apprenticeship (years)				Training period	Duration of entrepreneurship (years)			
	0-1	1-2	3-4	5/above	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	
Percentage	13	43	41	3	83	13	3	1	
Accomplishment	Financing relation's education	Society marriage rite	Building in the village	Building in city	Financing wife's post-secondary education	Financing self post-secondary (informal) education	Financing children's primary education	Financing children's secondary education	
Percentage	31	58	32	3	7	5	61	60	
Duration of entrepreneurship (years)									
	Under 5		10-May		20-Nov		21-35		Above 35
Percentage	3		6		21		33		37
Accomplishment	Financing children's tertiary education		Owning a car				Owning a commercial vehicle		
Percentage	22		1				2		

Source: Field work, 2010

Table 5: Declining technical apprenticeship

Apprenticeship period	Average No. of apprentice last 10 years (%)				Average No. of apprentice now in training (%)					
	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	0-5	6-10	11-15	0	1-2	1-3
Average No. of apprentice	15-30	7-13	0-5	0-2	96	3	1	97	2	1
Reasons adduced for declining technical apprenticeship and service (%)										
	Increasing quest for formal education		Get-rich-quick mentality	Bad business environment	Indolent generation	Low esteem for technicians	Decreasing demand for technical services			
Average No. of apprentice	98		81	68	48	19	8			

Source: Field work, 2010

Only 8% of respondents to Questionnaire I were under 30 years of age; 63% were aged between 31 and 50 years; 27% were aged between 51 and 70 years and 2% were above 70 years of age. Since, the respondents were technical service providers, the findings show that younger people were keeping away from technical apprenticeship and services provision as careers. The highest figure (63%) belongs to people of 31-50 age brackets, who joined in the professions decades ago. New entrants were minimal. Similarly, the second highest figure (27%) belongs to people of 51-70 age brackets. The whopping gap (from 63% down to 27%) between these two classes indicated that artisans were retiring too young (between 51 and 70 years of age) from their careers.

Further probing revealed that they found it difficult to operate their businesses without the services of apprentices and younger workers (journeymen). The business-unfriendly environment in Nigeria supplied exacerbating factors, such as difficulty in accessing capital, inflation and devaluation of local currency, lack of patronage of made-in-Nigeria goods/services, preference for foreign goods/services, inadequate and decaying infrastructure and incentives, rising cost of living/transportation/housing/others, insecurity, inconsistent policies, weak implementation of policies, corruption, frauds, ostentation and political instability. These findings agreed with earlier reports (Eneh, 2005, 2010).

Although, 90% respondents were aged 30-70 years, 38% were single, 49% were married and 13% were separated (Table 1). This showed a high population of unmarried adults among people of marriageable ages. The figure for separation was also high for African culture known for polygamy. These developments can only be explained by dwindling prosperity for entrepreneurial careers in Nigeria, as earlier reported (Eneh, 2005, 2009a, 2010).

Most engaged trade was barbing/hairdressing (19%), followed by garment production and service (17%), catering (16%), arts (fine and performing) (11%), electrical (11%), metal works (including aluminum fabrication) (8%), printing (6%), auto (mechanic, driving, electrical, panel beating and vulcanising) (5%), wood works (2%), construction (masonry, tiling, roofing, plumbing, etc.) (2%) and others (1%). Further probing revealed that increasing population of girl school leavers and dropouts engaged in hairdressing businesses from the early 1980s when Nigeria's government at the centre started to preach austere measures and the practice deepened from the middle 1980s when the structural adjustment programme (SAP) was adopted. Many male and female undergraduates still maintain barbing and hairdressing businesses to finance their schooling.

