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TABLE OF CONTENT

CONTENTS  
PAGE

Kwame Nkrumah's Idea of Revolution for Reconstruction in Post-Colonial Africa: Its Challenges and Prospects AFISI, OSENI TAIWO	1- 17
On Politics, Values and Organisational Performance For Sustainable Development in Nigeria OLUWATOYIN FREDERICK IDOWU	18- 33
Methodological Issues in Social Science: A Critical Examination AKANDE, MICHAEL AINA	34- 49
Westernization, Neo-Colonialism and Underdevelopment In Africa: Implications for the Degeneration of African Social Values WAZIRI BABATUNDE ADISA	50- 74
Federalism and Democratic Governance in Nigeria: A Critique of Neo-Regional Federal Structure MOSHOOB BABATUNDE ABDUL-WASI	75- 95
Dimensions of Entrepreneurs Behaviour in Nigeria D.J.K OGUNDELE Ph. D, D.T. OLAJIDE, S.O. ASHAMU *	96-116
BOOK REVIEW OLURANTI SAMUEL	117-126

# DIMENSIONS OF ENTREPRENEURS BEHAVIOUR IN NIGERIA

By

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## Abstract

*This paper presents empirical findings on the behaviour of two groups of indigenous entrepreneurs in Nigeria. The groups are made up of 74 Private Entrepreneurs (PEs) and 70 National Directorate of Employment Assisted Entrepreneurs (NDEAEs) making a total of 144 (n = 144) entrepreneurs. At the environmental level it was found that social relations, political factor and technology affected entrepreneurial behaviour. At the personal level there was partial support for the effect of training and development on behaviour. Innovationness and previous work experience were found to have affected entrepreneur's behaviour. At the internal Entrepreneurial organization level entrepreneurial behaviour was significantly affected by structure of organization, methods of communication and interpersonal relations. There was partial support for the effects of delegation of authority on behaviour. There was no support for the prediction on the use of subordinates' initiative in decision-making.*

## Introduction

Entrepreneurship had been described in terms of various types of behaviour varying from innovation, thrifts, flexibility, dominance and need for power to mention on just a few (Ogundele, 2000). Here is reported some of the factors that influence the behaviour of their entrepreneurial personality. In addition, the patterns of behaviour exhibited by a group of indigenous entrepreneurs in changing situations and circumstances are also reported.

## Conceptual Framework

On a broader scale, Kelly (1980) stated that organizational behaviour is the systematic study of the nature of organization, how they begin, grow, develop and their effect on individual members, constituent groups, other organizations and their effect on individual members, constituent groups, other organizations and the larger institutions.

A number of behaviours have been associated with entrepreneurs. Collins and Moore (1970) in analyzing entrepreneurial behaviour found them to be innovative, creative, undertaking risk of uncertainty and employing flexible behaviour in running their organizations.

Drucker (1985), states that entrepreneurship is behaviour rather than personality traits. In addition, its foundation lies in concepts and theory rather than in instinct. He examined innovative behaviour from the point of the development of business idea, to that of organization of resources to convert the idea to tangible product or rendering of services. Finally, he notes that it also involves the marketing of such products or services.

Stevenson and Gumpert (1985) also discussed entrepreneurship in terms of creativity, risk taking, dynamic flexibility and growth orientation. They suggested that entrepreneurship should be viewed in the context of ranges of behaviour. The question is "what determines behaviour of entrepreneurs"?

## Determinations of Behaviour of Entrepreneurs

A number of factors that influence people's behaviour have been identified. The influence of values, attitudes, belief and perception on behaviour of people and vice versa and had been highlighted by several writers (Robeach, 1972; Ertle and O'Keefe, 1982; Staw, Bell and Clausen, 1986; Sekaran, 1989; and Meredith, Nelson and Neck, 1991 & Osuagwu, 2006).

Ado (2006) presented a list of several dimensions at the environmental and personal levels that have direct influences on entrepreneurial behaviour across varying culture. They include societal values, political process, economic structure, training and development, experience etc.

context of an individual, including his family, the various groups with which he/she is a part, play important role in the shaping and maintaining of his behaviour.

Stevenson and Gumpert (1985) and Aborisade (2006) noted that external pressures stimulate opportunity recognition. These pressures include changes in (a) technology, (b) consumer economics, (c) political action and (d) social values.

Singh (1986) and Ogundele (2006) expressed the view that entrepreneurial behaviour is a function of personal characteristics and environmental factors. These factors include: (a) social/psychological aspect, (b) finance, (c) material availability and (d) technology availability and applicability.

Lewin (1989) considered behaviour as a function of: (i) the field that exists at the time that the behaviour occurs, (ii) the situation as a whole from which differentiated the component parts, (iii) the concrete person in a concrete situation, which relates to the needs of the individual.

