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Attitudinal change in the rebranding image of Nigeria: A panacea for foreign direct investment

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to determine Attitudinal Change and the Re-branding Image in the face of Direct Foreign Investment as put forth by the federal government of Nigeria, using Calabar, Cross River State as a study. A null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. A-5 items questionnaire was developed and validated in generating data, from where 200 (two hundred) respondents responses were utilized. The design of the study was ex post facto. The data was analyzed using the Pearson product moment correlation (r) and the chi-square (x) statistical test. The analyses revealed that: There is significant relationship between attitudinal change of people (due to cultural revival) and the re-branding image in the face of direct foreign investment. It was concluded that the re-branding image of Nigeria is significantly influenced by peoples' attitudinal changes. The major recommendation was, that to truly correct the negative image of Nigeria as a nation, the federal government should embark on projects that are aimed at laundering the image of the country by dealing with brand eroders, including insecurity, corruption, poverty, illiteracy and ineffective electoral process, among others.

Key Words: *attitudinal change, re-branding, foreign direct investment, corruption, insecurity, brand eroders, image laundering, poverty, ineffective electoral process, corporate existence, cultural revival, patriotic*

INTRODUCTION

Before the discovery of oil in 1956, Nigeria was famous for her agrarian economy through the production of cash crops like, palm produce (oil and kernel), cocoa, rubber, timber, groundnut which were exported to foreign land. Going down memory lane, upon the discovery of crude oil and its subsequent exploitation, there was a boom in Nigeria economy as it accounted for over eighty percent (80%) of the country's foreign exchange earnings. Ironically, this same country has turn out from being a producer and exporter to being one of the largest importers of food products.

Back in the Nigerian glorious years, education was something every Nigerian looked forward to and could afford. Today, according to Usang, E.E, 2013[1] the survival of Nigeria as a nation is daily being threatened by centrifugal forces pitched against her corporate existence. In line with Usang's postulations, Ogunyemi, B., 2010[2] maintained that as a critical review of Nigerian education in the last 50 years, reveals a long tale of growth without development. When such a country is blessed with International scholars like Prof. Wole Auyowhu, the Emeagwalis who Prof. Dora Akunyili and her cohort in government showcased as God's gifts to the Nigerian nation and

evidence of what Nigeria Education is capable of doing. But the question is are they touched that our best and brightest brains had to flee the country, with some shading their nationality like a cancerous stain, when we desperately needed them for the Nigeria project?

Paradoxically, in the midst of grinding poverty and neglect among the citizenry, the political class displays ostentatious lifestyles using their privileged positions to corner a disproportional slice of our common wealth. As the editorial of National Scholar ASUU, May 2012[4] edition puts it:

“It is on record that Nigerian political office holders enjoy salary and allowances as well as prerequisites well above their counterpart else where in the world. Example has been made of billion naira spent for feeding and kitchenware at the presidency. In other environment where democratic culture is better entrenched, Presidents are reputed for feeding themselves, their families and private guests from their personal income. But in Nigeria those elected insult the sensibilities of their countrymen, who elected them by annually appropriating scandalous votes to themselves and yet occasionally fake commercial bank loan to support their insatiable appetite for Jumbo allowances”.

The Nigeria situation has often times kept critics on an unending evaluation over the way forward. This paper hopes to achieve a new Nigerian through attitudinal change which is colored under re-branding image of Nigeria in the face of direct foreign investment. It has however been observed that Nigeria most outstanding unresolved question is the issue of marginalization of some sections of the country, and when a particular section feels highly marginalized, its restive youths resort to violent to articulate their position thereby dragging the name of Nigeria to the mud. Few years ago restive youths from the Niger/Delta region of Nigeria held the nation hostage with series of gunshots from the creeks where Nigeria crude oil exploited. Expert oil workers, government official, law enforcement agents and well placed Nigerian were kidnapped and some, sometimes killed.

In the South West zone of Nigeria, sometimes ago, some irate youths under the cover of Oduduwa Peoples' Congress (OPC) unleashed a reign of terror in the zone, thereby painting a negative image of Nigeria. They equally killed, maimed, and destroy properties. In the South East the emergence of the movement for the actualization of Biafra(MASOB) almost exhumed the spirit of the civil war which Biafra stood for, which kept Nigeria at standstill for thirty months of civil war, kidnapping, armed robbery and endless violence are the other of the day in the zone. Today, in Northern Nigeria a dreaded “JamaatulAhlusunnahLiddaawatiWal Jihad”/ Western Education is sinful alias (Boko Haram), this group has resulted into meaningless suicide bomb attacks and indiscriminate gun shooting at public places like motor parks, churches and the likes...The group beliefs, according to Jegede, S. B., 2012[5] Nigeria socio economic and leadership crisis arises from the rulers acquaintances with western-education, which makes them unpatriotic, corrupt and oppressive, and hence they demand for the enthronement of shariah.

