

**POLICYPRENEUR THROUGH INTRAPRENEURSHIP AND SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP; A CALL TO LEADERSHIP AND ACCELERATED
PATH TO CAREER SUCCESS FOR NIGERIAN YOUTH.**

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Abstract

The evolving socio-economic landscape of Nigeria demands innovative approaches to career success and leadership for its youth. Policypreneurship, an emerging concept at the intersection of Intrapreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship, offers a transformative pathway for young Nigerians to accelerate their careers while driving meaningful change in society. This paper presentation explores how youth can harness entrepreneurial thinking within organizations (Intrapreneurship) and leverage innovative solutions for societal impact (Social Entrepreneurship) to influence policies and create sustainable development. By integrating these frameworks, Policypreneurship empowers young professionals to lead reforms within public institutions, private enterprises, and civil society. It fosters a mindset of proactive leadership, enabling youth to transition from job seekers to policy-driven changemakers who shape the economic and social environment in which they operate. This presentation examines key success stories, practical models, and strategies for young Nigerians to become Policypreneurs, ensuring they play active roles in governance, business, and community development.

Keywords: *Policypreneurship, Intrapreneurship, Social Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Career Acceleration, Nigerian Youth, Policy Innovation, Systemic Change.*

Introduction

As Nigeria's political and social landscape evolves, a novel paradigm is emerging: policypreneurship. This novel technique integrates intrapreneurship with social entrepreneurship to educate the forthcoming generation of policymakers. Intrapreneurship refers to the ability to think and act as an entrepreneur within an organisation, fostering innovative solutions to challenges and facilitating structural changes by leveraging existing resources (Pinchot, 1985). In contrast, social entrepreneurs integrate commercial acumen with a social impact mission to develop sustainable solutions to societal issues (Dees, 1998).

Policypreneurship is a dual-faceted approach that enables young Nigerians to progress in their careers and foster national development by influencing institutional frameworks, business cultures, and civic participation (Adejumo & Olaopa, 2021). An entrepreneurial approach to policymaking is essential due to the unique opportunities and challenges inherent in the Nigerian setting. Ogundele, Akingbade, and Akinlabi (2012) assert that a new generation of leaders is necessary to address pressing societal issues by implementing innovative solutions to longstanding challenges, including youth unemployment, political apathy, and ineffective public policies. Policypreneurs leverage their roles in government, private sector organisations, and non-governmental groups to implement reforms, advance impact-driven initiatives, and shape policies aligned with sustainable development goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015).

Through policypreneurship, young professionals can acquire leadership, advocacy, and problem-solving skills that distinguish them in competitive industries, in contrast to traditional career trajectories that typically prioritise hierarchical progression (Obadare, 2019). Policypreneurship invites young individuals in Nigeria to assume leadership roles by actively participating in the formulation of policies that impact their lives and careers, rather than remaining just observers. Policypreneurs bridge the divide between effective governance and economic

development due to their entrepreneurial mindset combined with robust policy expertise. Policypreneurship, when paired with appropriate institutional support, mentorship initiatives, and a conducive policy environment, can transform young Nigerians into visionary leaders capable of advancing their careers while concurrently fortifying their nation (Aina & Salau, 2020).

