

Poverty of Education in Nigerian Universities: Paradigm Shift towards the Training of More Emotionally Resilient Graduates

Professor Uwem Essia

Department of Economics ,College of Peace and Social Sciences
Salem University Lokoja, Nigria.

Email:uwemessia@yahoo.co.uk

Accepted 10th March, 2012

Abstract

The world in which we live is constantly evolving. The rules in today's work places and businesses are generally changing; over and above technical expertise, emotionally resilient people are increasingly required. Emotional competencies are fast becoming the critical factors for determining who to hire and who to retain. Potential employees are no longer judged by their conventional academic training and expertise alone, but also by how they handle themselves and others. The new orientation predicts who is most likely to be a star performer either as an employee or in private business. This paper puts out two key arguments: first, excessive fragmentation of academic disciplines and the tendency towards over-specialization at the undergraduate level leave Nigerian graduates emotionally ill-equipped for the new knowledge economy; and second, weak commitment to entrepreneurship education leads to little or no exposure to real-life work and business conditions, making the typical graduates of Nigerian universities emotionally bankrupt. A paradigm shift towards a more holistic and broad-based university education will ensure that Nigerian graduates are internationally competitive and relevant.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, emotional competencies, dramaturgy, servitization of products, emotional resilience, and cultural entrepreneurs.

Introduction

Humanity is transiting from the old industrial society to the new knowledge society. Virtually every product today has a service component to it, and the new consumer has become powerful and demanding. Business theorists increasingly view service provision as a performance or act, sometimes referred to as dramaturgy. The workplace is the 'stage' and the objects that facilitate the service process are called 'prop'. A script is a sequence of behaviour followed by all those involved, including the client(s). Companies have become 'stagers' of events. The ultimate goal is to transform the mind of the customer, to ensure repeat (customer) visits and mentioning of experience gained to others. To achieve this, workers, or actors, in the new workplace need the requisite expertise and competencies. Expertise is the baseline competence, but the star performer needs emotional competencies to achieve excellence on the job.

To gauge the readiness of graduates of Nigerian Universities for star performance in the new knowledge society, focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted for some fresh graduates of Nigerian Universities. The FGD sought to

examine discussants' basic understanding of changing trends, and emotional intelligence's and competencies. The outcome revealed that graduates of Nigerian Universities generally have inadequate understanding of changing trends, and the concepts of emotional competencies. While the world is sliding fast into the new knowledge society, the curriculum and mode of learning in Nigerian Universities still carry the bandwagon of the industrial age. University education in Nigeria needs to be more responsive to changing trends. What needs to be change, particularly, is the mindset - the mental structures of our graduates. With the right mindset it is easy for our university graduates to be creative and emotionally resilient. However, it is difficult to imagine how this can be achieved when university management, lecturers, and administrators appear to be lacking emotional competencies. It is therefore needful to make the entire university system in Nigeria a learning environment.

The paper is divided into 6 sections. Section 1 discusses the transition from the industrial society to the new knowledge society. The second section conceptualizes service marketing in the new economy as dramaturgy, while the third discusses the emotional competence framework. Section 4 summarizes the FGD designed to test basic knowledge of emotional competence and other characteristics of the new economy. Section 5 makes the case for a paradigm shift in curriculum development and method of training adopted in Nigerian Universities, and Section 6 makes concluding remarks.

1. From the Industrial Societies to the New Knowledge Societies

We are living in a chaotic transition period to a new age defined by hyper- competition, rampant change, faster flow of information and communication, increasing business complexity, and pervasive globalization. The new environment is also characterized by far-reaching technological advances, and consumers whose desires and expectations are revised with the speed of a television commercial. The key forces driving today's global economy are:

- knowledge - intellectual capital as a strategic factor, a set of understandings used by people to make decisions or take actions that are important to governments and business organizations;

- change - continuous, rapid and complex, generates uncertainty and reduces predictability;
- globalization - in R&D, technology, trade, finance, communication and information, which has resulted in opening of economies, global hyper-competition, and interdependency of businesses.

Today's new knowledge economy is different from the old industrial economy in a number of ways that are summarized in Table 1.

- Economy - the industrial society is characterised by steady, linear, and predictable changes, trade is supply-driven, production is dominated by large monopolies, and mass marketing is dominant. But the new knowledge society is volatile, with fast and unpredictable changes, globalized competition, and differentiated products.

