

ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING INNOVATIVENESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness and economic development in the context of local government areas in Rivers State. Literature review research design was used in this study. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is the ability of a firm to introduce new products, new services, new production technologies etc. It is the process of innovation at work. Economic development is about the improvement of the general wellbeing of the citizenry by reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality while increasing the income of the people. It also includes increase in productivity and output which is measured with gross domestic product (GDP) and GDP per capita etc. Globalization and liberalization of the markets has increased competition and dynamics of the wider business environment. Innovativeness is a proactive posture of the firm in adapting to these changes while providing superior and differentiated products and services to the market in order to attain sustainable competitive advantage. Thus, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness implemented by firms help drive business performance. Most institutions in the public and private sectors leverage innovativeness in order to adapt to the environment so as to enhance their business positively. It is therefore, recommended that managers of local government in Rivers State should employ entrepreneurial marketing innovative activities in order to bring about effective public service delivery in their local government areas.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial, Marketing, Innovativeness, Economic Development, Local Government Areas, Rivers State

INTRODUCTION

Local government in Nigeria is the institution that is closest to the people and saddled with the responsibility of enforcement of local laws for the benefit of the citizenry. It is the third tier of government established with the sole aim of bringing grass root development through the provision of social amenities such as construction of roads and drainages, provision of water and sanitation, health care, basic education, employment etc within the communities and its primary constituencies (Ugwuja, 2014). Historically, it is a system of government introduced during the colonial era by Sir Lord Fredrick Lugard in 1900. It's primary objects is the maintenance of law and order improvement of the living standards of the people at the grass root through the provision of public amenities (Odo, 2014). Hence, the local government is the most laudable agent of community and rural development. However, rural development cannot be fully achieved in Nigeria due to lack of total independence and coordination among the federating units (Abbah, 2007; Ganduje, 2008; Odo, 2014).

Government in Nigeria is subdivided into three levels known as tiers of government. These federating units are the federal government, state and local government. Each of these public institutions are vested with relative functions and powers by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Among these federating units, the local government is the least in terms of development. Virtually all the local communities and rural areas in Nigeria suffers gross

underdevelopment in areas such as water and sanitation, unemployment and poverty, illiteracy, squatter settlement, lack of infrastructures etc (Ibietan&Ekhosuehi, 2013). Thus, this situation has created insecurity, crisis and lack of peace in most local government rural communities. Rivers State which is the treasurebase of Nigeria is not an exception as she is scrambling in various ways to bring about development of the various communities making up the State.

Rivers State which is one of the States in Nigeria is divided into twenty three (23) Local Government Areas (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). These Local Government Areas are naturally endowed with natural resources and large labour pool without skills. The local government areas are faced with numerous challenges ranging from mass poverty, illiteracy, unemployment especially, youth unemployment, squatter settlement, absence of viable infrastructures; electricity, water, roads and lack of managerial skills for local economic management etc (Odo, 2014; Uguwuja, 2014). However, government at various levels including the international development partners are leveraging various ways on how best to lift the rural communities to a state of inclusive growth and development. Most importantly, the current economic situation which has brought down revenues of all the tiers of government to an all time low and its attendant mismanagement by government agents calls for entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness (Kuntani, Chariri&Prabowo, 2019). This will make the institutions to develop innovative ideas and processes to manage the local government areas.

Local Government in Rivers State can leverage different types of management strategies including entrepreneurial marketing orientations which is a strategic posture for superior performance of an organization. Entrepreneurial marketing orientation is simply a resource for all organizations irrespective of size and age (Kraus et al, 2011; Olannye&Eromafuru, 2016). Hence, this resource is employed to bring about success in the management of both private and public institutions. The numerous challenges facing local government administration should be tackled by creating public institutions with entrepreneurial marketing behaviours (Olalekan, 2010; Schillo, 2011; George & Marino, 2011; Fedar, 2015). Entrepreneurial marketing is simply the strategic posture of entrepreneurship in marketing. It is the integration of entrepreneurship and marketing. Therefore, entrepreneurial marketing exhibits the combine characteristics and behaviours of entrepreneurship and marketing which is used by small, medium and large organizations to confront a dynamic and ever changing business environment (Mehran&Morteza, 2013; Olannye&Eromafuru, 2016).