Statement of the Problem

The lack of structured pathways to leadership and advancement in Nigeria exacerbates the issues of youth unemployment and underemployment (Adebayo, 2020). Policypreneurship, intrapreneurship, and social entrepreneurship are developing as feasible alternatives to conventional entrepreneurship initiatives that fall short of their objectives due to inadequate resources, poor policies, and insufficient institutional support (Eze, 2021). Although policypreneurship possesses the potential to advance novel policies and systemic transformations, the under-representation of young individuals in positions of authority constrains their influence (Okafor & Uchenna, 2022). Intrapreneurship fosters entrepreneurial mindsets within organisations; nevertheless, insufficient procedures exist to support young professionals in Nigeria in making creative contributions to their companies' operations (Ogunleye & Akinbami, 2023). Nonetheless, many barriers to social entrepreneurship persist, including insufficient mentorship and funding, hindering its capacity to successfully tackle societal challenges and generate sustainable lives (Afolabi & Aluko, 2020). Obasi and Nwogu (2024) caution that young Nigerians risk becoming ensnared in a perpetual cycle of economic stagnation and hindered career progression unless these three models are intentionally integrated into leadership development programs. Numerous aspiring social entrepreneurs struggle to expand their impact or achieve financial sustainability due to these impediments.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to explore how policypreneurship, intrapreneurship, and social entrepreneurship can serve as viable pathways for leadership development and accelerated career success among Nigerian youth. It seeks to examine the extent to which these models can empower young Nigerians to drive innovation, create sustainable economic opportunities, and influence policy reforms.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Highlight the significance of policypreneurship in enabling youth to engage in policymaking, governance, and public sector innovation.
- ii. Investigate how intrapreneurship fosters career growth, leadership skills, and corporate innovation in Nigeria.
- iii. Examine the role of social entrepreneurship in addressing societal challenges while promoting youth employment and economic inclusion.
- iv. Identify key barriers preventing Nigerian youth from leveraging these entrepreneurial models for career and leadership success.
- v. Provide strategic recommendations for integrating policypreneurial, intrapreneurial, and social entrepreneurial skills into educational curricula, corporate training, and government programs.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Policypreneur Through Intrapreneurship

An entrepreneur is a someone employed by a reputable firm who employs an entrepreneurial attitude to innovate products and advocate for legislative reforms. A policy entrepreneur seeks to influence public policy, while an intrapreneur leverages their organisational position to advance innovative ideas and initiatives; this concept merges the two roles. A policypreneur involved in intrapreneurship seeks to modify or improve public policy in accordance with the organization's objectives and the public's needs. Innovative solutions are achieved through the integration of organisational resources, collaboration with stakeholders, and navigation of

internal and external political dynamics. By doing so, they foster a culture of creativity and agility within the organisation, enabling it to adapt to changing policy environments.

Recent reviews indicate that intrapreneurship, as a strategy of policy entrepreneurship, has gained significance for firms navigating complex policy environments. According to Ratten (2020), "Intrapreneurs play a critical role in identifying opportunities and challenges within the organisation that can be leveraged to inform policy development" (p. 123), highlighting the importance of intrapreneurship in promoting policypreneurial innovation. A meta-analysis of forty studies on policypreneurship indicates that intrapreneurs effectively facilitate policy reforms by "bridging the gap between internal and external stakeholders" (Katz & Allen, 2018, p. 456). Policypreneurship significantly enhances youth empowerment, public sector innovation, and policymaking by providing young individuals with the requisite information, skills, and networks to influence policy and decision-making.

Tarsis and Hennink (2021) discovered that youth who proactively engage in policymaking contribute their personal experiences and perspectives on significant societal issues, thereby motivating others to participate in governance and fostering an inclusive environment (Tarsis & Hennink, 2021). Couret and Trujillo (2020) discovered that "youth involvement in policy entrepreneurship can drive transformative change that reflects the values and priorities of a new generation" (p. 64), indicating that initiatives promoting youth engagement in policy entrepreneurship can yield innovative solutions to issues such as gender inequality and climate change. Youth councils and hackathons are becoming seen as platforms for young individuals to collaboratively influence policy and apply their technical expertise effectively (UNDP, 2020). This participation can lead to a more representative and responsive government, enhancing the credibility of public policy by ensuring that diverse opinions are incorporated into the decision-making process.

These findings indicate that organisations can facilitate policy reform and innovation via policypreneurship, a variant of intrapreneurship. The innovative notion of policypreneurship integrates aspects of intrapreneurship and social entrepreneurship. It presents a transformative opportunity for young Nigerians to progress in their careers while significantly influencing society. Young individuals can leverage their entrepreneurial spirit to address significant social issues such as poverty, educational deficiencies, and healthcare access through engagement in policymaking and activism (Ekhatior & Junaid, 2021). Adeyemo and Ezeani (2021) assert that this strategy promotes youth engagement in government, enabling them to influence policies that affect their communities and facilitate the attainment of their objectives. They also contribute to the overall development of the country, which is the primary objective of policy entrepreneurship (Ogunbayo & Oduwaja, 2023).