Women mostly populated the garments and catering trades. Culturally, kitchen businesses are feminine in African culture. Sewing, cake making and home keeping formed the domestic training-a preparatory programme for the newly-weds and soon-to-marry girls popular in the 1970s and 1980s before the Universal Primary Education of 1976 and the Universal Basic Education (UBE) of 1999 programmes strengthened the quest of the Nigerian

youth for formal education (Eneh, 2008). Further enquiries revealed that girls/women still kept touch with garment trade. With the increasing craze for fashion, many out-of-school boys joined the garment trade. This might explain the higher fraction (17%) for garment trade over 16% for catering, which is almost exclusively populated by girls/women mostly at the micro levels of Mama put and restaurant.

According to the respondents, film production and entertainment industry picked popularity in Nigeria in recent times. This might explain the impressive fraction (11%) for performing arts. Similarly, recent peaking of communications industry, especially mobile phone business, might explain the relatively high fraction (11%) for electrical (which also included electronics) trade in the study. Although, welding trade was dwindling, the fraction for metal works was relatively high (11%) because of recent upsurge in engagement of youth in aluminum fabrication business.

The 6% fair fraction for printing was attributed by respondents to increasing numbers of educational institutions in Nigeria, which patronized printing a lot. There are over 12 tertiary institutions of learning in Enugu and its suburbs alone. Although, auto trade in the study embodied auto mechanic, driving, electrical works and panel beating, the figure was 5%. This showed high rate of desertion of the various aspects of the auto technical service trade in Nigeria. Respondents further confirmed the desertion when they reported that many youth that had trained in the auto trade workshops later abandoned their training for buying and selling auto spare-parts, which gave them quicker money and less stress.

The fraction, 2%, for wood works and for construction was low and confirmed increasing rate of desertion. Worse still, masonry and plumbing were lumped under construction, which still scored that low. Again, this was an indication of high rate of desertion of masonry and plumbing in Nigeria. Also, respondents further confirmed the desertion when they reported that many youth that had trained in construction works later abandoned their training for dealing on building materials for faster income and less stress.

Respondents could not specify the trades which they lumped under others. Therefore, it was difficult to analyse the 1% fraction it got.

No university degree holder was found among the artisans. This agrees with earlier report that the curricula of the post-Independent Nigerian education system were aimed at products to replace the departing colonial white-collar workers in the 1960s. Subsequent efforts to encourage the study of science, engineering and vocational education have not succeeded in producing enterprise-ready graduates because the curricula lack in entrepreneurship (Eneh, 2008). Therefore, lacking in entrepreneurship training, skill and drive, Nigerian graduates cannot employ selves in technical services provision.

Only 2% of the artisans were Higher National Diploma (HND) holders. They were into printing and fine arts (having read Printing technology and Fine Arts at HND level). Only 13% were Ordinary National Diploma (OND) holders. Again, they were into printing and fine arts (having read Printing Technology and Fine Arts at OND level). The results of the OND entrepreneurs could not qualify them for admission for HND, constraining them to settle for self-employment in an economy growing in unemployment. Those who made it to HND had wider job opportunities on graduation, hence the lower fraction (2%) compeled to undertake enterprises. The fact that HND and OND holders used the skill acquired in school for self-reliance corroborated the need to revise the curriculum of tertiary institutions of learning for functionality and enterprise-readiness of Nigerian graduates, as advocated in an earlier study (Eneh, 2009b).

Holders of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) constituted 1% of the artisans. They were mainly into catering businesses. The low fraction could be explained by the fact

that most NCE holders found teaching jobs with the growing number of schools in Nigeria. Primary school enrollment increased from 6 million in 1975 to 15 million in 1980 and from 17.9 million in 1997 to 19.7 million in 2002 (Eneh, 2008).

Holders of Government Trade Certificates (GTC), Royal School of Arts (RSA) certificates and government Trade Test certificates constituted together 26% of the artisans. This was understandable, since they had acquired job skills in schools, as against graduates and leavers of grammar schools. They were mainly into mechanic, metal works and electrical/electronic works. These were among the well established and equipped departments in the Government Technical Colleges (GTCs) in Enugu and Abakaliki serving the Southeast geopolitical zone. Also, these trades required little capital for basic tools and rent (if any) for self-establishment.

