



E-Commerce Promotion in the New Economy: Interrogating the Missing Links in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper analyses threats, vulnerabilities and insecurities attendant to E-commerce in the late modernity. There is a consistent global concern about emerging risks affecting commerce in general and the field of E-business in particular. Primarily, governments, organizations and other institutions pursue reductionist strategies mostly exemplified in risks prevention and contingency planning in managing the myriad of its events but most of these neglect the social welfare issues affecting sizeable portion of the population. This subset are hitherto believed to be capable of expropriating the benefits of E-commerce and driving its successful outcome. Regrettably, the reverse is the case in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). It is therefore argued that these neglected imperatives carry consequences for economic stability in Nigeria. Consequently, this discourse is situated in the risk model propounded by Ulrich Beck under modernization paradigm. Finally, a pungent advocacy on the need to impress it upon the political leaders to address these basic issues becomes important for economic growth and sustainability in Nigeria and in its global context.

Keywords: E-business, Risk, Social welfare, Nigeria, Economy

Yeni Ekonomide E-ticaretin Yükselişi: Kayıp Halkayı Nijerya'da Bütünlemek

Öz

Bu makale son zamanlarda, tehditleri, kırılgan yapısı ve güvensizliğiyle anılan e-ticareti analiz etmektedir. Genel olarak ticareti ve özellikle elektronik ticareti etkileyen risklerin ortaya çıktığı hakkında küresel bir endişe sürmektedir. Başlangıçta hükümetler, örgütler ve diğer kurumlar, daralmacı stratejileri takip ederek, genelde risk önleyici ve beklenmedik olay planlamalarıyla sayısız vakayı idare ettiler ama bunların çoğu nüfusun oldukça büyük bir bölümünün sosyal refah konusunda etkileneceği ihmal edilerek yapıldı. Bugüne kadar bu alt-gruplar e-ticaretin faydalarını kamulaştırabileceklerine ve e-ticaretin olumlu sonuçlarını kullanabileceklerini düşünmekteydiler. Maalesef bu durum sahra altı Afrikasında terse dönmüştür. Bu yüzden ihmal edilen bu zorunlulukların Nijeryanın ekonomik istikrarı için çeşitli sonuçlar içerdiği konuşulmakta/tartışılmaktadır. Sonuç olarak bu söylem Ulrich Beck'in modernizasyon paradigması altında ileri sürdüğü risk modelini ele almaktadır. Nihayetinde, politik liderlerin söylemleri üzerinde etki yapacak sert savunmalar ve baskılar, Nijeryanın sürdürülebilir kalkınması ve ekonomik büyümesi ile Nijerya'nın küresel bağlamdaki daha önemli rol oynayabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: E-ticaret, Risk, Sosyal Refah, Nijerya, Ekonomi

Introduction

The world may be widely viewed as traveling at a speed unprecedented (especially in the digital era) and it may equally be soaring at an altitude that cannot be fathomed by natural beings, but when the highways or the airspace upon which it is gaining momentum lie unattended, the world itself is heading towards a catastrophic crash, a failure and at best an extinction.

The above quote represents the philosophy explaining the concern inherent in this paper. The new economy as used in this work toes the line of the conceptual framework adapted by Jansen (2007) while explaining the benefits of e-commerce to web consumers. However, in its contextualization, new economic system has affinity with globalization which functions as the main driver of e-commerce. The latter was also used interchangeably to assume the same meaning in the flow of discussion and this include: e-commerce, e-business and e-economy. Globally, the new economy is illustrated to be associated with myriad of development that are linkable to globalization. This is connected to information or high-tech economy and simultaneously, the multi-faceted impact of the explosive growth of the World Wide Web. This unique development is in most cases viewed as synonymous to globalization in its current form by several scholars (Castell, 1998: Perry and Maurer, 2003: Ass, 2007). Logically, the advent of globalization and concomitantly e-commerce signify the era of unimpeded world progress. The emerging concern in today world therefore consist of the call to nations to meet up with the basic requirement needed to drive the global economy.