Innovation in Policy development

Innovation in policymaking is essential to address complex societal concerns and enhance governance. Policymaking involves devising answers to current issues and future needs through the integration of innovative thinking, interdisciplinary approaches, and technological advancements (Head & Alford, 2015). Bason (2014) indicates that policymakers have enhanced decision-making processes and garnered diverse views by integrating data analytics with public engagement tools. This has led to more inclusive and effective results. Moreover, traditional governmental structures have been modernised to exhibit greater adaptability in reaction to the continuously evolving environments in which they operate, facilitated by innovative policy methodologies such as design thinking and behavioural insights (Puttick, 2019).

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2017) emphasised the necessity of cultivating an innovation-conducive policy environment that enhances cross-sector collaboration and stimulates novel solutions to pressing global issues such as climate change, health crises, and social inequities. Ultimately, public trust and engagement in policymaking are enhanced by innovative policy development, hence increasing the efficacy of governmental responses. Increasingly, individuals in Nigeria are recognising that intrapreneurship—the promotion of innovation and

entrepreneurial mindset within existing organizations—can enhance career progression, develop leadership capabilities, and introduce innovative concepts into established enterprises.

This inherently entrepreneurial mindset empowers employees to assume responsibility for their tasks, resulting in innovative solutions that facilitate the advancement of both the organisation and the individuals' careers (Abifarin & Fatoki, 2020). In the dynamic business environment of Nigeria, employees engaged in intrapreneurial activities cultivate vital leadership attributes such as problem-solving, resilience, and strategic thinking (Igbong et al., 2021). Intrapreneurs leverage their unique knowledge and insights to introduce innovative ideas, leading firms that foster intrapreneurship to experience a notable increase in corporate creativity (Nwankwo et al., 2022). Nigerian enterprises can significantly benefit from intrapreneurship as a method to excel amid increasing competition and evolving market dynamics, as it promotes both individual and organisational development.

Organizational change and adaptation

These techniques are crucial for organisations to adjust to evolving market conditions, competition, and technological advancements. To remain pertinent, businesses must continuously assess and enhance their strategies, structures, and cultures (Burnes, 2017). Kotter (1996) presents an eight-step model for effective change implementation, emphasising the importance of creating a sense of urgency, forming steering coalitions, and integrating new practices into the organisational culture. Adaptive companies proactively adjust to changing circumstances; they embody flexibility and foster a culture of continuous learning and innovation (Senge, 2006). The significance of effective adaptation for long-term sustainability and growth is underscored by the observation that organisations emphasising agility and resilience in their change management strategies surpass their more inflexible competitors amid rapid globalisation and digital transformation (Zorn et al., 2011).

Concept of Social Entrepreneurship

The objective of social entrepreneurs is to achieve financial sustainability while identifying, creating, and implementing innovative solutions to social, cultural, and environmental challenges. Social entrepreneurship is essential for addressing social issues, generating employment for youth, and enhancing economic prospects. Seelos and Mair (2005) discovered that social enterprises tackle poverty, education, and health disparities among marginalised groups by integrating innovation with a dedication to social impact. Social entrepreneurship programs in Nigeria seek to assist young individuals in securing secure employment, mentorship, and training to facilitate their future development (Thompson, 2020). To enhance economic participation and mitigate injustices, social businesses often employ inclusive business strategies that engage marginalised populations (Santos, 2012). Research indicates that fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and offering genuine employment opportunities can significantly reduce teenage unemployment rates (Eiroa-Orosa et al., 2021). Social entrepreneurs distinguish themselves from traditional corporate leadership by integrating entrepreneurial principles with a mission-focused commitment to generating a positive social impact. To tackle social concerns, social entrepreneurs typically employ market-based methods to establish and manage their enterprises, as noted by Dees (1998). Their emphasis is on addressing the needs of underprivileged populations instead of generating profit (Bornstein, 2004). The concept is increasingly gaining support, with social enterprises emerging across various sectors, including healthcare, education, and sustainability (Austin et al., 2006). Moreover, social entrepreneurs may now amplify their impact and engage larger audiences due to the emergence of digital technologies. This has enabled them to develop innovative solutions to complex societal issues (López-Claros & Schwab, 2018). Ultimately, social entrepreneurship and youth engagement together enhance economies while addressing critical societal challenges.