Holders of the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) constituted 34% of the artisans. After obtaining FSLC, they underwent apprenticeship for various periods in order to acquire the technical skills for their self-employment. They were spread across the various trades in Table 3. Like them, the 7% that had no qualifications had undergone apprenticeship for various periods in various trades.

Very few artisans (3%) had sufficient patience for apprenticeship for 5 years and above. A low fraction (13%) had managed to pass through apprenticeship within a year. A high fraction (41%) of the artisans had been apprenticed for between 1 and 2 years, while the highest fraction (43%) had been apprenticed for between 3 and 4 years to acquire the technical skills for their self-establishment.

Impatience is part of abandonment mechanism. Nigerian youth seem to prefer stress-free means of making a living. The society does not help matters by sheer disregard for intellect and loud ovation for loots (Newswatch, 2010).

Most of the apprenticeship training (83%) took place in the 1970s, followed by 1980s (13%), 1990s (3%) and 1% in the 2000s. This gave a clear picture of appalling decline in technical apprenticeship.

Those who had been in entrepreneurial practice for less than 5 years constituted only 3% of the artisans, 6% had been there for between 5 and 10 years, 21% had been there for between 11 and 20 years, 33% had been there for between 21 and 35 years and 37% had been there for 35 years and beyond. Thus, the youngest breeds of the artisans contributed 9%, while the older breeds contributed 91% of practicing artisans. Worse still, those who had been in the practice for above 35 years (who should have actually retired) were of greater fraction (37%) than those in the practice for between 21 and 35 years (33%), which was also greater than the fraction (21%) for those in the practice for between 11 and 20 years. The fraction further decreased to 6% for those in the practice for between 5 and 10 years and 3% for those in the practice for 5 years and below. This is a graphical depiction of decline of technical service.

About 31% of the artisans were able to finance their relations' primary education and 58% their marriage rites. About 3% of them afforded to build a residential house in the village and only 3% in the city. About 7% of them were able to finance their wife's post-secondary education and 5% could train selves in post-secondary education. About 61% of them could finance their children's primary, 60% the secondary and 22% the tertiary education. Only 1% of the artisans owned a private car, while 2% owned a commercial bus.

These were some of the parameters for measuring people's arrival or success in life in typical Nigerian society. Nigerians respect someone who has the love for education, the heart and means to train his relations in the African extended family network, children, wife and self in school; show affluence in society marriage rites; build a house in the village and

in the city and own a private car as well as a commercial vehicle. The younger ones looked up to such a person and would like to be like him.

From Table 4, an average of 25.6% of the artisans was able to meet the societal expectations. This poor general score could account for desertion of apprenticeship and technical trades by up-coming generations. No young person would like to take after the career of a person considered to be a failure in the society. They prefer to toe the line of those considered to have arrived (made it or succeeded in life) in the society.

The artisans confessed the average number of apprentice-mates they had at various periods. A compilation of their submissions for various trades showed 15-30 apprentices per workshop per trade in the 1970s, 7-13 in the 1980s, 0-5 in the 1990s and 0-2 in the 2000s. This showed a decline in technical apprenticeship and attendant available service for all the trades. Although, there was a fall-and-rise trend at various times for some trades, like hairdressing, metal works and electrical/electronic works, the overall picture was downward trend for these and other trades.

About 96% of the artisans have had between zero and 5 apprentices in the past 10 years, 3% managed to have between 6 and 10 apprentices and only 1% had between 11 and 15 apprentices in the past 10 years. Most of the apprentices were in film production, hairdressing, aluminum fabrication and cell-phone repairs. Generally, the electrical, metal, printing, wood, construction and auto trades experienced serious decline. There was a general decline in the number of apprentices passing through a workshop, as compared to 15-30 in the 1970s and 7-13 in the 1980s (Table 3).