- Enterprise - the pace of business in the industrial economy is slow and tends towards stability, profit is the main measure of success, strategic planning is emphasized, and physical capital is the key growth driver. The pace of business in the new economy is fast and customers' expectations are rising, human capital and ICT are the major drivers of growth, and innovation processes are continuous and systemic.
- Workforce - the work places in the industrial economy are dominated by mono-skilled workforce and the working environment is streamlined and standardized; high male population and the preferred workers need sound academic qualifications and technical expertise. In the new work places, the preferred organizational structure is cooperative. Emphasis is on self empowerment, and gender biases are minimal. Star performance in the new work places requires flexibility

Table 1; Transition from the Industrial Society to the New Knowledge Society

CHARACTERISTICS	OLD INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY	NEW KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY
ECONOMY	Development processes slow, predictable and linear; large scale production dominant and trade is supply-driven; the scope for competition is local and mass marketing is the trend.	Development is volatile, fast, and unpredictable; markets are customer-driven and the life span of technologies is short. The key economy drivers are innovative, entrepreneurial, and knowledge based firms. Competition is global and products are differentiated.
ENTERPRISE	Pace of business slow with and emphasis on stability; profit is the main measure of success; strategic planning is dominant; business management dominated by command-control; and capital is the key growth driver.	Pace of business appreciably fast with ever rising customer expectations; the emphasis is on change management; the business approach is dynamic and opportunity driven; the key drivers of growth are people, knowledge, and capabilities; the key innovation drivers are ICT, e-business, and service; and Innovation processes are continuous and systemic
WORKFORCE	The organizational structure is vertical, with high male population; high proportion of semi-skilled or unskilled; the educated workforce is mono-skilled and standardized; the management approach is largely confrontational; workers need a degree, diploma, or a skill.	The organizational structure is cooperative, with emphasis on employee empowerment and self empowerment; minimal gender biases as there are comparable opportunities for men and women; high proportion of graduates that are multi-skilled, flexible with overriding focus on continuous learning; it is not what one knows but how fast an individual is ready to learn; the key factor for success at the work place are cooperation and team work; the employees see their work force as investment.

Source: Adapted from Pine and Gilmore (1999)

1.1. Business Spaces in the New Economy

Business spaces are constantly created in the new economy. Forces like technological breakthroughs, economic growth, market evolution and shift in customer tastes, social changes, and political events can expand or shrink business spaces. These changes re-configure the business perspectives. Unoccupied territory emerges as frontiers for innovators who can utilize it faster than their competitors; the opportunities are great, but so are the competitors and the chance of failure. Today's business environment produces huge discontinuities, creates new industries and destroys old ones, and accelerates global economic growth in the process. The business space, technologies, processes, and business models become more complex as new operators and products are introduced. That is because new characteristics are added frequently, but subtracted infrequently. The dimensions of business space keep increasing - adding complexity and furnishing attractive new opportunities for those who can successfully navigate in the new environment. This complexity also inhibits greater size and greater value creation (Grubor, 2008).

Creativity and entrepreneurship have become indispensable: the ideas, technologies, and capabilities required to satisfy new needs flow freely. The new economy opens unlimited opportunities for small scale entrepreneurs. In 2003 in United States for instance, a staggering 61percent of the listed companies were started at home, and 16percent were initially capitalized with less than US\$1,000. This is inspiring evidence illustrating how much creativity and entrepreneurship has accounted for growth in the new knowledge economy. Generally, technologies that are widely understood are already obsolete, strategies that are static easily get out of use, and training that is certified has become increasingly unnecessary. In addition to the requisite academic qualifications, employers increasingly emphasize practical experience, intelligence, and competencies of potential employees. The keyword in new work places is **LEAD** - Learn, Experiment, Adapt, and Distil. Organizations and individuals you wish to win in today's hyper-competitive marketplace take creativity and entrepreneurship very seriously (Wikipedia 2010:1; Grubor, 2008).

1.2. Consumer Power and Hyper-Competition

The new knowledge society is characterised by over-communication and hyper-competition. What the consumers want (or are made to want) is important to suppliers. People are overwhelmed by choice - choice of information, ideas, products, and services. Information is readily available around the globe at an unprecedented pace, and adjustments in consumers' demand and expectations are as fast as the speed of information flow. Customers, competitors, and innovators have instant access to each other. In the industrial society marketing intermediaries shield the producer from consumers, and marketing exists as a distinct component of the product chain. In the new knowledge economy, hyper-competition merges marketing and production, and increasingly the employees are required to manage the attitude and expectations of customers.