Entrepreneurial marketing is the employment of factors of production such as land, labour, capital and management in order to proactively identify, explore and exploit opportunities by creating values for the acquisition and retention of profitable customers (Kowalik, 2016; Mehran&Morteza, 2013). For the entrepreneurial marketer to produce valuable goods and services for the markets, valuable resources known as factors of production which are superior relative to the competitors' resources are employed. The focus is to provide superior products and services to the customers in order to earn sustainable competitive advantages. Entrepreneurial marketing therefore, is a strategic resource for managing markets and successful businesses in the face of a dynamic and globalized business space. Managers of organizations irrespective of size and age of an organization should leverage entrepreneurial marketing for the successful operations of their institutions. Managers of organization irrespective of size and age of an organization should leverage entrepreneurial marketing resources for the successful operation of their institutions (Kraus et al., 2011; Olannye&Eromafuru, 2016).

The Concept of Entrepreneurial Marketing

The business environment is associated with changes due to globalization and liberalization of markets which are largely driven by information communication and transportation technologies (Mehran&Morteza, 2013). This has increased competition in most sectors of the Nigeria economy.

Both domestic firms and multi-nationals are seen competing for markets in the industries. The ability to respond to the dynamics of the business environment should not be limited to traditional marketing practices. Traditional or conventional marketing practices are no longer adaptive enough in today's ever changing business landscape (Olannye&Eromafuru, 2016; Mehran&Morteza, 2013). Thus, traditional marketing practices are not always suitable for institutions in globalized markets.

For managers to successfully manage their organizations in the face of these dynamics, they must employ entrepreneurial marketing which is an innovative mechanism of managing the business and the markets with limited resources at the disposal of the company (Miles & Daroch, 2004; Morrish& Deacon, 2009; Mehran&Morteza, 2013). Hence, entrepreneurial marketing construct is complex and associated with competitive and highly dynamic business space. It is usually proactive, responsive and reactive to environmental changes and opportunities seeking in nature. Entrepreneurial marketing is the integration of the elements of entrepreneurship and marketing constructs which serve as the strategic posture in marketing management which is highly responsible for business success (Mehran&Morteza, 2013; Gruber, 2014).

The application of entrepreneurial marketing in both private and public sector management is a way of overcoming some business challenges facing institutions. The construct is considered useful to all types of organizations irrespective of age and size (Kraus et al., 2011; Olannye&Eromafuru, 2016). Both small, medium and large organizations can leverage entrepreneurial marketing orientation in order to survive the 21st century highly globalized and competitive market place (Hills, Hutman& Miles, 2008; Kraus et al., 2011). Morris, Schindehutte&Laforge (2002), defined entrepreneurial marketing as "the proactive identification and exploration of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation". Hence, it is the employment of the right resources or factors of production to create superior value for the market and retain profitable customers for sustainable competitive advantage in the market.

Entrepreneurial marketing implemented by firms proactively focus on the market; customers, competition, suppliers and distributors including the public in order to create innovative, efficient and superior value for the market (Miles & Daroch, 2004; Mehran&Morteza, 2013). According to Mehran&Morteza (2013), entrepreneurial marketing could be defined as the "proactive organizational focus on customer satisfaction through innovative and efficient value creation throughout the value chain". The implication of the foregoing is that, entrepreneurial marketing combine both behaviours of marketing and entrepreneurship to contain a dynamic and highly turbulent business environment. Isolating the two constructs in practice creates inability for firms to cope adequately with the 21 century markets which is globalized and competitive (Olannye&Eromafuru, 2016). Therefore, entrepreneurial marketing comes with advantages to a company and its stakeholders through unique provision of superior value to the market and sustainable competitive advantage to shareholders.

Entrepreneurial marketing practices provide opportunities for all the business stakeholders; customers, employees, suppliers/distributors, shareholders, the public etc. Each of these stakeholders enjoy relative advantages in the business relationships. The customer enjoy innovative products and services, the suppliers/distributors create and build long lasting beneficial business relationships with the company and the organization enjoy sustainable competitive advantages so as to earn above average return in the chosen industry (Otika, Nwaizugbo&Olise, 2019). The success of the foregoing is dependent on the company's ability to leverage valuable resources internally and externally for the successful operations of the institutions. This is the premise upon which institutional stakeholders in private and public sectors

can be satisfied (Stoner, Gilbert & Freeman, 2013). Entrepreneurial marketing orientation is a valuable resource for managing institutions in today's globalized and liberalized markets.

Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness

The operating business environment is dynamic and ever changing. It is only the institutions that are innovative that can keep pace with the dynamics of the market and customers, the competition, the economy, technology, government regulations and policies, socio-cultural factors etc (Stoner, Gilbert & Freeman, 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2012). Hence, since today's business environment is turbulent it requires different approaches to doing business. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is a laudable business scheme to adapt to the challenges of the ever changing business space and to improve competitive hedge in the industry (Robert & Allen, 2010; Okpara, 2007). Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness of firms is highly important due to dramatic changes occurring in the business environment which is largely driven by globalization and liberalization of markets. Due to globalization and liberalization of markets, the business environment is more dramatic, highly competitive and ever changing. Innovative entrepreneurial marketing will always develop adaptive organizations, products, services, processes and technologies to cope with the demand of the present day business environment (Stoner, Gilbert & Freeman, 2013).

Kamaruddeen, Yusof & Said (2014), defined entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness as "firm's overall innovative ability or capability of introducing new products to the market, or opening up new markets, through an integration of strategic orientation with innovative behaviour and processes", It is the process by which management of an organization engage in new ventures, adopt new ideas and novelty programs that may translate to new products, services and technologies. It is simply the process of achieving innovation; new products, new services, new production technologies and processes (Wang & Ahmed, 2004; Kamaruddeen, Yusof & Said, 2014). Thus, an organization is regarded as being innovative when the company's management adopts innovation. The dimension of innovativeness of a firm is a function of the number of innovations adopted by management. In most industries, the most innovative firms are those companies who pioneer the adoption of innovation.

Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is an important construct of growth strategy which helps corporate managers to attain sustainable competitive advantages especially, those companies with continuous innovative behaviours and characteristics (Wang, 2015). The author opined that, a company's innovativeness can be explained in the perspectives of product innovativeness, process innovativeness, organizational innovativeness, and marketing innovativeness. Management thinking of innovativeness encompass the adoption of these business activities as innovation (Wang, 2015; Wang & Ahmed, 2004). Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is laudable in business practice as it is conceptualized as the series or number of innovations a firm adopt. It is the ability of a company or an institution to generate new ideas and continuously innovate over time (Ruvio et al., 2014). It is the process of innovation and possess characteristics of creativity, internal knowledge development, future orientation, risk management and proactiveness (Ruvio et al., 2014). Hence, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness helps organizations and nations in the transformation of existing markets, creation of new markets and stimulate economic growth — through the employment and implementation of these characteristics.

Maritz, Waal & Verhoeven (2011), posits that entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is "doing something new with ideas, products, service or technology and refining these ideas to a market opportunity to meet market demand in a new way". According to the authors, the characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness are modifications, customer focus, integrated

marketing, market focus and unique propositions. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is aimed at continuously creating new things, processes with a view to satisfying the market with appropriate goods and services in line with customers changing expectations, thus, improving the quality of life of customers and the firm's stakeholders and to also drive the company's brand success in the market (Abasag&Breman, 2017). The innovative organization should have the right leadership, firm's strategy and culture as conditions for achieving successful innovation. Again, the company should assemble the right resources such as human capital, competences, firm's structure, financial resources, external collaboration and processes for achieving successful innovation at work (Alexe&Alexe, 2016).

Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is a laudable construct used in managing the organization, industries and markets that are continuously changing. It is the business strategy used in managing change at work in order to improve sustainable competitive advantages in the industry (Knowles, Hansen & Dibrell, 2008; Rubera&Kirea, 2012). Hence, the concept is important for all organizations irrespective of age, size and the sectors the firm operates.

The Concept of Economic Development

The construct economic development signifies positive real change in the life of a community, city or nation. It involve group of policies and programs that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life of a nation, state or community by creating and maintaining employment and jobs that drives growth (International Economic Development Council, 201). Hence, economic development is the mechanism that drives growth and restructuring to create wealth and jobs in an economy in order to improve the wellbeing of the citizenry. it focus on how people in a nation or community can escape from poverty and low quality of life (Deaton, 2010). This quite contrasts with economic growth which focus on productivity and output. The implication is that, a nation or society can experience economic growth without experiencing real positive change in the areas of jobs, standard of living, education, health care and infrastructure etc (Edet, 2015; Onyimadu 2015).

