

## **Place of Creativity, Critical Thinking and Emotional Intelligent in the Prediction of Economic Sustainability among Graduates Youths in Western Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The study examined the influence of creativity and critical thinking in stabilizing economic sustainability in Western Nigeria. The study employed survey research design. The research instrument adapted for the study were titled Creativity and Critical Thinking for Economic Stability Rating Scale (CCESRS). The sample for the study comprises of 1153 graduate of Bachelor Degrees Masters Degrees and PhD Holders in various discipline in the universities across Nigeria. Cronbach's Alpha was used for the reliability and the coefficient  $r=0.92$ . The purposive sampling techniques procedures was adopted for the study. The data use for was analyzed using ANCOVA. Three hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 significant level. The result revealed the significant outcome ( $F = 408.064, p<0.05$ ). This implies that creativity significantly contributes to economic sustainability of graduates' youths in Western Nigeria. Also, it was revealed that critical thinking predicts economic sustainability of graduates' youths in western Nigeria with significant outcome ( $F = 603.694, p<0.05$ ). Implies that critical thinking was significantly contributes to the variance of economic sustainability graduates' youths in Western Nigeria. But the result revealed no significant of emotional intelligent as a predictor of economic sustainability of graduates' youths in western Nigeria with the outcome ( $F = 720.821, p<0.05$ ). It was concluded that creative, critical thinking and emotional intelligent enhance innovation among

graduating youths in Western Nigeria. And at the same time a recommendation was given for consideration.

*Keywords:* Creativity, Critical thinking and Emotional intelligence

## **Introduction**

Creativity and critical thinking are cognitive processes that engage mathematical pedagogy for its functionality (Carni., Maknun, & Siahaan, 2017). It is no longer news that Nigeria's economy suffered a setback due to bad governance and these problems of economic depression had been traced to the era of the first republic which was the avenue used by Nigerian leaders to deprive the youths and the young ones good and sustainable education. Creativity and critical reasoning were traced to the existence of informal education. African continents were endowed with vocational skills such as crafting, fishing, farming and mining which made them avert any act of criminality before the advents of the British who systematically enslaved the blacks. To worst it all the discovery of crude oil, particularly in Nigeria after the '60s, killed the passion that both young and old had for vocation and all started to pursue white-collar jobs. (Hidayati, Zubaidah, Suarsini, & Praherdhiono, 2019). Opine that creativity entails dynamic ideas that actualize innovation that solves the unemployment problem. Creativity fosters sustainable development in societies that underpin innovations that address pressing challenges in the areas of environmental conservation, healthcare, engineering and information technology). Critical thinking, on the other hand, involves analyzing, evaluating, and logical organization decisions to come out with meaningful innovations (Herlina, & Mahwar, 2017).

The school curriculum which consists of a programme of study, programme of activities and programme of guidance was not strictly followed due to changes in education policies (Henriksen, Mishra, Fisser, 2016) and as a result, the youths become job seekers after their university education instead to be an employer of labour in their field of study. Arising from the new NYSC directive, all service youths to at least acquire one entrepreneurship skill before the completion of their NYSC program. According to the scheme, they believe that these entrepreneurship skills will help a lot in reducing the unemployment problem among youths. Unfortunately, this does not address the issue because the majority of the youths after their NYSC program still look for quick jobs or something that can give them sudden wealth (Erikson, & Erikson, 2019) The ambition to get quick

riches has led to majority of the youths to perpetrating in evils acts such as internet crimes, human and drugs trafficking, insurgences and kidnappers. In a situation where few graduated youths decided to practice the skills acquired during their youth service days, the governments do not provide an enabling environment for them and as such they fled Nigeria to look for greener pastures elsewhere.

There is even a need to revisit formal policy on education made some decade ago which introduced the 6334 system of education where secondary school students from junior secondary 1 to 3 were exposed to vocational education. This policy would have helped Nigeria then if fully implemented Nigeria would have been one of the leading states in the world but the leaders, we have been self-center leaders they killed the initiatives of the patriot Nigerians who want to salvage our collapsed economy because of their selfish interest (Odebode, 2022).