Consumer power surged as a result of the convergence of several long-developing trends. First, product and service scarcity gave way to abundance. A key reason for this is that advancing technology has dramatically increased manufacturing productivity and thereby reduced costs of entry to and expansion of many industries. With hyper-competition more companies now pursue the same customers, who have become more sophisticated and informed buyers and are increasingly able to find and analyse competing products and make intelligent choices. Customers know they have options and the power to exploit them. Customers now aggressively seek alternatives, compare offers, and hold out for the best option.

Further, many products have become virtual commodities and rapid changes in technology have dramatically shortened product life cycles. The result is a lot of similar offerings that make it very difficult for you to differentiate yourself from your competitors; this further empowers consumers. This phenomenon is transforming the supplier-dominated (industrial) economies into the new knowledge economies that are ruled by consumers. Accordingly, knowledge and continuous learning are now critical elements of success. Innovations in marketing and customers' management are as important as innovations in the production techniques. Managing the emotions and quality expectations of workers is as important as making the machines work optimally. Today's firms increasingly need multiple-skilled employees who are both technically and emotionally competent to remain competitive and relevant.

1.3. Knowledge as the Source of Value

In the new economy, the knowledge component of products and services has increased dramatically in importance to become the dominant component of customer value. The primary source of value has shifted from labour and physical capital (the sources and measures of value in the industrial economy) to knowledge. Knowledge in the context of the new economy is beyond the ideas and logic that dominate Hegel's idealism. Idea and logic are still of primary importance, but force and action are added to create products that have market value. In addition, star performers in the new economy need other technical and emotional competencies and capabilities to remain creative, flexible, and highly responsive to changing trends and needs. Star performers must be able to create, find, and combine knowledge into new products and services, to meet the changing needs of their customers, faster than their competitors. What is important now is not how much academic training an individual has or what volume of knowledge he/she has accumulated either as working experience or from training, but how well (or fast) the individual can access the relevant information, and how imaginative and intuitive he/she is able to deconstruct and re-engineer existing information to deal with new and increasingly complex problems, with utmost speed. However, searching for information is eased by the Internet (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

Speed, intangibles and connectivity dominate the social and economic landscape. Corporate performance in the new

economy is increasingly reckoned by speed to market, cycle time from idea generation to new product development, and the number of electronic connections to suppliers, customers and partners. The sources of value and determinants of performance have increasingly become blurred and difficult to measure. The implication of these new forms of exchange is a transfer of power from the producer to the customer. There are multitudes of values present: economic, informational, and emotional. These exchanges increasingly happen so fast that there is no time to translate them into precise monetary terms. Businesses will need to identify these hidden values and think more accurately about their worth before accepting the price proposed. The implications are profound - companies need to think in terms of offers, which involve merging products and services to exploit their knowledge to give customers a value-added experience, and not just selling (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

The Internet equally changes the fundamental nature of doing business and competition. As new ways of building and delivering products and services online emerge, the sphere of competition goes beyond established competitors to include new companies, new innovation, and new ideas or ways of improving existing processes or products. Overall, competition is now based more on capabilities than assets. The new multiple competition dynamics lead to greater instability in the profitability of firms, and the establishment of more firms. Each cycle of competition leads to the creation of new products, services, innovations, and competitors with blinding speed. Competitive pressure is intensifying and firms need more star performers to achieve market leadership and stay on top.

1.4. Servitization of Products

Virtually every product today has a service component to it. The old dichotomy between products and services has been replaced by a service-product continuum, and increasingly many products are transformed into services. Services now account for higher percentage of advanced and newly developed countries economies' GDP than 20 years ago. The current list of Fortune 500 companies contains more service companies and fewer manufacturers than in previous decades. It is increasingly easy for consumers to relate experience of the service with actual quality of life. Experiential knowledge can dictate whether or not to pay for a service, or patronize a service provider continually. But in the old industrial society, direct contact of consumers with producers is restricted. Production and marketing, which are separate roles in the value chain of the industrial economy, are by reasons of hyper-competition and servitization of products, merged and firms in the new economy are required to perform both alongside. Employees in the new firms therefore need a combination of technical knowledge and expertise (whether in engineering, economics, medicine, education, etc.) and the soft skills or competencies in marketing, brand value, psychology, and the interpretation and management of costumers' emotions. The soft skills have indeed become more important because users' experience with the brand

(i.e., the service value they expect) is far more important than the technical characteristics of the product (Wikipedia, 2010:1).