### Behavioural Acts

The determinants of behaviour of entrepreneurs' organizations could be grouped into here broad classes. These are; the external factors, the individual entrepreneurial characteristics and the internal structural arrangements or elements of the enterprises. It is the internal structural elements, which are tagged, behavioural acts in this paper. These behavioural acts include communication, decision-making, delegation of authority, and interpersonal relations inside the entrepreneur's organization.

Lindzey (1954) viewed communication as the transmission of stimuli for the purpose of modifying behaviour. That purposive communication is an act done with the intention of eliciting response. Mintzberg (1991) described the use of much personal contact by the entrepreneurs, which will involve face-to-face mode of communication.

Decision-making is viewed as choosing between alternatives to achieve a desired goal in an organization. March and Simon, (1958), treated decision-

making as a process of decision-making patterns. Legitimate authority implies the willingness on the part of subordinates to obey rules, laws of orders, because they agree with the system by which the rules, laws or ranks were arrived at (Schein, 1983).

The delegation of authority by the entrepreneurs to one of his/her subordinates means that the delegates is given the right to dictate to other subordinates and in some cases, act on behalf of the entrepreneur.

Interpersonal relations center on the types of interactions that are evolved inside the entrepreneur's organization. The absence of interpersonal compatibility can substantially reduce production in organization (Schein, 1983). Thus entrepreneurs were found to have employed people that were loyal to them at the same time exercised high degree of control over the operations of their organizations (Mintzberg, 1991). Olokoyo (2002) presents many factors that affect the behaviour of entrepreneurs based on practice of entrepreneurs, ranging from training and development to motivation.

This paper presents the relevant personal level and the environmental factors that affected the behavior of indigenous entrepreneurs. The behavioural acts inside the entrepreneurs' organization will also be focused upon in this paper.

### Study of Focus

This paper re-examines some of the salient findings in the behaviour of two groups of indigenous entrepreneurs in Nigeria (Ogundele, 2000). The groups were made up of 74 private entrepreneurs (PEs) and 70 National Directorate of Employment Assisted entrepreneurs (NDEAEs) in Lagos, Oyo and Osun States. The total is 144 entrepreneurs (n = 144 respondents). We here, examine their behaviour and the factors that were responsible for exhibited behaviour.

### Entrepreneur Behaviour

The behavioural analysis has been classified into two stages. These are: (i) Behaviour preparation stage, (ii) Behaviour practice stage.



## Behavioural Preparation Stage

This relates to pre-emergence learning stage, what were supposed to be learnt include: feelings, values, motives, sentiments, activities, practices and many more, in interaction with others, in given environments.

The two groups of entrepreneurs being reported had varied pre-emergence nurturing experiences. These were within the following environments: (i) The family of orientation, (ii) Educational institutions and training, (iii) background, (iv) various social groups including religious associations, (v) influence of mentors, (vi) Economic environment and urban experience, (vii) Parents occupations, and (viii) Individual previous work experiences.

These environments singly and collectively gave the entrepreneurs the needed up bringing, training and development, exposure, support and experiences that equipped them to become entrepreneurs.

## The Behaviour Practice Stage

The entrepreneur behaviour practice stage relates to the actions and interactions of entrepreneurs, inside and outside their organizations, as they unfolded in entrepreneurial practice. First, considerations were given to the behaviour generated by the entrepreneurs in reaction to the environmental determinants, e.g. social relations, political factor, and technology. Next are personal level factors e.g. training and development, previous work experiences and innovation. Twelve operational hypotheses relating to entrepreneurial behaviour practice were tested.

Thus at the behaviour practice stage, two phases are involved (a) behaviour that is generated as a response to external factors. (b) behavioural practices inside the entrepreneur's organization or behavioural acts. The behavioural acts include the following: (i) Structural elements of entrepreneurs organization, (ii) Methods of communication, (iii) Decision-making processes, (iv) Patterns of relationships with others by the entrepreneurs and (v) Delegation of authority.

## Methods

The research design employed was field survey with the used of personal interview, observation and structured questionnaires for data collection. Ten independent variables used in the research were: social relations, political factor, technology, economic environment, training and development, formal education, innovativeness, working experience, structural elements and demographic data.

The dependent variable used in the research was behaviour of entrepreneur, defined as the overt and covert actions of the entrepreneur, which were responses to the internal and external stimuli of the entrepreneurial organization.

The structured instrument employed for data collection was essentially self-designed (Ogundele, 2000). It focused on the ten independent variables listed above. The questions on each section had dichotomous options and open-ended question. However questions on technology and structural elements of entrepreneurial organization employed three point Likert type of scale.

## Data Collection

Three broad methods of data collection were employed. These were (a) case study/observation (b) Personal interview and (c) questionnaire methods. The research was focused on processes, therefore, there were no needs for rigid restrictions on the choice of states and sample of respondents. This is because processes remain constant and processes constitute behaviour.

## Sampling Procedure

Judgemental sample was used in the case of both Private Entrepreneurs (PEs) and National Directorate of Employment Assisted Entrepreneurs (NDEAEs). The research relied on the opinion of the officials on ground at the stage offices of the Nigerian Association of small-scale industrialists (NASSI) with respect to PEs. He also used the knowledge of the state branch officers of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in selecting the functioning beneficiary organizations with respect to NDEAEs.