Correspondingly, improvement in scientific base, adaptation of technology to economic growth and the adoption of innovative capacity have been advocated (Watkins and Ehst, 2008). This advocacy for mass participation is not devoided of its consequences; both benefiting and generating setbacks to nations in their quest for economic advancement. It presents a double edged opportunity and to this extent the globalised world has been described as an invisible continent. This world is described as a risk heightened world of cyber speed and high multiples exemplified in increasing cross border communication, travel and consumption (Ohmae, 2001).

Olukoshi (2009) equally subsumes the characteristics of globalization as including trans-border economic transaction, revolution linkable to information and communication technology and compression of time and space. Considering the latter, the major developments in the world of digital technologies were instrumental to the current growth and magnitude of cross cultural interaction worldwide. This flat interaction portends unimpeded



flow of interaction with its attendant feedbacks affecting global development. In their assessment of its nature, Pitelis *et al*, (2006) argue that the development of economies is increasingly influenced by the changing relationship or interaction associated with globalization. And borrowing from Duening *et al*, (2010), globalization is viewed to possess many benefits accruable to nations and peoples who participate in the global economy and in its impact, the state in which the world finds itself today is that of no return. This is quite baffling and to the extent that no one is able to escape the coverage of the globalizing effects. Further exploring the views of Duening *et al*, (2010), most benefitting attributes of globalization have continued to help nations in the field of information, trade, education, and including making room for timeliness. Apart, globalization is equally voraciously making the world a global village. However, all these carry quantifiable cost to nations and people in their diverse cultures. The cost appears limitless thereby making it confusive and in the process creating an illusion. The illusory aspect of globalization remains outstanding and this involves the discriminatory order the new era promotes which is widely believed to represent an anti-thesis of the inclusiveness it proposes.

Bigombe and Khadiagala (2003) while reflecting on the impact of globalization concluded that its emergence and processes have resulted in double marginalization across African’ continent with local incomes declining in value to the earnings of advanced capital. This has also resulted into disparities in the level of development across regional blocks. Research has shown that the ways in which post colonial states in Africa decide to engage in the global economy has a function for their developments (Andreasson, 2010). By reason of engagement in the current globalization, regional blocks are developing at different pace and experientially, their challenges are not uniform across diverse sectors of human society. Appreciable number are groping and witnessing abysmal growth in their economic sector and a negligible few are maximally benefitting from the opportunities offered by the new economic order. This form of discriminatory access to “economic enhancers” inherent in the new economy promote risk for nations finding it difficult to adapt.

Basically, exposure to risk in all its ramifications has not been found to be evenly distributed among nations in all the known continents of the world. Kehal and Singh (2005) for example, were able to identify the flow of recent impacts, influences and challenges confronting nations in the new economy. They argued that developed nations are mostly at the receiving end of the challenges emanating from digital driven economy and it was further stated that developing nations are gradually facing similar challenges as their developed counterpart. When evaluated, it is vividly clear that this pragmatic exposition on the workings of globalization seemed unidirectional for two obvious reason. Basically, one of these linked to the work of Kehal and Singh is the inability to interrogate the peculiarities linkable to each region of the



world. Another limitation to keep under focus is the non-uniformity of experiences from nation to nation which analysts must take cognizance of in order to measure the impacts, influences and challenges in the digital economy.

Zeroing on these identified lapses therefore, analysts must strive to know the nature and the specific area of challenge(s) affecting nations from continent to continent in the new economic order. To achieve this, one would need to engage the classification of nations according to their experiences in the digital world. And putting nations in a classificatory schema therefore, there are two category of pressing challenges that require probing. First, revolves around access to digital technologies, its application, right of use and official censorship that may be unique to each digital participant. A review of literature in this regard espoused that Kehal and Singh and other scholars substantially captured this in their work (Ogbu *et al*, 2009). Contextualizing this further therefore within the Sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) environment, one will be able to see that nations in this category have unimpeded access to digital technologies required to expedite e-business relationship with nations of other regions of the world. The rate of engrafting this into sectoral divisions is also commendable.