Services constitute an increasing share of GDP in low income countries like Nigeria, and as their economies continue to develop the importance of services in the economy continue to grow. The service economy is also key to growth, for instance it accounted for 47% of economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa over the period 2000-2005 (industry contributed 37% and agriculture 16% in the same period). This means that recent economic growth in Africa relies as much on services as on natural resources. Employment is also adjusting to the changes and people are leaving the agricultural sector for new jobs in the service sector. This job creation capacity of the service sector is particularly useful as it is capable of providing employment for low skilled labour in the tourism and retail sectors, thus benefiting the poor in particular and representing an overall net increase in employment. The service economy in developing countries is most often made up of the following: financial services, tourism, distribution, health, and education. The export potential of many of these activities is already well understood (e.g. in tourism, financial services and transport) and new opportunities in other sectors are emerging (Wikipedia, 2010:1).

Growth in the service economy also facilitates growth in the rest of the economy. Services such as energy, telecommunications and transportation are important to all sectors of the economy. Financial services facilitate transactions and investment. Health and education services contribute to a fit and well-trained workforce, and legal and accountancy services sustain an institutional framework required to run a successful market economy. It follows from the foregoing that the hopes of getting jobs by most Nigerians now and in the future lie in the service sector. Equally, that many Nigerians are currently unemployed or under employed is because the service sector is not growing fast enough. Nigeria's dream of attaining vision 20: 2020 lies in the capacity to generate and sustain service-led growth. This, among other things, requires a workforce that is equipped with the relevant expertise and competencies.

2. Service Marketing as Dramaturgy

Service marketing requires creative visualization to effectively evoke a concrete image in the service consumer's mind. The aim is to create and maintain long term customer-based relationships through appropriate encounter. The service encounter is defined as all activities involved in the service delivery process. Many business theorists view service provision as a performance or act, sometimes referred to as dramaturgy. The location of the service delivery is referred to as the 'stage' and the objects that facilitate the service process are called 'props'. A script is a sequence of behaviours followed by all those involved, including the client(s). Role congruence occurs when each actor follows a script that harmonizes with the roles played by the other actors (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

2.1. From Service Marketing to the Experience Economy

Focusing on dramaturgy draws in the 'experience economy' as a new stage of marketing offering. In order to differentiate their products, many companies are moving beyond services into experiences. For instance, banks offer more than savings/lending services; they can handle utility bills, compete with event managers to arrange marriages and birthday parties, and handle clients' travels and holiday's etc. In the experience setting the workers become actors, their visitor/customers are the guests, and the work place is the stage. The experiences offering seeks to provide memorable offering that will remain with the visitor/customer for a long time. To achieve a lasting impression, the guest must be drawn into the offering to participate actively such that they feel a sensation. This requires highly skilled actors who can dynamically personalise each event according to the needs, responses, and the behavioural traits of the guests. Firms are more or less stagers of events (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

The actor needs to dynamically select individual props and sentences in response to the statements, questions and body language of the guests. The guest should have as much or more influence on the actions as the actors, and the actors should be well skilled to ensure that trust and bonding develop. Marketing in the new firms is increasingly adopting the approaches of the entertainment and leisure industries, and marketing is fast becoming memorable events that the customer will want to repeat again and will want to recount to all their friends.

2.2. From Experience to Transformation

Pine and Gilmore (1999) have identified transformations as the outcome of intensification of experience offerings. Transformation is the logical progression of service marketing. Experiences from events however memorable and sensational do wear off with time. Transformations on the other hand make a permanent beneficial change to the customer. For example, a health service provider is able to return terminally ill persons to sound health, a university faculty is able to transform weak students to star performers, an investment adviser is able to turn around a dying company, and a pastor causes an addict to quit drug and become responsible. Whilst experiences are memorable and are sustained for a time, transformations are inspirational and sustainable through time.

2.3. The indispensability of Emotional Competencies

To successfully transform the mental models of customers and retain their patronage, the actors need to be emotionally resilient. This means in addition to acquiring the conventional academic training, successful actors need to be highly imaginative and intuitive, and able to manage their emotions and the emotions of others. Coleman (1998) describes emotional competence as learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work. Emotional intelligence determines our potential for learning the practical skills that are based on its five elements: self awareness, motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and adeptness in relationships. Our emotional competencies show how much of emotional intelligence we have translated into on-the-job capabilities.

For instance, being good at teaching others is an emotional competence based on motivation, and serving others well is based on empathy. Likewise, trustworthiness is a competence based on self regulation.

3. The Emotional Competence Framework

The earliest roots of emotional intelligence can be traced to Darwin's work on the importance of emotional expression for survival and adaptation. But the first use of the term "emotional intelligence" is usually attributed to Wayne Payne's doctoral thesis, *A Study of Emotion: Developing Emotional Intelligence* in 1985. Everyone has some measure of emotional intelligence. But having high emotional intelligence does not guarantee that a person will have learned the emotional competencies that matter for job performance; it means only the individual has excellent potentials to learn them. A person might have self awareness, for example, and yet not have learned the skills based on self-awareness that translates into superior leadership service, marketing or mentoring, or the ability to manage crisis (Wikipedia, 2010:2).