## Data Analysis Procedures

Summary statistics of frequencies and percentages were employed to describe patterns of information obtained from the entrepreneurs.

**Chi-Square Test:** This was employed to test for the significance of responses of the entrepreneurs to the dichotomous items of the instrument.

**Cramer's V:** It was used to test for the correlation between pairs of variables, by employing the computed  $X^2$  relating to them.

**Content Analysis:** This was employed on the open-ended questions to test for the overall significance of the reason behind reported perception of the entrepreneurs.

**Spearman's Coefficient of Rank Correlation:** This was employed to determine the correlation of related items in the instrument.

**T-Test:** It was employed to determine the level of significance of the calculated Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation.

**Hypotheses:** Twelve hypotheses were tested on entrepreneurial behaviour. They are contained in summary of findings presented in table 1 below.

## Limitations of the Methods

The study was limited to Oyo, Osun and Lagos State of Nigeria, this limits the power of generalization of results that were obtained.

The study is also survival biased, it focused only on active entrepreneurs. The sampling method produced convenient sample for both groups.

Multiple methods were used for data collection, involving case study, observation, interview and questionnaire. But they were used based on necessity. The measures employed were perceptual. However, this is characteristic of behavioural researchers.

Despite its limitations, it is expected that the study will contribute to knowledge and literature on entrepreneurship.

## Findings and Discussion on Entrepreneurial Behaviour

**Social Relations-** It was found that relations had partially significant and positive effect on entrepreneurial behaviour. Behaviour practice is first brought into focus with the establishment of social network in the entrepreneur's organization (Frost and Egri, 1990). The taking up of entrepreneurial role is a behavioural practice of some values and attitudes that had been acquired. After the establishment of the entrepreneurial organizations, the entrepreneurs behind them still take up membership of related occupational group, e.g. Master Bakers Associations and Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industrialists. This was to take advantage of opportunities of access to source of supply of raw materials and fund. This finding further confirms reported influence of social environment on the behaviour of entrepreneurs by Stinchombe (1965), Collins and Moore (1970) and Osoba (1987). Bello (1992) emphasized the importance of behavioural consideration in the management of indigenous entrepreneurs organizations.

**Political Dimension -** Political factor was found to have significant effects on entrepreneurial behaviour. Following the introduction of the Indigenisation Decree in 1972, some of the already established entrepreneurs claimed that the favourable environment then gave them opportunity to expand their existing operations or to diversify into new investment areas. Concerning expansion and diversification, which were centered on behaviour practice, only one organization expanded its operation in 1961 before the Decree, came into existence. The rest expanded or diversified between early and middle 1980s when the political environments were more favourable.

Also there was a ban on the importation of wheat flour between 1986 and November 1992. The entrepreneurs in the Bakery Industry claimed that this forced many operators in that sector to close down their operations. Withdrawal behaviour was thus exhibited. Later, some of them embarked on smuggling of processes wheat flour into the country or in some cases patronized smugglers of wheat flour. This was to ensure the survival of their organizations. In exhibiting survival behaviour they committed acts of indiscipline.

The issues highlighted above served to confirm Iyanda (1988), Oni (1988), Ogundele and Oni (1995) and Ogundele and Opeifa (2004), observation that the political/legal environments were sometimes restrictive and sometimes facilitating.

**Technology-** Hypothesis on adaptation of technology was also confirmed. In fact, one of the features of the food processing industry in which this study was conducted is its adaptation of technology. The technologies in use ranged from very crude simple system to highly sophisticated automatic production system. In practice it was common for entrepreneurs to shift from one level or mode of production to another.

This feature of permissive technology was reported by Kilby (1965), which was also noted by Ngoddy (1988) with specific reference to the food processing industry. Ekpo-Ufot (1988) in emphasizing the importance of technology in relation to entrepreneurship had called for the development of technological innovators.

Table 1 below summarizes the twelve hypotheses that were tested on entrepreneurial behaviour in this study.