From the highlighted, it is clear that no part of the country is immune to attacks, as each part of the country has to contend with their fashion of violence ignited by some aggressive persons of the society. Today, the threats are in millions as school gates are under lock and key at all level of Nigeria Education sub-sector. In Cross River State for instance, at the point of writing this paper, all the Primary, Secondary and Universities were on strike for months, reasons being government insensitivity to Educational demands.

Frustrations are well written on the faces of hundreds of thousands of desperate young graduates and school leavers who comb the streets daily in search of jobs which are not in sight. As can be rightly observe, the ruling circle in Nigeria, because of their control of the economic or material base of the society, entrench and re-enforce their perception of morality or values on the society, inclusive of corruption. Power supply remains epileptic and grossly inadequate in relation to the needs of the country. This has been in spite of the huge sum of money sunk into the power sector. Inflation remains a major and continuing problem. The fact that the government itself admit that inflation is in double digits indicate that the situation is much worse.

Today crime is not only on the increase, old forms of crime have assumed new proportions while new forms of crime have emerged. Government farther than provide measures that is aimed at protecting the entire population, the security apparatus, has a mandate to only protect the most powerful and wealthy citizens in the society. For many of us, especially the older or aging generations, we cannot but recall a time when we assumed Nigeria was on her way to greatness, and standing shoulder to shoulder with the developed/developing countries of south America, Europe,

Asia and elsewhere. It might be difficult for the young generation to imagine, but believe; there was a time when the Nigeria landscape was with rabble-rouser, intellectual giants and world class social scientists and all manner of men and women who made the country and the world a better place. It was nice and glorious being a Nigerian.

A country that was celebrated round the world has become a monumental failure. It failed international community. But far more than anything else, it failed the citizens (of Nigeria) hence, the significant reason among other issues which calls for attention to be focused on attitudinal change and the re-branding image of Nigeria in the face of direct foreign investment which this paper attempts to explore.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Purpose of the study

There exist lots of uncomplimentary remarks about Nigeria both at home and at the international arena. This negative picture of Nigeria has so many deteriorating effect on the body politics of the country when view outside the shores of the Nigeria nation, hence the need to become more proactive, in re-branding and reshaping the image of the country in other that foreign investors may change their mentality and opinion about Nigeria.

The purpose of this study therefore, points to the fact that if Nigeria is considered not good enough it is the attitude of the people of Nigeria and the way we paint ourselves to the world. To be seen and being normal, this paper provides many solutions as to what should be done for instance, if Nigerians are said to be corrupt, dishonest, intolerant, parochial etc. Then that goes a long way to remind us that Nigeria is not what she ought to be, therefore, the study is aimed at providing us with the following specific objectives:

1. Provide logical answers to why the image laundering project embarked upon by the Nigeria government has not achieved the desired result.
2. Ensure relatively conducive environment that will be attractive to investors, tourist and Nigerians themselves.
3. Provide ways to rekindle Nigeria social status in international community.
4. Highlight the effectiveness of legitimate governance in re-branding.
5. Make recommendation based on the research findings.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between attitudinal change and cultural revival among patriotic Nigerians.

The scope of the study

The research work was carried out on 5 selected public Institutions in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria to elicit responses on attitudinal change and re-branding of Nigeria's image.

The parastatals were:

1. Power Holding Company of Nigeria.
2. Cross River State Water Board Ltd.
3. Cross River State Internal Revenue Service.
4. Industrial Training Fund and
5. Cross River State Civil Service Commission.

The scope of the study was delimited to addressing Nigeria battered image, the number of image laundering project embarked upon by the Nigeria Government in the last 8years and why it has not achieved the desired results.

Theoretical framework

This section provides a conceptualization of research based on the theory review in order to come up with a frame of references showing how the correlation between Nigeria image and its re-branding processes, has helped in repositioning Nigeria to the international environment.

Several scholars have written extensively on the concept nations re-branding including Simon Anholt who wrote on the effect of a country origin and impact it could have on the national economics. Mr. Anholt who is the world leading authority on the subject believes that part of the challenges the developing world is facing today beside poor

governance and weak infrastructure is the issue of weak national brands and identities. In furtherance to the re-branding campaigns Randall Frost (2004) [6] maintained that “the image we have of another country says a lot about how we view it as a tourist destination or a source of consumer of consumer goods”.