Table 2 summarizes the emotional competence framework as provided in Coleman (1998), but amended here to include entrepreneurship culture. Two sets of emotional competencies are delineated - personal competencies and social competencies. Personal competencies determine how we manage ourselves, while social competencies determine how we handle relationships. Personal competencies generally include self awareness, self regulation, and motivation, while social competencies include empathy, social skills, and entrepreneurship culture. In the new workplace (with emphasis on flexibility, teamwork, and a strong customer orientation), emotional competencies are essential for excellence in every job, and in every part of the world.

Table 2: The Emotional Competence Framework

PERSONAL COMPETENCE'S - determine how people manage themselves.	
Self Awareness: knowing one's internal state, preferences, resources, and intuitions	<p>Emotional Awareness - Recognising one's emotions and their effects.</p> <p>Accurate Self-assessment - Knowing one's strengths and limits.</p> <p>Self Confidence - A strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities</p>
Self-Regulation: managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources.	<p>Self Control - Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check</p> <p>Trustworthiness - Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity</p> <p>Conscientiousness - Taking responsibility for personal performance</p> <p>Adaptability - Flexible in handling change</p> <p>Innovation - Being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information</p>
Motivation: emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals	<p>Achievement Drive - Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence</p> <p>Commitment - Aligning with the goals of the group or organization</p> <p>Initiative - Readiness to act on opportunities</p> <p>Optimism - Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks</p>
SOCIAL COMPETENCES - determine how we handle relationships	
Empathy: awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns	<p>Understanding Others - Sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns</p> <p>Developing Others - Sensing others' development needs and bolstering their capabilities</p> <p>Service Orientation - Anticipating, recognizing, and meeting customers' needs</p> <p>Leveraging Diversity - Cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people</p> <p>Political Awareness - Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships</p>
Social skills: adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others	<p>Influence - Wielding effective tactics for persuasion</p> <p>Communication - Listening openly and sending convincing messages</p> <p>Conflict Management - Negotiating and resolving disagreements</p> <p>Leadership - Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups</p> <p>Change Catalyst - Initiating or managing change</p> <p>Building Bonds - Nurturing instrumental relationships</p> <p>Collaboration and Cooperation - Working with others towards shared goals</p> <p>Team Capabilities - Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals</p>
Entrepreneurship culture: being teachable and adventurous	<p>Pliability - yielding and receptive to new opportunities and knowledge</p> <p>Audacious - bold and venturesome.</p>

Source: Adapted from Coleman (1998).

Coleman (1998) provides empirical evidence to show that emotional competencies make up two thirds or more of the ingredients of 'standout' performance, and finding people who have these abilities, or nurturing them in existing employees, adds tremendous value to an organization's competitiveness

3.1. From Competences to Resilience

The new workplace is dynamic, complex, and uncertain, and to weather the storm and remain relevant the star performer needs to move from just having emotional competencies to being emotionally resilient. Emotional resilience is the ability to take hard knocks, to weather the storm, and continue to value oneself in the face of complex challenges and difficulties, and 'spring back' quickly after a down turn. Three fundamental components of emotional competences are very critical for resilience: self-esteem & self-confidence; self-efficacy & ability to deal with change and adaptation; and entrepreneurship culture.

3.2. The Importance of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a dynamic and social process, where individuals - solely or in cooperation - identify possibilities and utilise them to transform ideas into practical and goal-oriented activities in a social, cultural or economic context. In the capital-based industrial society the entrepreneur is a risk bearer who is expected to gather the traditional factors of production; land, labour, and capital to transform innovations into products. In the new economy, there is a shift from the entrepreneur as a person to entrepreneurship culture, an infrastructure of knowledge that is indispensable for star performance. Entrepreneurship culture enhances the capacity to identify, establish, and maintain the linkages and synergies required for making the clients/customers have the required transformational experience.