According to Economic Development Administration (2018:32), economic development is "the expansion of capacities that contribute to the advancement of society through the realization of individual, firm and community potential". The symptoms of economic development are sustainable prosperity and quality of life which are largely driven by innovation and the provision of goods and services and their diffusions for common good. Economic development is managed by institutions with the right corporate governance structure; openness, risk prone or tolerance, diversity appreciation, integrity, transparency and confidence in achieving collective gain or benefits for the private and public sectors of the economy. Therefore, government and its agencies must reflect abusiness bias in their activities and become more entrepreneurial marketing in order to promote economic growth and development (Jones, Dollery& Grant, 2009).

According to Malizia (2017), economic development could be defined from the human resources lens. He posits that economic development happens in a community or nation when poverty, unemployment and inequality are sustainably reduced while per capita income in the society increases. Thus, the reduction of poverty and unemployment signifies improvement of general well being of citizenry, while the reduction of inequality in society upholds human dignity irrespective of tribe or race. Again, increase in per capita income is an improvement of the living standard of the average individual in the nation or community (Malizia, 2020) . Hence, economic development focused on the general well-being of society and the people and the enthronement of equal opportunity society. This is completely way off from economic growth which focus on

productivity and output. It is important to note that economic growth is one aspect of the process of economic development.

Economic development is the progressive change in the socio-economic structure of a nation or state and also encompass economic growth which focus on the increase in the value of real output of goods and services produced in an economy which is usually one year. It focus on improvement of quality of life, infrastructural, political and social wellbeing of the community or nation. Economic development is a multidimensional construct bordering on the income of the citizenry and improvement of the living conditions of people in a nation (Bucknall, 2013). For the nation or community to achieve these better well-being, the government through its agencies should provide an enabling policies and environment for economic development, build strategic alliances or partners, establish structure of governance and management, encouraging entrepreneurship and attracting inward investments, nurturing innovation and creativity so as to mitigate poverty, inequality and social exclusion (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2016).

Economic development is associated with some laudable indicators, these metrics are growth, poverty reduction, reduction in inequality, improvement of health, education, social protection, individual freedoms and human rights, political freedom and democracy, quality of regulation in the society (Silve., 2013 Bucknall, 2013; Malizia, 20 17). The indicators of economic development also encompass employment, social cohesion, safety and security, international relations and good governance, infrastructure and energy (Chabane, 2012). Government of nations should strive to achieve these development measures in order to bring about sustainable prosperity to the citizenry and the community. The achievement of economic growth without corresponding increase in these indicators results in an unhealthy improvement of an economy (Ajide, 2014).

Economic development in any nation or society can be brought about by good governance through which the citizens are allowed to participate in the process of governance. It is a situation that also encompass the running of all inclusive process, involving all the people irrespective of tribe or religion and without discrimination (World Bank institute, 2002). Thus, for economic development to occur in any society, the government and its agencies should render good governance, be accountable to the people by allowing the citizenry to participate equally in the process of politics and governance.

Entrepreneurial Marketing Innovativeness and Economic Development

Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness implemented by firms brings about institutional performance and growth in the face of dynamic business environment. This proposition has been empirically proved by studies. Rubera&Kirca (2012), investigated the effect of organizational innovativeness and its performance. The study made use of Pearson product moment correlation. The result of the study indicates that entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness has direct positive influence on the company's financial position and firm's value such as the book value and market capitalization of the company. It was revealed that this relationship found is stronger in larger organizations, small and medium scale companies. Thus, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness help improve business performance; financial performance and improvement of firm's valuation. The number of innovations an organization is able to come up with help enhance the performance of companies and institutions.

A firm's innovativeness dimension; products innovativeness create advantage for the organization in the market and bring about financial performance. McNally, Cavusgil&Calantone (2010), studied the product innovativeness dimension and product advantage, financial performance and project protocol. The study made use of structural equation modeling to measure the level of significance of the study variables. The result of the study is that product innovativeness of pharmaceutical

companies in North America positively impact product financial success. Hence, product innovativeness creates advantages for the product in the pharmaceutical industry and bring about significant financial performance of the pharmaceutical firms in North America.