Social Impact Metrics

Organisations, particularly social businesses and nonprofits, can assess their social effect utilising these frameworks and approaches. These measures are crucial in assessing the effectiveness of social welfare programs and initiatives aimed at addressing issues such as education, poverty, and

health. Organisations can assess their outcomes, enhance decision-making, and demonstrate their value to stakeholders through social impact assessments (Brest & Bornstein, 2013). One can utilise the Social Return on Investment (SROI) model (Nicholls, 2009) to compare social impact with investment. The Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) provide a collection of measures for social enterprises to assess their performance (Giannakis & Hardy, 2019). However, when implemented well, these measures not only enhance transparency and accountability but also facilitate our comprehension of how social programs effect societal change (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014).

Young Nigerians have numerous challenges that must be surmounted to effectively leverage social entrepreneurship models for professional advancement and leadership roles. The inability to initiate and sustain enterprises due to insufficient financial resources is a significant obstacle (NBS, 2021). A multitude of young entrepreneurs encounter difficulties in securing bank loans due to elevated interest rates and stringent collateral requirements (Odufuwa et al., 2022). Moreover, significant barriers to entrepreneurial activities arise from inadequate infrastructure, including unreliable power supply and limited internet access (Ismail et al., 2020). Nigerian schools often fail to cultivate innovative and practical thinking in pupils, resulting in a workforce inadequately prepared for the dynamic demands of industry (Osanaiye et al., 2021). Adleye et al. (2021) assert that young entrepreneurs may be deterred from establishing new enterprises due to the volatile environment created by persistent socio-political issues, such as corruption and regulatory impediments. These factors impede young individuals in Nigeria from utilising social entrepreneurship as a means to enhance their professions and emerge as future leaders.

Polycypreneurship—To assist young Nigerians in transitioning from job-seekers to policy-driven changemakers, it is essential to integrate policy-making with entrepreneurial initiatives, including intrapreneurship and social entrepreneurship. This transition not only instructs young individuals in effective leadership but also equips them with the necessary instruments to influence policies, hence potentially benefiting society and the economy (Nwagboso, 2020). Moreover, young professionals can enhance their career opportunities and positively impact Nigeria's socioeconomic environment by embracing an intrapreneurial strategy within established organisations. This will empower individuals to instigate change internally, becoming catalysts of innovation and progress in their particular domains (Bansal & DesJardine, 2014). Encouraging youth to become polycypreneurs is a strategic approach to equip them with the skills necessary for constructing a sustainable and inclusive future.

Financial sustainability metrics

The health and sustainability of organisations, particularly social enterprises and nonprofits, can be assessed using these metrics. Net income indicates profitability post-expenditure, whereas operating reserves assess the cash available to cover expenses during economic downturns (Kumar & Singh, 2020). Key metrics include debt-to-equity ratios, which assess financial leverage and risk, and liquidity ratios, which evaluate an organization's ability to meet short-term obligations (Harris, 2019). An additional crucial indicator for securing further funding is the return on investment (ROI), which evaluates the financial returns generated by projects or initiatives (Deloitte, 2021). Organisations can maintain their viability in a competitive environment by employing these strategies to make informed decisions, enhance operational efficiency, and augment their attractiveness to stakeholders and investors.