Table 1: Hypotheses on Behaviour of Entrepreneurs

S/N	Hypotheses	Results	Literature	Summary of finding
1	That social relation will be perceived to have significant and positive effects on the behaviour of entrepreneurs	The results support the hypothesis 82.4% of the PEs & 92.8% of the NDEAEs perceived social relations importance. From content analysis 62.13% of PEs & 61.65% of NDEAEs strongly support the perception $X^2$ not significance	The literature suggests strong support for this hypothesis	The finding is consistent with literature. Attitudes values, beliefs and feelings, which are the building blocks of behaviour, are formed in given social environment.
2	That the political factor will be perceived to have positive on entrepreneurial behaviour	The results confirmed the hypothesis. $X^2$ of 19.35 is significant at 1 degree of freedom 67.13 of PEs & 67.5% of NDEAEs support positive effect of political legislation	The literature strongly supports this hypothesis	It affects several independent variables apart from the dependent ones. It could be used to influence changes in the others
3a	That indigenous entrepreneurs will often adapt imported technology in use in their production processes in the SAP environment	The result support hypothesis relating technology to behaviour 79.73% PEs and 80% of NDEAEs positively support the hypothesis	Literature suggest that entrepreneur in small-scale industry will employ adaptive and substitution behaviour in relation to available technology	The findings are consistent with the literature. The implication of this is that small-scale organization could be a fertile ground in the development of indigenous technology
3b	That indigenous entrepreneur will often substitute locally available materials and parts for imported one in a SAP environment.	The result confirms hypothesis relating technology to behaviour $X^2$ of 15.71 is significant at one degree of freedom	Literature suggest that entrepreneur in small-scale industry will employ adaptive and substitution behaviour in relation to available technology	The findings are consistent with the literature. The implication of this is that small-scale organization could be a fertile ground in the development of indigenous technology
4	That entrepreneur will employ innovative behaviour to survive	The result confirms the hypothesis 50% of the combined group emphasized innovativeness. $X^2$ of 8.95 is significant at $P < 0.01$ level of significance. Cramer's value of .24 shows fairly strong	The literature suggests that entrepreneurs will employ innovative behaviour to survive	The finding is consistent with the literature

	necessary training and development will be perceived to have significant and negative effect on entrepreneurial behaviour	hypothesis 95.13 of the combined group perceived negative effects of lack of training and development content analysis shows Crammer's that 91.7% of the combined groups stated reasons for the negative effects	also suggest that because of increased awareness that is associated with training and development and increased skills lack of it will have negative effect on behaviour	supports hypothesis prediction. It is a fruitful approach influencing change in pure positive manner
6	That working career experience will have positive effect on entrepreneurial behaviour	The result confirms that hypothesis, $X^2 = 55.25$ is significant at $df = 1$ , $V = 0.1$ which show very strong relationship	Prior studies suggest positive relationship between previous working experiences and entrepreneurial behaviour	Finding is consistent with literature. They tend to suggest the need for practical experience in work place as a way positively influencing behaviour
7	That entrepreneur organization will exhibit simple structure	The data supported the hypothesis in all respects 86.00 of the combined group expressed support	Literature suggests that entrepreneurial organization will be simple creating room for dynamic flexibility	Finding is consistent with literature. The implication of dynamic flexibility that it allows for innovative behaviour to be engaged on
8	That entrepreneurs will often use face-to-face method of communication inside their organization	The results confirmed the hypothesis content analysis result of 95.71% and observed patterns of communication support the hypothesis	Prior studies suggest that entrepreneurs will use face-to-face method of communication inside their organization.	The finding is consistent with literature. The implication of this is that it ensures clearer understanding and clarification. Thus ensuring proper functioning of organization.
9	That entrepreneurs will have frequent work time contact with subordinate	The results supported the hypothesis. The contacts time with subordinate ranged from 21 - 100% for PEs and 61-80% for the NDEAEs. Contacts time with other groups were less than 20% for both groups	The literature suggests that entrepreneurs will be in close contact with subordinates to ensure for effective monitoring of operations	The finding is consistent with and confirms the literature. The implication is that it ensures for direct control of operations. The result is strong influence of entrepreneurs on all activities of their organizations.

That entrepreneurs will not often use subordinates initiatives in decision-making	The result contradicts hypothesis production. It is on the opposite of the hypothesis prediction 77% of the PEs and 55.7% of the NDEAEs often used subordinates initiatives in decision-making $X^2 = 10.85$ is significant, $df = 1$ , $V = 0.27$ it shows fairly strong relationship	The finding contradicts the literature. The literature suggests that entrepreneurs will not use subordinate initiative in decision-making	Literature suggests entrepreneur is the sole decision-making. This finding reflect the unique feature of the food processing industry that allows for use of subordinates initiatives in some aspects of decision-making process
That entrepreneur will not frequently utilized suggestions scheme	The predicted relationship is not supported by result. 52% of the combined group made use of suggestions	The literature suggests that entrepreneurs will not frequently utilize suggestion by subordinates	The finding is not consistent with the literature. It shows that entrepreneur is not in total control as literature suggest
That entrepreneur will not delegate high level of authority to subordinate	The hypothesis is partially supported by result, 56.8% of the PEs, 74.3% of the NDEAEs and 61.28% of the combined groups delegated moderate level of authority to subordinate	Literature suggests that the entrepreneur assumes total control of his/her organization.	The finding is consistent with literature. The implication is that the entrepreneur alone dictates the pace and scope of operations in his/her organization

Key  
 $X^2$  = Chi-square  
 $df$  = Degree of Freedom  
 $V$  = Crammer's V

Source: Adopted from Ogundele O.J.K. (2000) Determinant of Entrepreneurial Emergence, Behaviour and Performance in Nigeria, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Lagos, Akoka.