Research have linked this accessibility to one of the requirements of globalization for market freedom and flexibilization of state policies which has consistently led to a substantial decrease in state control (Guehenmo, 1994; Cable, 1995; Bryan and Farelli, 1996). Also, personal and corporate acquisition of digital technologies is encouraged and there exist minimal laws censoring the e-activities of the users. Second consist of gamut of economic and socio-cultural issues such as factors relating to capacity of traditional economy, religion, social welfare issues, knowledge base, political ideology and host of others with their varying degree of impacts or challenges capable of inhibiting the flow of digital economy. This category is what Duening *et al* described as technological venture drivers which consist of requirements such as availability of capital essential to investment in technology, intensity of knowledge and its adaptability to development, structural flexibility needed to absorb evolving technological changes and acceptability of use with its implication in value. As far as this second challenge is concerned, Duening *et al*, (2010) considered few of them associated with entrepreneurial drive for both nation and individuals and considerably neglected the social welfare issues needed to accelerate the movement of e-business. This second dimension which has received minimal attention in research and in literature constitutes the focus of this paper.

Research has revealed that about 2 billion people live in countries that are not participating enough in globalization and many of them are in Africa (World Bank, 2002:6). This attests to the global reality that several nations operating in the new world economic environment are consistently



finding it difficult to cope with modern challenges inhibiting economic growth. Substantial portion of these challenges are humanly induced while the rest may be linked to structural constraints. The former is made unabatedly overt and largely pronounced in the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) while the latter have also been severally adduced to Africa's experience of colonialism. Puts together, their impact is undoubtedly devastating on the survival of modern e-commerce in the region. Man-made risk to e-business in this context is firmly located in the persistence of variables promoting the symptomatic of the failed state syndrome. And in explaining these variables, there is a considerable neglect of state primary responsibilities to the citizenry on one hand and the inability to maintain law and order on the other hand.

These two prerequisite are needed to roll the wheels of e-business. A point of departure is taken in this paper to aired the views of several Africans commonly exposed to the negative consequences of globalization. Just as Bacon (2008:VIII) has rightly observed that "those who live with globalization consequences are not at the table, and their voices are generally excluded along with those who proposed progressive alternatives." This impact analysis has substantial relevance to the material condition of those bearing the brunt of e-economy especially in Africa. In this regard, the true cost of globalization in such developing economies is closely knitted to the welfare related situations affecting the generality of the people and inhibiting their participation. It is quite obvious that deteriorating economic conditions has consistently affected Africa's population, poverty is on the rise, and unemployment remains highly precarious (Antoine, 1995). Dirt of infrastructure, insufficient investible capital, corruption and cyber driven crimes are quite endemic and are both assuming significant threat potential to the newly unfolding or a state of gravitation to e-relationship that is spontaneously required in the modern world. These enumerated inhibitants draw strength from what has been earlier termed Africa's leadership crisis and further made worse by the failed state syndrome that characterizes Nigeria's socio-economic environment. In addition to this identified precipitators, what makes these challenges more striking is the role of globalization in terms of how it make them more complex to solve and in which efforts must be geared toward their resolutions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The adequate understanding of the economic risk factor in this global era is tangential to our grasping of the crawling progress majorly recordable in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. This is basically experienced through participation in e-business economy. The analysis of socio-economic risk in the context of this discourse considers majorly citizens encounter with the state and in which individuals in the new global economy become a risk object. Risk theorists school attempt the linkages between globalization, risk



and modernity (Beck, 1992: Bauman, 2000). The predicament of modern man has been linked by risk theorists to three socio-economic attributive factors (Giddens 1991: 1994: Beck 1998; Bernstein, 1998). These factors include experienced removal, loss of stability and reintegration. These identified factors have linkage with the now observed acute or excessive individualism both exposing modern man to vicious cycle inherent in socio-economic threats on one hand and simultaneously placing him at the mercy of socio-technological circumstances knitted to the new economy on the other. Research has shown that there is a connectivity between social exclusion (individualism), inequality and the resultant poverty (Tilly, 2007).