Wally, Olins (2002) [7] in his paper “Branding the nation”, the historical perspectives warned countries of the risk of ignoring nation branding and predict that country branding will become normal practice in the future. According to him, the lack of interest and believes in country branding by some is mere semantics. Nilsson (2004) [10] writes that “A brand is just a symbol with tremendous potentials, and that this symbol can be expressed in many different ways”. Nworah (2005)[8] sees branding as the marketing and management process that gives a product or organization a unique identity and image such that it is easily and positively identifiable and distinct from competitors. Branding therefore is about highlighting one’s unique selling point (USP) in a way that it will be difficult to ignore by the prospective customer. In the case of a country branding such unique selling point must be enduring and must be supported by an enabling political, social and economic environment.

Mark Leonard of Demos, in the book Britain TM (1997) writes of the need for Britain to rebrand itself. According to him, “the main reason why this needs to be done is that a gulf has opened up between the reality of Britain as a highly creative and diverse society and the perception around the world that Britain remains a backward looking island immersed in its heritage. In a related remark to that of Mark Leonard, Wally Olins (1999) writes that countries which have thought most about re-branding issues have been those with some kind of traditional position, influence and reputation which they seek to change.

Olins (1999) further maintained, “That despite the similarities between product and place brands the idea of a nation as a brand is a very big mistake”. Olins is also emphasizing caution and care in the application of traditional branding principle to place branding.

Brymer (2003) [9] however suggested that although the principles of re-branding apply equally to countries as they do to products and services, the method may differ. According to him, “creating a branding program for a country demand an integrated policy that most countries do not possess the ability to act and speak in a coordinated and repetitive way about motivating and differentiating (steps) a country can make”. Chris Nwodo, submitted in his paper the task of re-branding Nigeria, that most of the change has to be internal at first, entailing a shift in the cultural and ethical reorientation of society. A new Nigeria will first of all have new ethics, philosophy and an attitude that will get us believing in ourselves once again.

According to the former Inspector General of police (IGP) Mike Okiro “There is no way you can re-brand Nigeria effectively and successfully without re-branding sections that make up Nigeria, the various organization, unit, ministries, parastatals and the individuals beginning with the Nigeria police.

In a chat with Oluoyewole, M., pioneer executive vice president of Certified Marketing Communications Institute of Nigeria (CMCIN) as recorded pointed out that the media is the avenue through which the activities geared towards re-branding can be communicated to the people. To convey the integrated vehicles that will be adopted in the re-branding Nigeria exercise, a well articulated media has to be evolve in conveying these messages, without which the media awareness cannot be achieved.

”Most of the problems that Nigeria blames on corruption are not caused by corruption, but a wrong attitude among Nigerians”. Good luck Jonathan.

President Jonathan made this remark in Yenagoa on Saturday 29th December, 2012 at Peace Park during the burial of the former National Security Adviser, Owoeye Azazi, pointing that corruption is not the only challenge to good governance, rather our negative attitude towards issues remain a major challenge in the country. In line with the president gestures the Catholic Bishop of Bomadi, Hyacinth Egbebo agreed that if Nigeria would change their attitude, most of these issues being attributed to corruption may naturally be addressed.

Akunyili, Dora (2010) [3] opined that re-branding image of Nigeria is anchored on attitudinal change, reorientation, revival of our cultural values and a renewed spirit of patriotism and hope in all Nigerians. These according to her,

help Nigeria projects the country's image positively, emphasizing our strong points and de-emphasizing our weak points.

Research Design

This research was a combination of two approaches namely descriptive and inferential research methods. It is descriptive because certain facts were obtained from the primary and secondary sources which were described on the basis of inferences and results made from the analysis, policy recommendations were proffered by the nature of the research and the data gathered, tables and summary calculations were used in some cases to facilitate or necessitate the analysis. In planning this research, the researchers relied or made use of two principles sources of data gathering which are primary and secondary sources.

Sample size

The sample size used for the study comprised 200 respondents in the five parastatals listed earlier .

Table 1: Distribution of study population by parastatals/cluster and gender

S/NO	PARASTATAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	%
1	Internal revenue service	146	116	262	31.23
2	Industrial Training Fund	16	17	33	3.93
3	Power Holding Company	144	56	200	3.84
4	Civil Service Commission	28	33	61	7.27
5	CRS water Board	246	37	283	33.73
	TOTAL	580(63.13)	259(30.87)	839	100.00

Procedure for data collection

The questionnaire was administered to workers in their various places of work by the researchers with the aid of some research assistants. The instrument was completed and retrieved by the administrators immediately after completion.