### Personal Level Factors Determined Behaviour Practice

#### Working Experience

Working career experiences were perceived to have positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial behaviour. This confirms Drucker (1985) statement that entrepreneurship is behaviour. The physical establishment of an entrepreneur's organizations in many of the cases of the PEs of this study was a concrete demonstration that the entrepreneurs were practicing acquired skills and knowledge.

Such skills and knowledge were acquired during the period of apprenticeship or by working with other organizations. In the case of food processing industry, the permissive technology and low investment threshold for entry into the industry, aided entrepreneurs in practicing acquired skills. This finding confirms Harris (1971) finding that the established "entrepreneur" in his employment of his skilled journeymen is only training his soon to be competitors. This also emphasizes the facts that budding entrepreneurs in the food processing industry often find it not particularly difficult to practice the skill acquired through working experience. Therefore, working career experiences were directly linked with practice.

### **Training and Development**

The hypothesis on training and development in relation to behaviour received partial support. This was based on the perception of the entrepreneurs who expressed the view that lack of training and development resulted in poor performance. Therefore, the effect of training and development is expressed in behavioural practice of performance. The objective of training and development is in part, behavioural change. This could best be expressed in performance. This confirmed the finding of Kunkel (1971), and Singh (1986) on the influence of training and development on behaviour.

### **Innovation Behaviour**

Innovation was found to be an important determinant of entrepreneurial behaviour.

From the responses to the research questionnaires, interaction with and observation of the entrepreneurs' behaviour, innovation was among the most important factors that were responsible for the level of performance achieved by the entrepreneurs. Innovation had been the most common reaction or behaviour of the entrepreneurs of this study. The use of innovative behaviour was reported by 59 out of the 74 PEs and by 56 out of the 70 NDEAEs of this study.

The specific innovation may involve positive or negative behaviour. There were cases of some entrepreneur in the bakery industry who took to smuggling of or patronized smugglers of wheat flour. This was when the importation of the product was under legal ban. They thus committed acts of indiscipline.

Also many of the entrepreneurs in the bakery industry in Oyo and Osun States, employed innovative survival strategy, by responding positively to environmental threats when costs of raw materials in the bakery industry became prohibitively high. They changed from production of bakery products to the processing of other food products e.g. corn and flour milling. Some of them adapted the use of their production equipment into rice and garri processing. As a result of these actions, these groups of entrepreneurs were able to survive instead of folding up their operations. This again, confirms Kilby (1965) finding and Ngoddy (1988) characterization of innovation in the food processing industry.

A particular entrepreneur in Eruwa, Oyo State focused on technological innovation. As at the time of this study, he produced for sale, various milling machines, maize Shellers and several spare parts for machines used in the food processing industry.

There were also cases of marketing innovators. For example a group of entrepreneurs in the bakery industry in Ibadan, established selling stands for bread along the Ibadan end of Lagos Ibadan expressway. This started around 1987-1988 when patronage from consumers of bread in Ibadan metropolis was low. The stands were established to capture the patronage of long distance travelers and are still place up till now.

There was also an administrative innovator, who evolved his own distinctive style of informal relationship. The members of his organization see themselves as a family unit. This study of dealing was extended to the clients of the organization. This particular organization had survived for over four decades as at the time of the study, it had also expanded by establishing more production units.

Innovation had been shown here as exhibited behaviour by entrepreneurs. This finding confirms reported influence of innovation on organizational behaviour (Kilby, 1965; Swayne and Tucker, 1973; Kimberly, 1979; Rothwell, 1983; Smith, 1990; Ogundele and Oni, 1995; Ogundele, 2005).



### Behaviour within the Entrepreneurs Organization

Six hypotheses were tested with respect to behaviour inside the entrepreneur's organization (see Table 1 above 8-10). Four of them were predicted by the hypotheses. The two exceptions were with respect to the use of subordinates' initiatives in decision-making and the use of suggestions scheme by the entrepreneurs. It was found that entrepreneurs often made use of subordinates' initiatives in decision-making contrary to hypothesis prediction. This finding contradicted Kets de Vries (1985), and Mintzberg (1991) reports that the entrepreneurs were usually the sole decision maker. However, Connor (1992) found that different levels of participation in decision-making were related to organizational size, skill level and type of profit orientation. It was also found that entrepreneurs frequently utilized suggestions scheme.

On the structure of the entrepreneur's organization, it was found that they had simple structures. They were built around the personal needs and orientations of their owners and staffed by people loyal to them (Mintzberg, 1991 and Adeleke, Ogundeke and Oyenuga, 2004). Harris (1968) reported similar finding, which ensured quick decision-making.

It was found that entrepreneurs often used face-to-face method of communication inside their organization. The reason was to ensure that there exists a direct control over subordinates. Rothwell (1983) and Stevenson and Gumpert (1985) noted that this method of communication resulted in efficient internal communication.