Consequently, there is a forceful detachment from the mostly known or predictable socio-economic environment of the pre-modern society into a fast moving and 'non-arrestable' world. Man in the process has entered into a realm of psycho-social destabilization often occasioned by the loss of stability. All this is occurring in the era of new economy. The era is characterised by a rapid loss of all known stability that ever existed in history. Thus, the magnitude of exposure to vulnerabilities remain quite alarming. Consequently, human survival and continued existence in the industrial society is primarily fraught with challenges and this situation constantly propels individual's yearning for reintegration in today run away world (Giddens, 2002). The theoretical emphasis of this paper therefore constitutes a reflection on the changing human conditions promoted by the new economy and in which modern people are constrained to live.

Assessing the situation, Beck (2005) establishes an affinity between man's social material conditions and the rising rate of misunderstanding globally. In this regard, the resulting misunderstanding is circumstantially determined and also a function of different typology of experienced vulnerabilities. In the arena of globalization that is driving the new economy, flexibilization is the norm. In this way, new types of flexible, pluralized underemployment and in the extreme as in the case of Nigeria unemployment remained prevalent.

Invariably, this has ushered in hitherto unknown problems affecting the social welfare of sizeable portion of people and at the same time generating new types of life situation. Reflecting on the new condition of modern man, Mick-Meyer and Villadsen (2013) positioned that the era of globalization creates a new situation for individual's life and perception. This creation is also what led Bauman (2000) to conclude that globalization does not only supply what we want or at best helping to accomplish what we desire but accounts for what happens to us all. As a matter of fact, when one examines the consequences of the new economy for the modern man, one will be able to observe that individual (himself or herself) has constantly assumed the status of a reproductive unit with its implications in determining his/her placement in the scheme of things on one hand and at



the same time left to chance on the other hand. The situation at hand promotes bowling alone and thus leaving social actors in the hands of circumstantial predators inherent in the environment of the new economy. This carries negative consequences for those without social welfare supports.

In the global society as explained by Beck, men have gradually become agents of their livelihood mostly mediated by the labour market. By extension therefore, the continued existence of man is absolutely dependent on the favorability or otherwise of the labour market. Unfortunately in Nigeria, the labour market that is needed to insure man against survival related risks is extremely saturated with mass underemployment cum unemployment. Man's destiny and continuity of survival being a factor of dependency on the labour market appears dislocated and thereby making socio-economic welfare to be hanging in the balance. Apart from the existence of flexibilization which accompanies the new economy, the more important provision of decentralization of the work site which affords developing nation the opportunity of participatory production linkable to this new order equally excluded substantially those in Sub-Saharan Africa. Unlike nations such as China, India, Japan, Korea and host of others which enjoy participatory globalization, Nigeria and other countries in Africa experience closure to such opportunity. This also increases the social welfare related challenges being faced by Nigerians. The advent of globalization that developed alongside the neo-liberal governance underplays emphasis on the welfare of the downtrodden as it places their collective destinies in the hands of private concerns. In view of Nigeria's known political leadership challenges with its attendant irresponsiveness of the state to the citizenry, the environment of the new liberal economy birthed by globalization further reinforces the abandonment of most people to their plights.

Borrowing from Beck, what compounds the situation of modern industrial man remains the absence of conscience collective or by extension, a social reference unit in the sphere of cultural life. The existence of the value of "Africaness" or "Nigerianess" located in securing collective response to probable threat to survival has been grossly eroded. In the same vein, the reference unit located in the state appears dislocated due to the existence of negative factors inhibiting the welfare of most citizens (discoursed in the section below). This resonates the death of the "social" characterized by the comodification and privatization of risk identified by Rose (1996). The new order is completely blinded to the hitherto existed traditional possibilities of support which functions to cushion the effects of economic vagaries' and this is simultaneously made compounded by the existence of failed state syndrome prevalent in most countries in the African region. Today industrial man in the context of the latter is greatly affected by the emergence of the new status of institutional dependent individual situation.