The advocacy for a sustainable economy cannot be realized if Nigeria continues to rely on the importation of goods and services. Countries like China, India, Japan and America to mention but a few built their economy through critical thinking and creativity the act of their creativity made them leaders in the world of technology (Abdurrahman, Setyaningsih & Jalmo, 2019). Creativity and critical thinking are cognitive processes that bring about innovations (Irwanto, Rohaeti, & Prodjosantoso, 2019). Creativity commands originality that comes with planning, systematic organization of ideas, exploration and discovery and diversifies productivity. Creativity and critical thinking are the backbone of the economic structure of a nation (Corral-Lage, Iñaki, Peña, & Peña-Miguel, 2021).

Sk & Halder (2020) see creativity and critical thinking as fundamental goals of emotional and inner experiences in analyzing and evaluating information objectively, using logic and reason to form judgments and make decisions. Emotional Intelligence is the individual's ability to develop skills of innovation that can promote economic sustainability (Shahin, 2020).

Dewi, & Mashami, (2019) opine that the way out of economic imbalance is to engage graduating youths in tasks that require critical reasoning that can make them innovative. Creativity involves acts of innovation through logical reasoning and critical thinking that propel originality in humans. Nigeria as a nation get it right if our educational system had been funded in the area of research. Research is the act of deep thinking which guides the government in policy-making. Good governance romances the researchers that predict the economy of a nation. Demir (2015) in his

perspective says that the growth of any nation lies on a formidable education because education is a cognitive process that involves analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting information to form reasoned judgments or decisions. Based on role play by creativity, critical thinking and emotional intelligence graduating youths in various fields of Nigeria's education sector should develop and marry their emotional intelligence with creativity and critical thinking to come out with unique technology that can move the whole world.

### **Statement of the problem**

Creativity is the act of displaying intellectual capability and establishing intuition rather than depending on or interacting with others to agree on a particular concept. But it is unfortunate that many developing countries especially Africa faced economic depression because of their unproductive. A nation cannot grow if the level of its productivity is low creativity they say brings about innovations and innovations accrue from critical thinking. Nigeria faces economic instability because it is not innovative enough to explore its mineral resources to generate wealth. To worsen the matter, the education sector in Nigeria was rendered nonfunctioning to embark on creative research that can make Nigeria compete with the rest of the world. Our professors were frustrated out of the universities by the politicians so that their shortcomings would not be revealed to the whole world. Not only these, government make policies that throw Nigerian youths out of school's policies like exorbitant school fees, non-payment of teachers' salaries and depriving promising youths to get admission into higher education. All these factors kill the passion of young for education and therefore kill their creativity and critical thinking and these result in economic instability.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the influence of creativity and critical thinking in stabilizing economic sustainability in Western Nigeria.

#### Hypotheses

**H01:** creativity will not significantly predict the economic sustainability of graduates' Youths in Western Nigeria

**H02:** critical thinking will not significantly predict the economic sustainability of graduates in Western Nigeria

**H03:** Emotional intelligence will not significantly predict creativity and critical thinking on gender graduates' economic strength in Western Nigeria

**Methodology**

The study examined the influence of creativity and critical thinking in stabilizing economic sustainability in Western Nigeria. The study employed a survey research design. The research instrument adapted for the study was titled Creativity and Critical Thinking for Economic Stability Rating Scale (CCESRS). The sample for the survey comprises 1679 graduates of Bachelor Degrees Masters Degrees and PhD Holders in various disciplines in the universities across Nigeria. The purposive sampling techniques and procedures were adopted for the study. The data used was analyzed using ANCOVA.

**Analysis of Data/ Results**

**Table 1: Regression of Creativity a Predictor of Economic Sustainability of Graduates Youths in Western Nigeria**

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Multiple R = 0.742  
 Multiple R<sup>2</sup> = 0.761  
 Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.195  
 Std. Error of the Estimate = 9.188

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Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	34448.238	1	34448.238	408.064	.000*
Residual	141654.690	1678	84.419		
Total	176102.928	1679			

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Table 1 displays the regressions on creativity to predict the economic sustainability of graduates' youths in Western Nigeria. The result shows a significant outcome (F = 408.064, p<0.05). This implies that creativity significantly contributes to the variance of economic sustainability of graduates' youths in Western Nigeria. The result shows a multiple correlation coefficient of 0.442 and an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.761 thus showing that cognitive engagement accounted for 76.1% of the

variation in the dependent variable (students' attitude towards Mathematics). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 2: Regression of Critical Thinking as a Predictor of Economic Sustainability of Graduates' Youths in Western Nigeria**