Almost all artisans had no apprentice during survey. Only 2% had 1 or 2 apprentices and 1% had between 1 and 3 apprentices, mainly hairdressing, aluminum fabrication and cell-phone repairs trades. Further probing revealed that the apprentices hardly lasted 6 months in training, only to quit.

All the artisans not only accepted that there was a serious decline in the rate of apprenticeship and available technical service, but decried the situation and were frightened by the perceived impact on the society in future. Most artisans (98%) attributed the decline to increasing quest for formal education, 81% to get-rich-quick mentality, 68% to unconducive business environment, 48% to indolence, 19% to lack of respect for artisans and technicians in the society and 8% to lack of patronage. Respondents submitted that the government education programmes, such as the UPE of 1976 and UBE of 1999, which made going to school mandatory for school-age children, had drastically trimmed down the number of children going for technical apprenticeship.

Indolence and get-rich-quick mentality of the citizens had resulted in increasing rate of school drop-out and demand for buying and selling for quick profit with limited stress, especially as there was poor respect for artisans, but high respect for wealth, no matter how ill-gotten. Poor business environment had forced many technical workshops to close down, since they lacked electric power supply, had to pay multiple taxations, had little or no incentives from government and were shunned by banks from which they requested for capital. These issues agreed with earlier reports on problems of small and medium enterprises in Southeast Nigeria (Eneh, 2005).

Some of the artisans have abandoned their professions for quick money in auto-byke commercial transportation business, popularly called okada in Nigeria. A study on the socio-economic effects of motorcycle taxis in the city of Enugu shows that motorcycle taxis in the city have directly employed about 14,000 of the city dwellers and indirectly employed many other people, such as motorcycle spare-parts dealers and motorcycle repairers. Operators of motorcycle taxis comprise 80% permanent operators who were formerly

unemployed and 20% part-time operators, including public servants, students and artisans. Motorcycle taxis have been linked to serious crime incidents in the city, such as snatching of personal effects, grand larceny, robbery and political killings. The transportation system also presents the most potent hazards both to passengers and other road users in the city. Accidents arising from motorcycle taxis are on the increase. Because of quick way of making money through motorcycle taxis, many youths have abandoned their skill acquisition or capacity building to operate motorcycle taxis. The operation of motorcycle taxis in the city has reduced the demand for buses and contributed greatly in stopping the operation of big buses for intra-urban services (Atubi and Ali, 2009).

Effects of Declining Technical Apprenticeship and Service on Nigerians and the Implications for Future Development of the Country

Since, artisans are skilled manual workers, who craft items that may be functional or strictly decorative, including furniture, clothing, jewelry, household items and tools, as well as hand-make food products, such as bread, beverage and cheese (Wikipedia, 2009), the declining number of artisans in Nigeria dictates declining quantum of available artisanal products and services and their unique and individual qualities, variety and beauty resulting from creative thinking and manual dexterity. Personal esthetics or sense of value, reflected in the elevation of even the simplest piece of product to an art form, is fast disappearing from among the citizens.

Artisanal services in garment, catering, arts (fine and performing), electrical/electronics, metal works (including aluminum fabrication), printing, auto (mechanic, driving, electrical, panel beating and vulcanizing), wood works and construction (masonry, tiling, roofing, plumbing, etc.), barbing/hairdressing careers are fast diminishing at disturbing rates. It is feared that in a few years from now, new locally made technological artifacts will disappear from Nigerian society and old (locally made and imported) products can no longer be maintained or serviced. In other words, travelers cannot get their busted tyres vulcanized in emergency; leaking roofs cannot be repaired; faulty household items (fridge, furniture, electronics, etc.) cannot be repaired; faulty office equipment will have to be abandoned; ailing vehicles and cycles cannot be maintained; spoiling dresses and foot-wears cannot be mended; hair-doing has to be by selves and micro catering services will be out of sight.