SOCIAL WELFARE ISSUES AFFECTING E-BUSINESS IN THE NEW ECONOMIC

There are many related challenges impinging on the social welfare of Nigerian people and concomitantly the e-business platform in a significant number of countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The social welfare issues confronting Africa region was initially discussed by Zack-William et al (2002). This was classified as imbalances that have culminated into “Africa crisis” and with its manifest mostly recordable in the economic structure. Most African nation suffer economic retardation as a result of indebtedness to international financial institutions; over reliance on agricultural products, deteriorated infrastructure, famine, food crisis and deficient industrial base. These also have consistently promoted several inhibitive factors to the flow, growth and sustainability of the new economy. Inhibitants traceable to Africa include corruption, unemployment, poverty, crime and other attendant problems. The combination of these factors potentially reduced globalization benefits accessible to most Africans. Each of these factors is discussed in turn to explain their specific effect on the growth and sustainability of modern globalization in Nigeria. This is also done with the view of exposing their impact on e-business flow.

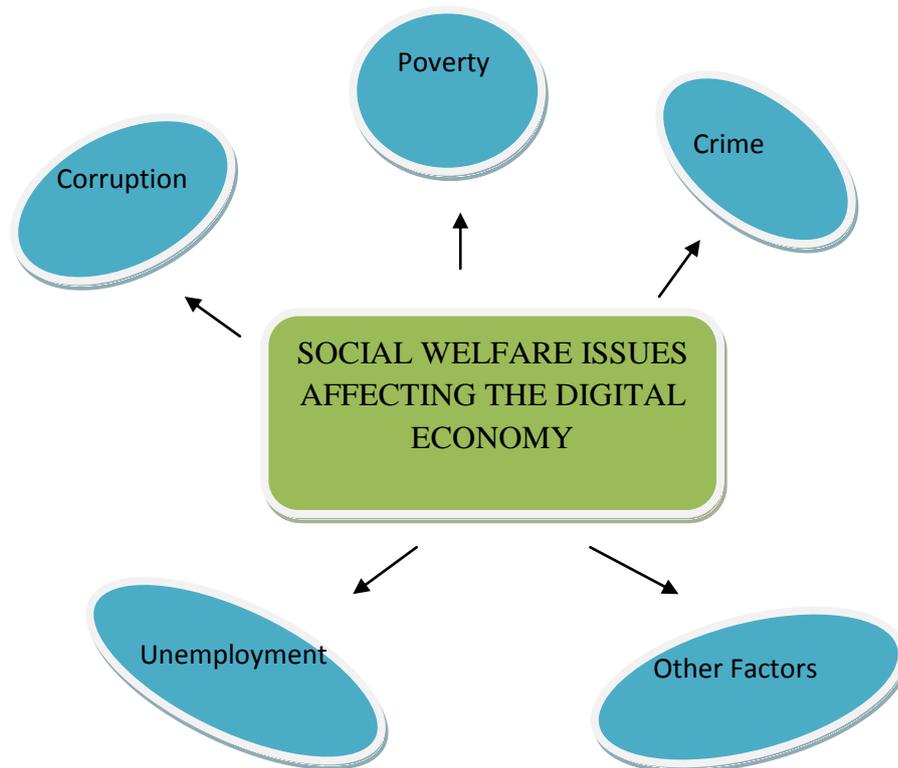


Figure 1: Social Welfare Issues Affecting Digital Economy

Poverty

The examination of poverty adapted in this discourse borrows substantially from the concerns of the world leaders which lately became enunciated in the Millennium Development Declaration of 2000. The declaration aims at reducing the alarming rate of poverty found prevalent in most developing nations. This encompasses tackling of acute health and nutritional problems and a call to embark on a path of sustainable poverty reduction which were aimed at improving the quality of daily life for most poor in the developing world. It was viewed that the high prevalence level of poverty possesses the capability of destabilizing the world order. Apart from its impact at the macro level, its implication on the micro sector of the world economy cannot be quantified. Poverty is dangerous and risky to business cum-investment survival in all known society. IEG (2006) argued that the quality of a country's investment climate (IC) is determined by the risks and transaction cost of investing in and operating a business. The cost as used here is inclusive of an aspect of social cost that must be borne in the business circle which is often brought to fore as a result of acute deprivation and a condition nearing extreme poverty that the citizens of the investible environment have to face or encounter which constitutes a potent risk to e-business. With the annual per capita income of less than US\$700, the typical resident of the low income country lives below the \$2 per day poverty line (Watkins and Ehst, 2008:19). This is an affront against the socio-economic wellbeing of those affected.