In the same vein, Kim et al., (2015), investigated the influence of organizational innovativeness and product innovativeness on customer value through the mediating forces of instrumental and symbolic brand benefits. The study revealed that company's innovativeness enhanced product innovativeness and the instrumental brand benefits. An institutional innovativeness has positive and significant influence on the symbolic brand benefits and customer value. It is important to note that, organizational innovativeness help mobile phone institutions to create superior value for their customers (Kim et al, 2015). Thus, instrumental and symbolic brand innovativeness should be the direction or focus of marketing managers and experts in new product development in the mobile phone manufacturing industry.

Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is an institutional activities or firm's processes that bring about innovation which is in the form of new products, new services, new technology adoption etc. This is in line with the works of Walsh, Lynch & Harrington (2018), the authors examined innovativeness from the lens of conceptual framework antecedents, its dimensions and innovativeness outcomes. The finding of the study is that company innovativeness consistently lead to new products and services which are differentiated across emerging and developed markets in Europe. Again, it was revealed that entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness lead to customer satisfaction and sound financial outcomes through innovative customer service. The competitiveness of firms in the dynamic global market space is largely driven by firm level innovativeness (Paleo&Wijnbcrg, 2008; Mengul&Auh, 2006).

In measuring innovativeness of organizations through the development and refinement of new scale (Knowles, Hansen & Dibrell, 2015), discovered that, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness positively influence company growth and sustenance of competitive advantages in form's industries. Specifically, innovativeness activities at work help improve financial performance in the context of North American softwood sawmilling industry. Similarly, Rubera&Kirca (2012) investigated the association between organizational innovativeness and business performance using the Pearson product moment correlation, the result of the study indicates that organizational innovativeness positively influence both market and financial positions. It was revealed that this relationship is more stronger in both smaller and larger institutions (Rubera&Kirca, 2012).

OECD (2012), in examination of the relationship between innovation and economic development discovered that innovation is not limited to high-technology products but encompass the building of capacity to address the local conditions of a nation. Innovativeness and innovation help drive economic development in the areas of drinking water, reduction of hunger and diseases, health care, literacy etc. This is largely achieved through global collaboration among private and public institutions (OECD, 2012). Similarly, Szimai, Naude&Goedhlys (2015), studied the relationship between entrepreneurship, innovation and economic development. The result of the study shows that entrepreneurship contribute to economic development through the mediating influence of innovativeness and innovations which encompass new products, new services, new market entry, new business process developments etc. Innovativeness is an important driver of entrepreneurial marketing orientation in the 21st century dynamic business environment.

Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is positively related with economic growth. This is empirically investigated by Braunerhjelm (2010), who studied the association between entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth. The study made use of survey data with the

help of Pearson product moment correlation. The result of the study indicates that entrepreneurial orientation implemented through the mediating influence of knowledge acquisition and knowledge using, innovativeness and innovation drive successful organizational growth. This findings is also supported with the works of Adim, Tamunomiebie&Akintokunbo (2018), the scholars investigated the relationship between entrepreneurship innovativeness and business performance in the context of women entrepreneurs in business. The study made use of spearman's rank correlation and the result indicates that entrepreneurial innovativeness has positive and significant relationship with business performance in the context of women entrepreneurs in Rivers State. Entrepreneurial innovativeness of women entrepreneurs brings about successful performance of their business. From the expositions above, entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness implemented by institutional managers enhance economic development of LGA's in Rivers State.

CONCLUSION

Globalization and liberalization of markets has made the business environment to be more dynamic, competitive and ever-changing. Markets are becoming more globalized with attendant cut throat competition. This competition is inherent in all industries and sectors including competition among nations. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness help companies and institutions to respond to these changes in the business space in order to provide superior and differentiated products and services to the markets so as to outperform the competition, attain sustainable competitive advantage in the firm's industry or sector.

Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness implemented by firms brings about organizational performance. This has been statistically proved in the empirical literature. Companies, institutions and nations invest in innovative activities which crops up new products, new services, new markets, new production technologies and processes, new management culture and orientation etc, which bring about institutional success and performance. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness help in the area of competition among nations. Nations with innovative behaviours and activities attract better development and are more distinct relative to peer nations. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness adapts the organizations to markets and industry changes, provide superior offerings to the market in order to attain sustainable competitive advantage. Entrepreneurial marketing innovativeness is a laudable predictor of institutional performance. We therefore recommend that managers in local government in Rivers State should employ entrepreneurial marketing innovative activities to bring about sound public service delivery in their local government areas.

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