Leadbeater and Oakley (2001) argue that entrepreneurship in the new society should be seen as a process, driven by teams of people and involving collaboration across organizations and between sectors like higher education, government, and financial community. This requires an infrastructure of knowledge based on networks and clusters, which government can facilitate through enterprise education in schools, new forms of finance, the linkage of entrepreneurial firms with management skills, and other institutional reforms. Generally, entrepreneurship training offer three sets of skills, as follows:

- Core technical skills - these relate to literacy and numeracy, ICT, and problem solving. They represent the fundamental requirements for operating effectively in a working environment, and for career planning and the process of identifying and accessing appropriate work opportunities;
- Personal and social skills - a whole raft of skill areas or personal attributes may be subsumed within this category, including: team working; self-confidence; self-awareness; risk taking; problem solving; creativity; and the desire to innovate;

- Skills relating to business start-up and financial literacy: such as drafting business plans, marketing, financial management, sales, and human resource management. Participants often undertake an exercise in setting up and running their own company.

Although the importance of education for entrepreneurship, or enterprising behaviour, has been widely acknowledged, this has not necessarily been reflected in the systematic incorporation of comprehensive entrepreneurship training in the mainstream of university education in Nigeria (Balogu, 2007).

3.3. The rise of cultural entrepreneurs

The character of entrepreneurship changed when industrial comparative advantages shifted towards the tertiary sectors - large firms lost their competitive edge while smaller and more flexible firms gained new importance. New dynamic ventures are acknowledged to be drivers of innovation, and many fast moving businesses exist on the laptops of independent star performers. Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) observe this new breed of independents account for a growing share of employment output in some of the fastest growing sectors of the British economy: cultural industries such as design, fashion, multimedia and Internet services. These independents are mainly in their twenties and thirties, and run micro-businesses or are self-employed freelancers. Independents account for 6 percent of employment in Britain and their number is rising. The independents or cultural entrepreneurs are characteristically multiple-skilled - they are often producers, designers, retailers, and promoters at the same time. Their main assets are creativity, intuition, ingenuity, and imagination.

Cultural entrepreneurship gives opportunities for people to make money and grow rich from any resource at their disposal, including their physical looks and pastimes! Adam Smith's classical economic argument that full employment is possible seems more realizable now than in the old industrial economy. Sheer mastery of academic topics is relevant to the extent that it gives you high scores and a good class of degree; it may qualify you for employment, but will certainly not make you keep high paying jobs. What takes people to the top is ability to detangle and solve problems, regardless of whether they were part of your academic training or not. Performance evaluation increasingly focuses on the final output, and the star performer is expected to handle competently all aspects of the entire process, including those that may not relate directly to his/her original training.

Hyper-competition leads to rapid changes in the skills' requirements of work tasks, and workers need to continue learning to meet emerging skills' needs. Increasingly workers in fast moving firms find themselves providing a combination of skills that may or may not relate to their original academic training. The ability to learn quickly and effectively take up a combination of tasks either in paid employment or self-employment is the coefficient of one's cultural entrepreneurship.

3.4. Skills' Portfolio for Today's University Graduates

Achieving star performance either in paid employment or freelance self employment calls for a combination or portfolio of skills. Following Coleman (1998), we identify two set of skills - expertise (or hard skills), and competences (soft skills). Expertise is a combination of common sense (natural intelligence), specialized knowledge from academic training, and skills we pick up in the course of doing any job. Expertise comes from the processes of learning; embodying human capital and manpower, and shows as practical intelligence (or (an insider's sense of the tricks of the trade). Expertise is the real knowledge of how to do a job that is acquired through a combination of training and experience. An employer hires our expertise, which explains why people with the requisite qualification and more years of experience are employed into high paying jobs.

Expertise is a baseline competence that you need to get the job. But it is one thing to know how to do the job, it is another to achieve excellence on the job; you need competencies to translate your expertise into actions and events that stand out - if not, it makes little difference. Competence in this sense is basically a personal trait or a set of habits that leads to more effective or superior job performance - in other words, an ability that adds clear economic value to the efforts of a person on the job.

Expertise is a baseline requirement that is made up mainly of cognitive skills. With high level of technological development and growing codification of technical knowledge, it has become easier for people to learn high-tech cognitive skills at much lower levels of academic attainment. In effect, on-the-job learning and experience can displace academic training to a very large extent. Many firms have developed highly simplified operational manuals that ease learning; such that people with very low academic qualifications can be oriented to undertake what used to be very complex operations in the past.

What distinguishes you as an outstanding employee in the new workplace lies in the architecture of your mind, and relates basically to self image - how you see yourself, and attitude - how you see others. Expertise - the combination

of common sense, pedagogic training, and on-the-job experience - matter, but competencies count when it comes to excellence and getting to the top, and there is comparative advantage in being on top. Competencies or soft skills are increasing of immense value as the new workplace is more of a 'community of practice' than a hierarchically structured neoclassical economic firm.