Another form of poverty related risk most prevalent in Nigeria aligns with the one referred by Narayam and Petesch (2002) as material, financial and bodily risk. This form combines hunger, illness and injury. The condition of poverty also raises the question of survival among Nigerian people existing within the verge of impoverishment. Reporting on the conditions of survival in the developing societies, Livi-Bacci (2004) disclosed that the probability of a new born dying before his/her fifth birthday was 145 per thousand in Africa. This is quite high and pictured a gloomy environment.

The adoption MDG's philosophy is further predicated on the fact that e-business is all about production, rendering of services, investment, and exchange. Considering Africa's environment, the realization of these goals is a function of the nature of environment on one hand and the socio-material conditions of those at the receiving ends on the other hand. Comparative analysis of prevalence of poverty across world regions shows that developing nations suffer more of poverty than the developed nations. More striking is the absence or dirt of data on the level of poverty in most Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) nations. Poverty militating against the utilization of the medium and the opportunities in the e-business environment involves that described by Sen (1995) as complex deprivation. In this, most Africans are consistently incapacitated to participate in the current global economy due to lack of financial power needed to invest in the various sectors. This is simply because they lack access to credit and other complimentary inputs needed for



participation in the global economy. Further worsening the situation involves the increasing gaps in domestic earnings resulting in inequalities in wages for different categories of people (World Bank, 2002).

There is an entrenchment of inequality sectorally, with the few that are relatively financially buoyant by virtue of placement benefitting more and the majority earning incomes that are barely solving the physiological requirement of life groaning and nearing exclusion from the goodies derivable from the e-economy platform. There is a significant relationship between financial earnings and investment into national economy.

Unemployment

Poverty and enforced idleness are related. Guigni (2010) was apt to report the problematic of unemployment as bearing a two way consequences on the unemployed. People in this category lack economic resources on one hand, and self esteem and social recognition on the other hand. These two are essential to the propagation of modern e-business. E-business requires myriad of resources to thrive both in fiscal and human components and concomitantly the supportive social security. This is grossly lacking in Nigeria due to relatively limited industrial base which can be adjudged to be substantially low. In the new economy, the centrality of increased unemployment lies in the requirement for trade reform associated with globalization. The most affected category of workers are the unskilled people. Many Africans are unskilled and ultimately this makes them vulnerable to the demands of the new economy. They are less protected and this increases the level of poverty for those in this category.

It is important to note that unemployment is one of the inhibitory factors excluding most Nigerians from participating and expropriating the gains of the e-economy. By implication, the propensity to save is nearing zero among significant portion of people affected. In the case of Nigeria, Haywood and Teal (2010) locates unemployment problem to lack of economic opportunities that pays more than reservation incomes. Locally, unemployment rate has been on a steady increase. In the year 2000, 13.1% was recorded and in 2001 it was puts at 13.6%. Subsequent years revealed the following data accounting for those in the category of the unemployed: 12.6% (2002), 14.8% (2003), 13.4% (2004), 11.9% (2005), 12.3% (2006), 12.7% (2007), 14.9% (2008), 19.7% (2009) and 21.1% (2010) respectively (NBS, 2011). This has also resulted into the inability of Nigerians in most cases to have access to bank facilities needed to participate in the E-business environment. Apart from the trend of unemployment linkable to Nigeria, Narayam and Petesch (2002) also reported a corresponding increasing rate of unemployment in Ghana. Evaluating the impact of unemployment therefore, Onwe (1997) lamented the impossibility of providing a decent minimum of living conditions without employment.