Since all artisans are fun-loving, optimistic, realistic and focused on the here-and-now; unconventional, bold and spontaneous; make playful mates, creative parents and troubleshooting leaders; are excitable, trusting their impulses, wanting to make a splash, seeking stimulation, prizing freedom and dreaming of mastering action skills, a very important cream of the society is disappearing. About 30-35% of the population (artisans), who create much of the beauty, grace, fun and excitement the rest of the people enjoy in life, are fast going extinct. Life is bound to lose fun and become harder, leading to further shortening of the already too short lifespan (48 years) of Nigerians.

Since, master artisans are entrepreneurs, who drive the economic development of the nation, national development will be retarded with disappearing artisanship and technical skills and services that are critical to development. Similarly, grassroots empowerment will suffer with diminishing skills acquisition, which is key to this empowerment. Development of both the personality and manipulative skill capability of youth will suffer with diminishing adaptive skills. Thus, street youth, ghetto youth and the destitute will no longer be rescued from gangsterism, drug abuse, crime/violence and other vicious involvements that mar the social, cultural and economic development of countries. And, unemployment will no longer be addressed if adaptive skills cease to provide youth with self-sustaining job skills. Only breakdown of law and order will be expected in such a situation.

With diminishing vocational and technical skills that enhance the relevance and functionality of individuals in the society, promote their economic survival and vibrancy, boost labour market by empowering unskilled, poor and unemployable youth for sound social living and thereby, play a vital and indispensable role in the development of the society, curbing restiveness, crime and poverty and providing antidote for idleness and means of self-reliance, insecurity conundrum will become the lot of the society. With disappearing job skills that determine enterprise success and a nation's comparative advantage, development of the nation is simply ebbing out.

Desertion of artisanal professions for motorcycle commercial transport business increases the wave of crimes facilitated by speed and meandering movements of auto-bykes, in addition to tolls of lives claimed in colossal numbers in frequent accidents involving commercial auto-bykes. Others are maimed in such accidents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is not unusual for artisanship to decline, but it is anti-development to fail to address the situation. In recognition of the important role of artisans in development, it is recommended that:

- Nigeria should establish Artisan Marketplace (similar to the Oakland Artisan Marketplace established in 1999) to support local artisans and spur Oakland economic development
- To encourage artisans, Neighbourhood artisans for neighbour gifts programme should be mounted to celebrate a neighbour and a neighbourhood artisan with one affordable package
- In a country, where diligence is disregarded and ill-gotten wealth is venerated, ethical and moral re-orientation has become imperative. Government at federal, state and local levels should hire effective private organizations to effect measurable arrest of moral decay in the system
- Corruption in high places, which trickles down the ladder, should no longer be tolerated, but confronted head-on with the required courage, as was done in Ghana by Rawlings to save the country from imminent collapse

CONCLUSIONS

Master artisans are entrepreneurs, who are willing and able to take business risks for gainful purposes, have a strong desire to be independent, enjoy working at something they cherish (rather than settle for the security of a steady income), are the prime cause of economic development and are responsible for the innovation and technological change of a nation, as well as make things work in the economy of the country. It is the entrepreneurs, such as artisans and technical services providers, including the fine art workers, performing artists, caterers, printers, metal workers, wood workers, auto workers, garment workers, construction workers, electrical/electronic workers and others, that drive the economic development of the nation. Enterprises are mainly responsible for the German economic miracle after World War II to recover to a position these days as the third most powerful economy in the world. Also, using enterprises, the Asian Tigers have become strong economic powers.

Visits spread over 5 years to artisan shops and villages in the 5 State capital cities and their suburbs of the Southeast Nigeria, followed by questionnaires and probing

extra-questionnaire interviews, have revealed rapid decline in technical apprenticeship and artisanal products and services in Nigeria. Technical apprentices and artisan services providers were predominantly male (85%). The 15% females engaged mainly in garment, catering and hair dressing businesses, as against the harder professions of fine arts (painting and sculpture), printing, metal works, wood works, auto works, construction works, electrical/electronic works and others.