It was also found that entrepreneurs spent a greater percentage of their work time contact with their subordinates in interpersonal relations. The works of Stevenson and Gumpert (1985) and Kets de Vries (1985) confirmed this reported pattern of relationship.

Lastly, it was found that entrepreneurs did not delegate high level of authority to subordinates. This finding is in line with Kotter (1990) and Mintzberg (1991) on behaviour of leadership of organizations that are charged with coping with fast changes.

This finding confirms reported influence of internal factors on entrepreneurial behaviour (Kilby, 1965; Swayne and Tucker, 1973; Kimberly, 1979; Rothwell, 1983; Smith, 1990; and Ogundeke, 2005).

### Conclusion

It should be noted that social relations, political factor and technology were found to have affected entrepreneurial behaviour. Therefore developing positive social, political and technological values in training programmes for entrepreneurs could produce entrepreneurs with focus on excellence. This was reported by Nishikawa (2003) while discussing the influence of training and development on the practice of Japanese entrepreneurs.

It was also reported that entrepreneurs employed both and negative innovation strategies for survival. Again this calls for emphasizing values of positive behaviour in entrepreneurial training programme. Need for business ethics must be emphasized (Ogundeke, 2005).

The nature of industry and technology in respect of the food processing industry was shown to have affected the delegation of authority and decision-making process. This is contrary to reported findings by Singh (1986), Osoba (1987), and Mintzberg (1991), especially in the developing country. Thus, emphasizing industrial and local peculiarities. Two broad stages of behaviour identified in this study, call for policy programmes aimed at the development of entrepreneurs to be designed to include the homes, schools, religions and social groups and entrepreneurial development centres.

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## BOOK REVIEW

**TITLE:** Ideology Posturing and Trade Union Leadership in Nigeria: The Story of Comrade Ali Chiroma. Mini  
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### PREAMBLE:

Leadership is an array of qualities or character possessed by a person that makes others to emulate him and look up to him for purpose, direction and fulfillment. Trade unions like any other organisation regard leaders as a requisite resource. Without appropriate leadership, most organisations will have difficulty in realising the goals for which they are established. Such leader-follower-ship results in pursuing and achieving common goals. A leader therefore helps to mobilize his followers. He influences people. He is goal-driven; someone who has an orientation in common with those who rely upon him for leadership; someone who has people willing to follow him.

Trade union leaders without vision cannot be effective, and may face extinction with time. The difference between progressive trade union and unprogressive one is the operating vision of the leaders. Any trade union without visionary leaders lives in danger of stagnation, decline and eventual death. If therefore vision is the power behind effective union leadership, it is also the driving force that propels any serious minded labour leader.

This book is an autobiography of the role of Comrade Ali Chiroma as a trade union leader, his acquired leadership training, and the various stages at which he served, up to his tenure as the President of the Nigerian Labour Congress.

The book; **Ideology Posturing and Trade Union Leadership in Nigeria: The Story of Comrade Ali Chiroma**, is classified into seven parts which include: Prologue; The Man Ali Chiroma; Initial Involvement in Trade Union; Emergence as Labour Leader no 1; The Benin Stalemate; Winding Down; and Epilogue.

### I. The Prologue

This section gave a brief history of trade unionism in Nigeria with emphasis on the effects and impacts of industrial revolution as the catalyst of present civilization and modernity. It emphasizes on the fact that capitalism or capitalist ideology characterizes today's processes of industrialization and industrial changes. According to the author, industrialization was and is still the root and the origin of paid employment. With the introduction of the factory system, workers began to experience industrial displacement, unfamiliar environment and alienation from the sweat of their labour. The result of this was the emergence of labour and trade unions formed globally, regionally and countrywide. The author of this book acknowledged these landmark efforts of modern workers accentuated by increasing forces of industrialization.

Apart from mentioning the various roles of trade unions, which include economic, social, political etc. the author also traced the rise of trade unionism in Nigeria to the 17th century Euro-African trade, colonial administration and other commercial concerns, which also served as the harbinger of money-market which replaced the existing trade.

On ideological issues, the author stated the fact that ideological inclinations were more evident in the activities and positions taken by trade union federations than those of individual unions. Apart from the ideological polarization within the trade union movements, the colonial project also made trade union to be more ideological. In addition, governments intervention on trade union matters, which resulted in several banning and proscriptions; international affiliation with various ideological blocks as well as the competition of various ideological groups (socialist/communist; conservatives/ capitalists) were all parts of what make today's Nigeria trade union.

### II. The Man Ali Chiroma: A Biological Sketch

This section traces the background of Ali Chiroma. The significance of him being the only child of his parents was traceable to the high mortality rate prevalent in those days in the North as well as inadequate medical facilities, which unconsciously encouraged Ali Chiroma to seek a career in the medical field. In addition, his work experience in the trade union movement that spanned 34 years, of which he served in various leadership positions.

Professional career and training were exemplified and the management areas that he touched, even where he played pioneering roles, were elucidated. His family life and the relevant training given to his children who are also in the echelon of the society is a point to note.