Method of data analysis

The researchers collected the data and organized them according to the questions formulated for the study. The generated data were then subjected to statistical analysis procedures using the following statistical models.

Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between attitudinal change and cultural revival among patriotic Nigerians. Dependent variable (y) = cultural revival of patriotic Nigerians (as portrayed by the re-branding gospel). Independent variable (x) =Attitudinal change of Nigerians (uncategorized)

Test statistical techniques: The Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used in determining the relationship between the two variables. To test the hypothesis data for both variables were extracted from the data bank and summarized into mean (x), standard deviations (SD), sum (x y), sums of square (x y), and sums of products (xy). The summarized data was then subject to statistical analysis using Pearson product correlation coefficient (r) analysis. The result of analysis is on table 2.

Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) analysis for the relationship between attitudinal change and cultural revival among patriotic Nigerians. N=200

Variable	x	SD	$\sum x \sum y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum xy$	df	r-cal	p-val
Attitudinal change(x)	12.563	3.60	2513	12.935	6.583	198	0.892	000
Cultural revival among patriotic Nigerians(y)	14.326	3.141	2865.20	16146				

Source: Field Survey: Result significant at $P > 0.05$, $df=198$, $crit-r=0.195$ (2-tailed).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The statistical analysis of this hypothesis has exposed us to the facts that significant relationship exists between attitudinal change due to cultural revival of our culture and the spirit of patriotism among Nigerians (as portrayed) in the re-branding Nigeria gospel, the more the revival or our culture and even our heritage, the better and stronger the spirit of patriotism among Nigerians.

Those findings are in agreement with President Jonathan (2012) who assented vehemently, that most of the problems Nigeria blame on corruption are not caused by corruption but mainly due to the wrong attitude to everything Nigeria are confronted with. However, corruption was not the only challenge to good governance; hence, he stressed the need for attitudinal change among Nigerians for the country to make progress.

In like manner, the findings of this hypothesis also align with Akunyili (2010)[3] who espoused to Nigerians that the rebranding image of Nigeria is anchored on attitudinal change, value reorientation, revival our cultural values and a renewed spirit of patriotism and hope in all Nigerians.

To Akunyili, the spiritual revival would enable all Nigerians to project the country's image positively, emphasize strong points and de-emphasize our weakness.

In corroboration of the above facts the Catholic Bishop of Bomadi (Bish H. Egbebo, 2012) assented that if Nigeria change their attitude most issues being attributed to corruption may not actually be caused by corruption, but/rather by the people's attitude to life.

In this research, the researchers also agree with these authors in the light of the happenings in the nation in term of national issues such as false electoral process; issues of over-blown contracts, irregularities in school/educational system, as well as many other inconsistencies that are targeted at tarnishing the nation's image to the world.

Summary of the study

This study was conducted to determine the effect of attitudinal change among Nigerians. To give the study a focus, one (1) research question was posed based on the identified major independent variable of attitudinal change of Nigerians, and external/ foreign influences.

The research question was transformed into a null hypothesis, which then directed the entire study. It was therefore recommended among others that to truly correct the negative image of Nigeria as a nation, the federal government should enhance projects aimed at laundering the image of the country by dealing with brand eroders including insecurity, corruption, poverty, illiteracy and false electoral process among others.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of statistical analysis of the null hypothesis formulated for this study, the following conclusions (which could be regarded as an addition to knowledge bank) were carried out.

There is significant relationship between attitudinal change due to revival of our culture and the spirit of patriotism as portrayed by re-branding image of Nigeria, the more the change in attitude through revival of our culture and value re-orientation, the higher the spirit of patriotism; consequently, the higher and better re-branding Nigeria image.

Recommendation

Based on statistical revelation of the null hypothesis that guided the study, as well as the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

That the federal government should as a matter of immediate concern re-awaken the issue of ethical reorientation as well as cultural value system through Nigeria education system. This would enable both the present and the future generation to see Nigeria as a useful, dependable and reliable nation to trust and invest in. The government should embark on projects aimed at laundering the image of the country to deal with brand eroders, including insecurity, poverty, corruption, illiteracy and faulty electoral process among others.

Suggestions

This same research topic and other issue could further be researched into, but involving a wider research area (like senatorial districts, or a whole state) with a larger population and representative sample for a better generalization of results and findings.

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