A Call to Leadership and Accelerated Path to Career Success for Nigerian Youth

The urgent need to provide young Nigerians with the information, networks, and perspective required for success in today's changing economic landscape is emphasised by the youth's need for leadership and accelerated career advancement opportunities. Developing leadership skills in Nigeria's youth is crucial for the nation's economic and social advancement, given the elevated youth unemployment rate (Adewale et al., 2021). To empower youth and equip them for leadership

positions, initiatives that prioritise skill development, mentoring, and entrepreneurship are essential (Odugbemi & Theophilus, 2020). Ogunyemi (2021) contends that incorporating leadership training into school curricula and utilising technology to enhance accessibility and engagement can enable young Nigerians to become active participants in society and their communities. This method not only cultivates future leaders but also promotes sustainable growth and social cohesion by empowering them to tackle pressing national challenges. Regrettably, young Nigerians have numerous challenges while attempting to utilise entrepreneurial models to further their careers and assume leadership positions, despite the increasing popularity of these models. Adejoro and Akinlabi (2018) discovered that 70% of Nigerian entrepreneurs were deficient in the capital required to develop or establish their enterprises, underscoring the lack of financial availability as a significant impediment. The elevated youth unemployment rate, approximately 23.1% in 2022 as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics, hinders their ability to acquire entrepreneurial knowledge. Akinwande (2016) observes that the issue is exacerbated by insufficient access to training and educational programs, particularly in areas like as innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship. Societal and cultural factors are significant; for instance, conventional wisdom often prioritises employment above entrepreneurship (Kolawole, 2015). In summary, Nigerian young have further challenges in achieving their career and leadership aspirations due to the widespread informality and corruption within the business sector, which hinders the growth and advancement of startups (Oke, 2018).

Theoretical Reviews

The word "policypreneurship" refers to the utilisation of an entrepreneurial attitude and methodologies in the formulation and implementation of public policy. It signifies an innovative perspective on policymaking wherein individuals, typically referred to as "policypreneurs," employ inventive strategies to address social issues, enhance quality of life, and effectuate systemic transformation. It is essential for Nigeria to have leaders that are both capable and sensitive, as the nation confronts numerous socioeconomic challenges. Policypreneurs are crucial in expediting transformations by fostering collaborations among public, private, and non-profit entities to identify and implement viable solutions.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Innovation Theory: A fundamental principle of policypreneurship is innovation theory, which posits that fresh methodologies can enhance society and the economy. Legislators who adopt innovative methods can convert conventional bureaucratic processes into more efficient and effective systems. Contemporary invention is intricate and multifaceted, as highlighted in recent evaluations of innovation theory. The shift from static innovation models adhering to a conventional R&D-to-commercialization sequence to more flexible frameworks incorporating user input, co-creation, and feedback loops has been a significant focus.

Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (2000) exemplify this concept by referencing the triple helix model, which fosters an innovation-conducive environment that encourages collaboration and information exchange across academic institutions, enterprises, and governmental bodies. The heightened interest in creative methodologies due to the COVID-19 epidemic has led to an increasing emphasis on the resilience and agility of innovation cycles. The company's rapid adaptation to digital services and remote work in response to unforeseen challenges exemplified quick innovation (Nambisan et al., 2019).

Institutional Theory: This notion underscores the significance of institutions in shaping conduct. To enhance policy responsiveness and facilitate change, policy entrepreneurs endeavour to modify current institutional frameworks. Recent evaluations of institutional theory have underscored its adaptability in addressing the complexities of contemporary organisational dynamics, particularly in the context of globalisation and rapid technological advancements. Scholars have stressed the necessity of understanding how organisations navigate "institutional multiplicity," characterised by

various institutional contexts with contradictory norms and expectations. Institutional entrepreneurs, characterised as individuals or collectives that advocate for, challenge, or alter institutional norms to attain legitimacy and foster innovation, have gained prominence as a consequence of this. Culture influences organisational practices and the sustainability of institutions, prompting scholars to investigate the interplay between formal and informal institutions. To gain a comprehensive understanding of organisational behaviour and the elements influencing their strategic decisions, contemporary thought advocates for the integration of institutional theory with complexity and network theories. The reviews emphasise the significance of institutional theory in comprehending organisational change and adaptation to new circumstances.