A worker in the new workplace needs to market independent creativity and at the same time fit into the team. This ever increasing emphasis on knowledge and capabilities make people become more important. Yet the rapidly changing business environment makes long-term employment guarantees difficult - employers continually search for the star actors of their competitors and are ready to lay off 'dead woods', and star actors equally search for better offers. Both sides - employers and employees are continually on the move.

4. Poverty of Education in Nigerian Universities

To gauge the readiness of graduates of Nigerian Universities for star performance in the new knowledge society, focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted with 20 National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) members at the State NYSC Secretariat in Lokoja, Kogi State. The NYSC members were bachelor's degree graduates drawn from various private and public universities in Nigeria. The FGD sought to examine the discussants' understanding of the following:

- Evolution from industrial societies to knowledge societies;
- And, meaning and importance of emotional intelligences and competencies.

The FGD lasted for one hour, and all discussants found the occasion quite informing. Information gathered from the FGD provided only a simple check of the key discussions here, and may not fit for generalization as its validity and reliability have not been tested. More detailed researches are required to deepen understanding of how the transition from the old industrial society to the new knowledge society will affect university curriculum and potentials of university graduates. The posers that guided the FGD and the responses of the discussants are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Summary of FGD on the Implications of the New Knowledge Societies

Posers	Summary of Discussants' Responses
Understanding the evolution from industrial societies to knowledge societies.	
What is globalization?	Discussants were generally able to link the process of globalization with hyper - competition and revolutions in ICT.
What are the key features of the new knowledge societies?	Discussants agree that mobility of labour and capital, and growth in services generally and cultural products have become dominant.
Were you taught courses that explain the dynamics societal evolution?	Discussant who studied social sciences and arts fields (60%) affirmed that they took courses on globalization. Few discussants from the sciences accepted they took courses that were explicitly on globalization. Many from the science knew about globalization through personal reading, Internet, and the mass media.

Understanding Emotional Intelligence and competencies

What do you know about emotional intelligence, and emotional competencies?	Only 2 discussants had good understanding of what emotional intelligence is - one studied psychology and the other education. All discussants agree that they were not taught emotional intelligence (or competencies) either as a major topic within a course, or as a full course.
What do you consider as the most important requirement for getting a good job?	Majority of discussants believed that being connected to the employers, politicians or someone in government way the key to having good paying jobs.
What factors constrain Nigerian graduate from into self-employment?	Discussants identified poor access to capital, multiple taxation, and competition from larger operators as major constraints.
What is entrepreneurship culture?	Discussants understood the traditional concept of an entrepreneur, but were unable to relate it to entrepreneurship culture.

Source: FGD conducted for 20 NYSC members at Lokoja NYSC Office, Kogi State in September 13, 2010.

4.1. Key Learning Points from FGD

Key learning points from the FGD are as follows:

- ✓ The level and content of training in general studies is inadequate and poorly responsive to emerging perspectives and changing trends: more credit units should be allocated to General Studies courses, which should be broadened to include topics on emotional intelligence and competencies.
- ✓ Many undergraduate programmes are overspecialized. This may have made sense before, has become a liability in the knowledge society: Curriculum developers need to take into consideration the skill portfolio concept, to ensure that students are exposed to the combination of skills they will require to do their jobs in practice.
- ✓ The knowledge of what it takes to start a business and become self-employed is grossly inadequate among Nigerian graduates: Vocationalization of academic disciplines, branding and marketing, and ICT competencies should carry a substantial part of the course load for undergraduate degree programmes in Nigerian universities.

5. EMOTIONALLY RESILIENT GRADUATES FROM NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

Cultural change should be a determining factor for curriculum development (Nakpodia, 2010). The shift from the mechanical capital-based culture of industrial societies to the new service-led knowledge societies calls for the re-thinking of the entire formal education in Nigeria. Education for the industrial society sought to build expertise, with emphasis on the capacity to make and use tools, and the discipline to observe rules and follow laid down procedures. Human thinking was regulated by grand theories and concepts, and the dominant world view was the tendency towards equilibrium. But the new knowledge

society focuses on change management, creativity, and innovative enterprise.