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Multiple R = 0.514  
 Multiple R<sup>2</sup> = 0.615  
 Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.264  
 Std. Error of the Estimate = 8.785

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Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	46593.589	1	46593.589	603.694	.000*
Residual	129509.339	1678	7.181		
Total	176102.928	1679			

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Table 2 revealed critical thinking predicts the economic sustainability of graduates' youths in western Nigeria. The result shows a significant outcome (F = 603.694, p < 0.05). This implies that critical thinking significantly contributes to the variance of economic sustainability of graduates' youths in Western Nigeria. The result shows a multiple correlation coefficient of 0.514 and an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.615, thus showing that critical thinking accounted for 61.5% of the variation in the dependent variable (critical thinking). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, meaning that critical thinking determines the economic sustainability of graduates and youths in Western Nigeria.

**Table 3: Regression of Emotional Intelligence in the Prediction of Economic Sustainability of Graduates' Youths in Western Nigeria**

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Multiple R = 0.548  
 Multiple R<sup>2</sup> = 0.223  
 Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.231  
 Std. Error of the Estimate = 8.568

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Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	52917.141	1	52917.141	720.821	.000*
Residual	123185.787	1678	73.412		

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Total	176102.928	1679
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Table 3 revealed that emotional intelligence predicts economic sustainability of graduates’ youths in western Nigeria. The result shows a significant outcome ( $F = 720.821, p < 0.05$ ). This implies that emotional intelligence significantly contributes to the variance in economic sustainability of graduates’ youths in western Nigeria. The result shows a multiple correlation coefficient of 0.548, an  $R^2$  value of 0.223, and a 22.3% variation in the dependent variable (emotional intelligence). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 4: Summary of the step-wise Regression of independent variables on students attitude towards Mathematics**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Coefficient Standardized	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	8.321	1.797		4.631	.000
Creativity	.373	.059	.150	6.355	.000
Critical Thinking	.613	.062	.248	9.957	.000
Emotional Intelligent	.714	.055	.325	12.876	.000

A measure of the cumulative effects of the three predictor variables, creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence on the economic sustainability of graduates’ youths in western Nigeria can be seen in the above table considering the Beta values in the table.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed significant creativity in economic sustainability among graduates’ youths in Western Nigeria. The result points out that to be creative requires critical thinking, and the end product brings about innovations. This was in line with the findings of Hajhosseini, Zandi, Hosseini Shabanani, & Madani, (2016) who agreed that critical thinking brings about interaction which stimulates creativity in the mindset. Although, this contradicts the opinion of Hsu, (2021) who believes that critical thinking can have its sustainability through engineering ethics courses.

This study also revealed that creativity, critical thinking and emotional intelligent relate together to set cognitive domain in action. Wahyudi, Ayub & Prayogi (2018) in their finding deem it fit that the development of inquiry-creative promotes creativity and critical thinking ability. This corroborates the findings of Heaviside, Manley, & Hudson, (2018) who opine that education arose creativity, critical thinking ability and meaningful innovation.

However, the result of this study emphasized that emotional intelligent does not necessarily contribute to the economic sustainability of graduates and youths in western Nigeria. This result contradicted the finding of Orakci, (2021) which explained the relationships between cognitive flexibility, reflective thinking skills and Creativity. This means that Creativity, critical thinking and emotional intelligence work together.

### **Conclusion**

Creativity and critical thinking emphasize divergent thinking, associative thinking, analytical thinking, objective evaluation, skepticism, and systematic reasoning. These complement each other and can be seen as two sides of the same coin. They provide a framework for evaluation and refinement that expands the range of possibilities solutions and innovations.

By cultivating both creative and critical thinking skills, individuals can enhance their ability to navigate complex problems, make well-informed decisions, and drive innovation in various

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made based on the findings:

- i. The government should fund the education sector to enhance research
- ii. Entrepreneur education should be implemented in the school curriculum
- iii. Teachers should embark on tasks that enhance students' creativity and critical thinking in Nigerian schools.
- iv. Training and retraining programs policies on skills acquisition should be the focus of Nigeria.



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