Corruption

Corruption is a menace to e-business expansion. The existence of corruption in any country causes foreign investment to be driven away thus making the economy porous and vulnerable to high risks, uncertainties and distrust. Corruption creates a suspicious business climate that discourages investors whose efforts are needed to solidify local industrial base and create employment to the teeming job seekers. (Joda, 2010). Drawing from an outcome of a World Business Environment survey (WBES) reported by Batra *et al.* (2003), the major constraint to business growth affecting most developing economies is corruption. Further research also attested to the survey findings (Oluwalaiye and Awolaja, 2007; Joda, 2010). A corresponding relationship has also been found between corruption and economic sabotage (Aliyu, 2010). Corruption is viewed as a product of moral deterioration, and simultaneously involving the use of corrupt practices, bribery, negative attitude to work and capability of leading to insecurity, destabilization, destruction or undermining of the national economy or the retardation of national growth and development. It is a direct affront to individuals economic well being, peace and contentment.

The high level of corruption in significant developing societies remains incontestable. Earlier cost estimate showed that about 148 billion US dollars, amounting to 25 per cent of the official GDP of Africa is lost yearly to corruption (Ribadu, 2005; Stith, 2008). The implication of this for the citizens is quite devastating. It was also reported that 40 per cent of Africa's wealth is held overseas thereby depriving the group the benefits accruable if properly invested. Cost of business formation is also high thus reducing the gains of globalization to the continent (Stith, 2008). Prior to Ribadu's observation, it was earlier observed that sixty four percent of firms in Africa blamed loss of business growth to corruption (Batra *et al.*, 2003). In some of the nations in Africa, corruption has assumed the magnitude of becoming an institution. The percentage of total revenue of firms required to be paid every year in bribe is colossal. As from 1985 in Nigeria, the incidence of corruption in the economy is unparalleled and its consequences on its economic growth and development is unimaginable (Oluwalaiye and Awolaja, 2007:220). The state of Nigeria's corrupt related practices has been tied to political cum administrative leadership across various levels of governance in the country. Discussing the prevalence of corruption in post independence South Africa, Adams *et al.* (1998) located conflict of interests between public office and private interests as the major inhibiting factor of development. The resultant effect of this collusion constitutes what Schneider (1997) viewed as antithetical to democratic ideal, economic efficiency and social welfare. Africa's political leaders are head bent at making gains at the expense of actualizing collective social welfare.

Crime



In its global context, people are spending considerable amount of time participating in the digital business environment, and the popularity of e-relationship has spawned new breed of behaviours, some of which are, in fact, criminal (Morris, 2011). Relationally, there is a symbiotic relationship between poverty, unemployment and crime in all known societies. Living in poverty is very stressful and leads to conflict and violence. (Stern, 2006:94). Conversely, when there is corruption, the society becomes entrenched in cycles of vulnerability to crime and insecurity (Joda, 2010:57). The high prevalence of crime in societies without support for the indigents have been widely reported. In the era of e-business, the volume of commerce related risk cum crime are on the increase. The goal of a large number of criminal act is to generate a profit for the individuals or groups that carry out the acts (Ryder, 2011). New challenges are often associated with e-technological development that significantly alter the way in which individuals participate in the world of modern business and ultimately the manner in which trade and financial transfers are handled.

The era of e-business and cyber payments have sporadically changed the landscape of crime (Salay, 2002). Factor responsible for this development is that many e-platform users throw caution to the wind when they are on line, assuming apparently that they are completely safe (Hitchcock, 2006). Innocent users operate with utmost faith hoping for positive outcomes and those with the intentions of accessing illicit gains hide under the virtual cover and supported by the anonymity the medium of Internet offers to unleash diversities of crime on their victims. In cognizance of the latter, Nigeria's e-business environment have been viewed as a risky environment (Hitchcock, 1996) In determining the situation of crime and e-business in Nigeria therefore, Elliot Currie's distinction between a market economy and a market society becomes the most appropriate (Currie, 1991;Stern, 2006). Prior to the advent of globalization, Nigeria's environment can be suitably described as a market economy. There is a relative balance between public and private provisions and invariably reducing the rate of involvement in crime among Nigerians. With the coming of e-developments, a transformation came into existence. There is an excessive pursuit of private gain which correspondingly became the organizing principle for all area of social life. The balance between private and public life then shifted dramatically, both displacing group purpose and mutual responsibility needed to drive the national value on one hand and to guarantee participation and consummate the gain offered by e-business platform on the other.