Table 4 summarizes the changes that are required to make graduates of Nigerian universities emotionally resilient to meet the needs of the new knowledge societies. Firstly, there is need to give premium to courses that develops the ability to control the thinking process, and promote the release of mental energies towards creative imagination, intuition, and concentration. Since what is known is already obsolete, star performance in the new knowledge society calls for a high level of ingenuity and originality that comes only from the inner self. The mind then becomes the 'search engine' that needs to be tuned to the appropriate frequency for effective translation and attraction of new knowledge, innovations, and concepts from universe to outward manifestation. It cannot be taken for granted that people will know how to think when they are not taught. Secondly, current research programmes should address specific problems and phenomena rather than continue to dwell on the bandwagon of testing grand theories, which dominated research and development in the industrial age. Today's students need to be taught how to identify a problem, deconstruct it to lay bare the relevant internal logic, and design the processes towards resolving the inner contradictions. In this regard, the reinvention of philosophical thinking in every discipline, which dominated academic inquiries in the past, has become necessary.

Thirdly, Nigeria Universities should rise to the need for a multiple-skilled workforce in the new economy. In addition to making efforts to vocationalize all academic areas, each student should be introduced to a variety of complementary skills, particularly those that the individual is most likely to apply in the professional

Fourthly, lecturers and instructors need to continue learning. It is difficult to imagine how students would be taught how to adapt to the changes that the lecturers and instructors do not understand. Along this line more interaction and cooperation of universities and the new workplaces should be encouraged and promoted.

Table 4: Training Emotionally Resilient Graduates in Nigerian Universities

Old Industrial Society	New Knowledge Society	Recommended Paradigm Shift
Development is capital-based	Development is thought-based, requiring the combination of self image and attitude.	University curriculum should give premium to developing people's capacity to think, thereby promoting creative imagination, intuition, meditation
The ground rules for R&D are drawn from grand theories and the experiences of advanced countries	Each experience has its unique characteristics, and generalizations have not quite useful	More research programmes need that adopt situation-specific approaches. Treating every problem as a phenomenon whose internal logic needs to be discovered is now more useful.
Specialization promoted technological fragmentation and encouraged the training of graduate in highly specialized academic disciplines	Convergence of knowledge calls for multiple skills and core competencies. Specialized skills still required, but good working knowledge of other areas important	University curriculum should give high premium and more credit units to an increasing array of subjects and courses that have become general knowledge; music, languages, theatre and communication arts, quantum physics, mechanics, ICT, etc.
Slow changes in thinking, emphasis on stability, working with existing technology was the key reason for learning.	Fast changes in thinking, with emphasis on wedging and managing uncertainties. Learning has to be a continuing enterprise.	Lecturers/researchers need to continue learning to move with the pace of changes. Lecturers need to consider what the society needs or what their students require.

6. Concluding Remarks

As the world transits hastily to the new knowledge society, the centrifugal force driving development is shifting from factories and laboratories to the minds and mental models of people. What needs to be changed now is the mindset - the mental structures of people. With the right mindset it is easy for our university graduates to identify; what to learn, what to do with new knowledge, and how best to use their inner strengths - powers of imagination, intuition, visualization, and attraction. Before now these powers treated in the purview of religion, mysticism, and occultism, but exigencies of the new knowledge society demands that they be incorporated into the mainstream of academic training. People need to be taught how to think, what to think, how to manage their feelings, and why one needs to be creative.

It would be difficult to imagine how graduates of Nigerian Universities can be trained to become emotionally resilient when university management, lecturers, and administrators lack emotional competence. Accordingly, every stakeholder in the university needs to build capacity for emotional competencies. The lecturers and instructors particularly need to learn to know, learn to understand changing trends, learn to teach their students, and learn to know when they are not learning. The time to change is now.

References

- Balogu, D. O. (2007) "Developing Manpower-Centered Curricula and Effective Administrative Regulations in Improving Nigerian Education System" Being A Contribution to the Third Nigerian Science and Technology Conference, Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria, July 25-28.
- Coleman, D. (1998) Working with Emotional Intelligence Bantam Books: New York.
- Grubor, A. (2008) 'Service Competitiveness in the New Economy' Montenegrin Journal of Economics (7) 103-110.
- Leadbeater, C and Oakley, k. (1999) The Independents - Britain's New Cultural Entrepreneurs Demos (The Mezzanine): London.
- Leadbeater, C and Oakley, k. (2001) Surfing the Long Wave - Knowledge Entrepreneurship in Britain? Demos (The Mezzanine): London.
- Nakpodia, E. D. (2010) 'Culture and curriculum development in Nigerian schools' African Journal of History and Culture 2 (1), pp. 001-009
- Pine, J. B and Gilmore J. H. (1999) The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage Harvard Business School Press: New York.
- Wikipedia - the free encyclopaedia (2010:1) "Service Economy" Downloaded on September 26 2010.
- Wikipedia - the free encyclopaedia (2010:2) "Definition of Emotional Intelligence" Downloaded on September 26 2010.