### III. Initial Involvement in Trade Unionism

This section chronicles Ali Chiroma's involvement in trade unionism and his leadership right from his youth. It shows the traditional role of trade union to recruit members by convincing them of what they stand to benefit. Ali Chiroma, according to the author, was motivated to fight injustice that was the characteristics of the autocratic Northern traditional institutions then. The test of his determination was his success in getting a better salary structure for his union.

### IV. Ali Chiroma as Labour Leader No 1: The Challenge of Leadership

This section emphasizes on the understanding of the context in which Ali Chiroma emerged and the environment in which he worked as the President of the Nigerian Labour Congress. Ali Chiroma emerged and operated during the administration of the 'pretentious nationalistic tendency of General Muhammad Buhari' as well as the period of the face-off with the IMF and the World Bank over the Country's external debt. It is significant to note that during this period, there were no political parties; therefore the role of the opposition to the IMF and the World Bank policies fell on the Nigerian Labour Congress. There was a greater challenge of maintaining, if not surpassing the standard of leadership put in place by Comrade Hassan Sumonu in the face of the then military autocracy, especially when Buhari was overthrown by General Ibrahim Babangida and his warning of "not going to tolerate undue radicalism" During this period in question, the divide, either on ideological stand or public/private sector was visible, despite the unity in the labour movement. The divergent interest and lack of unanimity in the choice of candidate, even within the same grouping is an indication that the struggle for positions in the trade union movement was so much based on ideological foundation. The section also reveals the unfair labour practice adopted by management, especially in promoting an individual and making him/her ineligible to contest union post.

The major achievements of Comrade Ali Chiroma were also explained in this section. These include: the reconciliation of factions within the NLC and the involvement of all affiliated unions in decision-making; the financial growth of the congress as all the unions became alive to their financial obligations; a result of non-interference in their internal affairs; confronting the Buhari/Idiagbon government on the inadequacies of its policies and initiating enlightenment programmes to sensitize the populace on the need for alternatives. The position of labour on the then economic policies in Nigeria as well as the Congress position on the belief by government that SAP was the only solution, was based on a clear knowledge of the devastating effects of such programmes in other countries. Ali initiated workers-students alliance and also experienced several arrests and detentions without trial by the military juntas, as a result of several criticism and mobilizations over unending fuel increase and the cry over subsidy.

The author sees Comrade Ali Chiroma as a man that appreciated criticism. According to the author, Ali Chiroma saw critics of his administration as appreciation of his roles in trade union activities and also as a form of self-assessment. Furthermore, the role of Decree 4, 1996 in weakening the traditional militancy of trade union/NLC was exemplified. This eventually prompted Comrade Ali Chiroma to agitate for broad coalition against military monsters.

This section also beeped at the emergence of the downward trend of the Nigerian trade union movement which was traceable to December 19, 1988 when the new labour leadership were selected by Babangida military junta, which according to the author marked "the end of the golden era of the Nigerian trade union movement in the post-independence period".

**V. The Benin Stalemate: A Stab in the Back?**

This part, which starts with a rhetorical question, further reveals interference of government in trade union politics and government's determination to impose its candidates through sponsorship on the entire members of Nigerian Labour Congress. The plan of government then was to cause a spilt in the NLC so that government could take that as an excuse to hijack the organization on the ground of factionalization. These intrigues were perfected during Chiroma's bid for a second term in office in 1996.

The state's sponsorship of candidates, state intervention to truncate the election of Comrade Ali Chiroma through the hastily National Economic Recovery Emergency Powers (NLC) Order of 1988 on February 29th 1988 in 1976, 1988, and 1996 were points to note. Government eventually infiltrated everywhere and later reconstituted the NLC on her own terms in 1988. The trend was successful because affiliates went back to their respective unions to continue their business.

Significantly, the role of government in the affairs of NLC really revealed that government and its inducement strategies could also clamped down radicals within the unions. It must however be stated that the chicken-out phenomenon in trade union is also in the larger society.

**VI. Winding Down: Life Outside Active Trade Unionism**

This part discusses Ali Chiroma's post retirement activities. Apart from being a consultant, he served as a member of ILO Governing Body as workers' representative until 1990. In addition ILO also engaged him as a consultant to some countries in Africa. He was a member of the Constitutional Conference Committee 1994-96. He also served as the Sole Administrator of NUPENG, a position he was criticized for, though he explained his reasons for accepting the post.