Other Factors

There are three notable obstacles to the utilization of gains that e-business offers in this era of the new economy. Basically, both are closely knitted to the economic sectors of most countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa. There is the



existence of deficient industrial base consistently promoted by the abysmal functioning of the energy sector of Nigeria's economy. For over a decade, energy generation had been devastatingly erratic and this have booming ranging effect on the sustainability and growth of the industrial sector. Dirt of infrastructure constitutes one of these constraints to business growth linkable to Africa. The problem of energy generation and the high cost of production attributable to private generation of power have consistently promoted closure of most industries and ultimately the soaring rates of unemployment. Another obstacle explicable in the non-accessibility of e-business gains involves the economic structure of most developing nations in Africa which is riddled with the reliance on primary products. This is made worse by limited direct foreign investment across the region.

Most central on the scale of preference for significant Africans is what tomorrow holds while making impact assessment of economic vulnerability and quest for survival. This state of confusion is made worse by the absence of intervention and neglect. Many of the citizens are left to their predicaments and no one rises to challenge their deplorable states. Nigeria like any other Third World nations is affected by the global economic crisis. UNCTAD (2009) has located this effect in the area of trade. In most cases, more than half of the country's GDP involve trade with the Western trade partners. Trading or exchange of goods and services in the global age neglects the consequences of transaction on the domestic workers thus constituting a significant setback to the appropriation of benefits derivable in the e-business environment. This in part accounts for near massive closure of indigenous industries and at the same time swelling the distribution ventures in most African countries. The globalised political and economic system create inequalities for significant nations through the displacement of people and the denial of socio-economic rights needed to participate in the new economy.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The requirement to bridge the gap between e-commerce and the unimpeded access to the opportunities it offers lies in the mitigation of the none existence of socio-welfare packages needed to drive its success. The magnitude of official corruption recordable in Nigeria on one hand and its resultant effects culminating in unemployment and crime on the other hand remained a quantifiable setback to the effective take-off and sustainability of e-commerce in this part of the world. Poverty is quite endemic and the economic power of the citizenry is low thus becoming a disincentive to investment in the e-environment. Apart from the fact that there is a deficiency in the scientific and industrial base of the national economic sectors, innovative capacities in the utilization of myriad of opportunities offered on the e-platform is grossly lacking. There is a consistent conflict between the demands of the new



economic order and the traditional mode commonly subscribed to in Nigeria which also require a resolution.

Modern developing states such as Nigeria therefore require the re-evaluation of the operations of the new economy in order to domesticate its impacts on the local economy. Efforts should be geared toward the maximization of benefits offered by the globalized framework and this can only be achieved by addressing the social welfare issues affecting the significant portion of Africa's population. These will include the reduction in the level of official corruption, poverty alleviation, employment generation, friendly financial policies and facilities toward empowering the citizen in their quest for participation via investment in the e-business environment and the reconciliation of the conflict existent between the new economic platform and the traditional mode. A blend of local productive capacity, production potentials and the reduction in the disparities in income must of necessity be engaged. Local earnings must be made commensurate (in both quantity/amount) and quality (purchasing power) with diverse earnings obtainable across the globe.

Finally, there is the need to rebuild the decayed educational system in Nigeria. The role of education in bridging the gap between e-commerce and access to the attached benefits cannot be overemphasized. Education will help to increase self esteem, competence, creativity/innovation and technological knowhow in the citizens. Most importantly, education will serve as a medium to curb the menace of corruption in Nigeria.

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