Recent reviews indicate that institutional theory is pertinent in today's complex and dynamic corporate environment (Scott 2014). According to a meta-analysis by Greenwood et al. (2017), scholars have been investigating institutional multiplicity, institutional entrepreneurs, and the interplay between formal and informal institutions. Hargrave and Van de Ven (2017) underscore the need of incorporating agency and power dynamics into institutional theory, whilst Pache and Santos (2013) highlight the critical role of selective coupling in reconciling competing institutional logics.

Empirical Reviews

Research consistently demonstrates that Nigerian young significantly benefit from a combination of policypreneurship, intrapreneurship, and social entrepreneurship in their personal and professional development. Research by Moyi and Wairagala (2021) indicates that policypreneurship fosters innovative thinking among youth, enabling them to address real-world challenges. Individuals engaged in intrapreneurial endeavours acquire essential skills such as risk-taking, networking, and adaptability, which collectively enhance long-term career success (Pinchot, 1985). Moreover, when youth engage in efforts aimed at addressing significant social issues, social entrepreneurship has been linked to improved employability and entrepreneurial skills (Choi & Lee, 2020, p. 127). Kim and Lee (2019, p. 234) discovered that "organisations that promote intrapreneurship are more inclined to achieve policypreneurial innovation and enhanced policy outcomes" following an analysis of 30 articles on policypreneurship and intrapreneurship. As previously articulated by Dees in 1998. A study involving 200 young Nigerians revealed that those engaged in intrapreneurial and policypreneurial activities exhibited superior leadership potential and career aspirations compared to their non-intrapreneurial counterparts (Olaitan, 2020). A meta-analysis of fifteen empirical studies on young entrepreneurship in Nigeria (Moyi & Wairagala, 2021) emphasised the capacity of social entrepreneurship to promote economic growth and social welfare. According to existing data (Mazzucato, 2018), policypreneurship, intrapreneurship, and social entrepreneurship offer young Nigerians avenues for leadership and swift career progression. Consequently, it is the duty of parents, educators, and legislators to cultivate an atmosphere that promotes adolescent entrepreneurship.

Contribution to Scholarship

This research contributes to the existing knowledge by elucidating policypreneurship, an innovative career trajectory that integrates intrapreneurship and social entrepreneurship to promote leadership development among Nigerian youth. It elucidates how contemporary youth may foster social and economic transformation by using current organisational and policy frameworks effectively. Empowering adolescents with entrepreneurial and leadership competencies is essential for national advancement, and this research underscores the necessity of reconciling commercial innovation with public policy. Additionally, it offers a framework for educational institutions, government entities, and corporate leaders to cultivate a new generation of leaders who are both socially aware and professionally accomplished.

CONCLUSION

Young Nigerians possess a transformative opportunity to enhance their careers and effect change through policypreneurship, which integrates intrapreneurship with social entrepreneurship. Young Nigerians can position themselves as future leaders by participating in social entrepreneurship, which addresses social issues through commercial means, and intrapreneurship, which employs innovative thinking within businesses. This approach equips youth with the leadership skills necessary for national development while fostering economic growth and policy innovation. They can redefine success beyond conventional career trajectories, impact legislative matters, and effectuate enduring change by adopting this accelerated route.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integrate Policypreneurship into Educational Curricula - To adequately equip Nigerian youth for leadership positions and policy innovation, educational institutions ought to incorporate courses on policypreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurship.
2. Implement Programs to Support Government and commercial Sector Initiatives - To aid young policypreneurs in developing successful solutions, both public and commercial sectors should establish programs that offer funding, mentorship, and incubation.
3. Encourage Youth Participation in Policy-Making - It is essential to create channels for youth engagement in governance and decision-making to provide innovative insights on national development.
4. Cultivate an Intrapreneurial Mindset by Motivating Employees to Develop and Implement Innovative Ideas - Organisations should motivate employees to develop and implement innovative ideas within their workplaces, thereby fostering a culture of innovation.
5. Optimise Online Resources – Nigerian youth should leverage online resources, including social media and digital technology, to enhance awareness, garner support, and implement scalable solutions that can effect social change and influence policy.

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