**VII. EPILOGUE Looking Ahead: Addressing the Leadership Challenge in Trade Union Movement.**

This last section of the book discusses the leadership problems in trade union. These problems as identified by the author include: the leaders who are in trade union for their own selfish interests; lack of commitment to the core value of trade unionism; greed; emerging change in lifestyle of leaders etc. The change in people's life style and tastes is affecting trade unions in that many trade union leaders look forward to supplement their legitimate incomes and acquire choice cars as well as houses in cities. Some trade union leaders have been turned into big time traders and contractors' patronizing government. Against this background, therefore, members behave expected to behave like shareholders in a business, active trade union leaders

The author suggested some ways out of these problems trade union is facing. These include:

1. Trade union leaders should be those interested in the development of Nigeria trade union movement. They should be those that will render adequate service and regard the protection of their members' interest as their major occupation.
2. Officials of the union should stop using the union machinery to pursue personal ends.
3. Labour leaders should come to term with the fact that trade unions exist to promote sectional interests the section of the population they happen to organize. This is an essential part of the democratic process.
4. The rank and file members should show more interest, and be more active in union affairs.
5. There is the need for new organizational arrangement. The appointed union officials should be more amenable to the union apparatus and not to make the union members tremble before them. In addition, candidates to be appointed as union officials should demonstrate convincingly an abiding commitment to the ideals of trade unionism.
6. Effective links must be established between the various branches or units of the unions and their national headquarters.
7. The leaders must re-dedicate themselves to the interest of the members and shun careerism, while the rank-and-file members must show more than a passing interest in the affairs of their union.
8. Past labour leaders must be involved at an advisory level.
9. Union leaders should adopt collective democratic leadership style, where the president at whatever level sees him/herself as first among Equals.

## SIGNIFICANCE AND TIMELINESS OF THE BOOK

This book is significant and timely for several reasons:

1. It stands to show that leadership at any level must be transparent and focused. Unnoticed by many, leaders at the helms of affairs of any organization are being observed and thoroughly watched by people not only in their constituencies, but also outside.
2. This book also serves as caution for many leaders, who see the opportunity of leadership not to serve but to be served and make those whose mandate they enjoy, perpetually subservient to them.
3. The trade union history alluded to in this book are refreshing and stand to correct some wrong notions that are held in different quarters.
4. It is motivational for young trade union leaders as they have a lot to learn from the knowledge and experience of Comrade Ali Chiroma as exhibited by the author.
5. The book has brought to the open some hidden truth about trade unionism in Nigeria, especially the leadership styles and the various perspectives of ideology and their implications.
6. It shows how possible it is for one to rise from a simple beginning to the zenith of one's career through self-discipline, determination and Dedication.
7. The differences between the union leaders then, who were serving the purpose of safeguarding workers interest and were dedicated and devoid of the sell-out syndromes with the present leaders, who in most cases serve themselves with little or no regard for those who gave them the mandate were elaborated.
8. Significantly, the role of government in the affairs of NLC really revealed that government and its inducement could also cow radicals within the unions. It must however be stated that the chicken-NLC phenomenon in trade union is also in the larger society.



9. The book also shows how the leadership of trade unions took away the independent power of the rank and file members and transferred it to the hierarchy of the leadership. The leadership during exercises empowered the Nigerian state to interfere with the affairs of the unions.
10. The avariciousness and materialistic tendency of the present trade union leaders, juxtaposed with the selfless leaders like Goodluck, Michael Imoudu and H. P. Adebola is a great contrast.
11. It brings to light the probability of union leaders receiving money/salary from union and also from government because they enjoy government's Appointment.
12. The book reveals the hatred the military administration has against any force or forces that criticize their policies. This is seen in the manner they shun out several decrees to incapacitate trade union in Nigeria.
13. The book further reveals the political role of the NLC, especially their criticism of government's economic policies. These were included in The NLC's suggestions of alternative to Structural Adjustment Programme, as contained in the twenty-eight (28) points to the Political Bureau set up by the Babangida administration.
14. Suggests that leaders at whatever level must believe in, and be Committed to collective leadership, not an ego trip.

## CONCLUSION

The book contains some typographical errors that need to be corrected. It is also important to state that throughout the book, the author never saw any negative thing or role played by Ali Chiroma before, during and after his tenure as the NLC president. This book could then be seen as praise-singing Ali Chiroma. One also need to add here that Ali Chiroma is not alone in this clamour for selfless service, notable trade union leaders like Michael Imoudu, Goodluck and H. P. Adebola were exemplary leaders who made their tremendous impacts in the Nigerian labour movement known. Their roles must have motivated the achievement ascribed to Ali Chiroma.

Furthermore, the author saw nothing bad in Ali's acceptance of the Sole Administratorship of NUPENG, a union he was and had never been a member of. One need to emphasize here that notwithstanding the situation that warranted such appointment, accepting to serve in such capacity under the military dictatorship of that time or any government, contradicts the philosophy on which trade union is built upon. It also contradicts the author's criticism on the actions of the then military government, against NLC and Ali Chiroma. With his acceptance of the post it could be said here that Ali Chiroma undoubtedly benefited from the anti-union practices of the military leader, which was also played against him initially, notwithstanding his explanation for accepting such post.

Generally, the book is a piece that every trade union leader and members should read. It is not only motivational, but also inspiring in terms of its intellectual content. Thus the book challenges every reader into acting positively in whatever position occupied for the sake of posterity.

### INFORMATION TO AUTHORS

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