Most engaged trade was barbing/hairdressing, followed by garment production and service, catering, arts (fine and performing), electrical/electronics, metal works (including aluminum fabrication), printing, auto (mechanic, driving, electrical, panel beating and vulcanizing), wood works and construction (masonry, tiling, roofing, plumbing), in descending order. Increasing population of girl school leavers and dropouts engaged in hairdressing businesses from the 1980s when austere periods set in. Many male and female undergraduates maintain barbing and hairdressing businesses to finance their schooling.

Women mostly populated the garments and catering trades. Although, welding trade was dwindling, the fraction for metal works was relatively high because of recent upsurge in engagement of youth in aluminum fabrication business. Printing got a fair share because of increasing numbers of educational institutions in Nigeria, which patronized printing a lot. There are over 12 tertiary institutions of learning in Enugu and its suburbs alone. There is high rate of desertion of the various aspects of the auto technical service trade in Nigeria (mechanic, driving, electrical works, vulcanizing and panel beating). Many youth that had trained in the auto trade workshops later abandoned their training for buying and selling auto spare-parts, which gave them quicker money and less stress.

Similarly, the construction trades encountered increasing rate of desertion. Many youth that had trained in construction works later abandoned their training for dealing on building materials for faster income and less stress. The performing arts were impressively engaged because of the rising demand for film production. Similarly, recent peaking of communications industry, especially mobile phone business, led to a relatively high demand for electronics repairs. The engagement of metal works weighed on the recent upsurge in engagement of youth in aluminum fabrication business.

Artisans were aging out and retiring from their profession, whereas new entrants were minimal. Older artisans could hardly operate their businesses without the services of apprentices and younger workers (journeymen), nor could defy the business-unfriendly environment in Nigeria, which supplied exacerbating factors, such as difficulty in accessing capital, inflation and devaluation of local currency, lack of patronage of made-in-Nigeria goods/services, preference for foreign goods/services, inadequate and decaying infrastructure and incentives, rising cost of living/transportation/housing/others, insecurity, inconsistent policies, weak implementation of policies, corruption, frauds, ostentation and political instability.

No university degree holder was found among the artisans, unlike the Printing technology and Fine Arts National Diploma holders, who were into printing and fine arts enterprises respectively because of the enterprise-readiness skills acquired in school. Holders of Government Trade Certificates (GTC), Royal School of Arts (RSA) certificates and government Trade Test certificates contributed a good fraction of artisans because they had acquired job skills in schools.

The highest fraction of artisans was holders of the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC), who underwent apprenticeship for various periods and careers to acquire the technical skills for their self-employment. In the past 10 years, very few people trained as apprentices, who had sufficient patience to train for 5 years and above; others prefer

stress-free means of making a living, managed to pass through apprenticeship within a year and exhibited the get-rich-quick mentality. Most of the apprenticeship training took place in the 1970s, followed by the 1980s, the 1990s and the 2000s.

An average of 25.6% of the artisans met the societal expectations, which was a discouragement for up-coming generation to choose their careers, as no young person would like to take after the career of a person considered to be a failure in the society, but would prefer to toe the line of those considered to have arrived (made it or succeeded in life) in the society. Indeed, almost all artisans had no apprentice during survey, excepting a few hairdressers, aluminum fabricators, cell-phone repairers and auto artisans.

Factors that contribute to the serious decline in the rate of apprenticeship and available technical service included increasing quest for formal education, get-rich-quick mentality, unconducive business environment, indolence, lack of respect for artisans and technicians in the society and lack of patronage.

The implications for future development in Nigeria include declining quantum of available artisanal products and services, diminishing beauty and fun created by artisans, retardation of national development and grassroots empowerment, insecurity, economic dependence and loss of lives increasing number of road to accidents involving auto byke taxis.

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