

INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

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ABSTRACT

Currently, every other business entity is being urged to be creative and innovative to remain competitive. Creativity and innovation are essential ingredients necessary for survival and success of businesses. For organizations to compete effectively in the modern world, they have to be creative and innovative. They need to continue evolving by applying new ideas to the way they perform their business processes. Specifically, an institution that is able to adapt to new and emerging technologies stands a better chance of thriving. It is evident that times are changing and hence what used to work before may not necessarily work today and customers are increasingly demanding better services and products while competition is getting stiffer every day. This implies that no organization can afford to be complacent if they want to remain in business.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVITY INNOVATION

1.1 Introduction

Creativity and innovation are essential ingredients necessary for survival and success of businesses. For organizations to compete effectively in the modern world, they have to be creative and innovative. They need to continue evolving by applying new ideas to the way they perform their business processes. Specifically, an institution that is able to adopt to new and emerging technologies stands a better chance of thriving. It is evident that times are changing and hence what used to work before may not necessarily work today and customers are increasingly demanding better services and products while competition is getting stiffer every day. This implies that no organization can afford to be complacent if they want to remain in business. Hence, continuous stream of innovative services and products are not options; they are a requirement. Companies can only be described as having a competitive edge if they are able to offer better services or products, faster services, quality services and products at cheaper rates. This can only be achieved through continuous creativity and innovativeness.

While innovation involves exploitation of new ideas, creativity is concerned with development of original and novel ideas that are likely to generate more revenues. This paper addresses some of the major aspects of these two related areas. It will also offer a conclusion in terms of a learning experience.

1.2 Creativity and Innovation

Creativity is the process of conceptualizing, visualizing and bringing out new ideas. It involves generation of new ideas that are geared towards improving efficiency and

effectiveness of a system (Nteere, 2012). Further, Plsek (2003) defined creativity as the process of connecting and rearranging knowledge through flexible thinking in order to generate new idea that are useful to the mankind. This implies that creativity is involved with generation of new ideas that are able to solve a problem.

Innovation on the other hand could be defined as the implementation of an idea in a way that bring about some recognizable change to an individual or organization (Plsek, 2003). Tidd and Bessant (2009) simplifies this definition further by stating that innovation is the process of exploiting new ideas. Hence, innovation involves practical implementation of new ideas that have been generated creatively. In essence, innovation is the final product that people sees and appreciate. This implores the importance of not just being creative but going the extra mile to actualize the dream into a product or a service and creating value out of them.

Table 1: Difference between creativity and innovation

Creativity	Creates something new	New knowledge and ideas
Innovation	Transform ideas into something usable	New products, services and processes

1.3 History of Creativity and Innovation

Discussion about creativity and innovation has been taking place for hundreds of years. Generally, the history of creativity and innovation can be traced during the time of civilizations. These innovations have continued to transform traditional cultural systems with unexpected social consequences. Creativity and innovations can therefore be said to be both creative and destructive at the same time.

Kaufman and Stenberg (2010) trace the history of creativity and innovation in Western history through the past 2,000 years. The history of research on creativity began with the

recognition that research constitutes an effective and practical way of learning about and understanding the world around us. Aristotle, Kant, Plato among many other early philosophers have a lot to say about creativity and innovation.

The conceptualization of creativity came about as a result of the desire for freedom where the discussions and arguments were directed at the notion of human beings being released from institutional doctrine (Kaufman and Stenberg, 2010). This implies that the desire to do things differently from the prescribed routine created the urge for people to try other alternative ways of doing things, which would be more meaningful to them. The need to solve problems in a more affordable way was the driving force for people to become creative and innovative.

Elsewhere, the earliest western view of creativity is traced from the biblical story of creation that is given in the book of Genesis. The story denotes the idea of the artisan doing God's work on earth. This became an inspiration for man's realization that they have the capacity to create new and better things due to their likeness with God (Kaufman and Stenberg, 2010).

The history of creativity and innovation is also easily traceable from the evolution of early humans. The evolution history shows human beings creating simple tools to the complex, large-scale networks that influence most of contemporary human life (Palmer, 2010).



Source: Encarta Encyclopedia (2009)

Prehistoric tools provides evidence of innovative tools used for hunting and gathering by the early peoples

These tools are referred to as the Oldowan tools and they date from about 2.3 million years ago. These first innovators were nomadic groups of people who used the sharp edges of stone to process food. By about 40,000 years, humans had become innovative enough to produce fire, make a variety of tools such as pear-shaped axes, scrapers, knives, and other instruments

of stone, bone, and other materials. They creatively made tools to make clothing and build shelters for protection from vagaries of weather (Merritt, 2008). What was evident from these innovations is that these people used locally available resources to solve their problems and as time went by, the innovations continued to become sophisticated and complex.

The agrarian period that ushered in the farming communities in about 10,000 BC in places such as Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), Tigris and Euphrates ignited the desire for more innovations. For instance, in order to facilitate efficient transportation of farm produce and minerals, two-wheeled carts were constructed about 3500 BC, in Mesopotamia. The wheel is considered as one of the most important inventions in history. It was discovered more than 5000 years ago and has been very essential in construction of mechanical devices (Merritt, 2008).

1.4 Theories of Creativity and Innovation

1.4.1 The High Level Model of the Mechanics of Mind

The model was developed by Osherbon and Smith (1990) through their collection of works on '*Thinking*.' The model suggests that the reality of the world happens all around us all the time. This reality is experienced through our senses and mental subsystem of perception and memory. Taking action requires judgment and choice. The actions ultimately changes the reality of the world. Higher order thinking processes direct attention, make memory searches efficient, and retain veto power over judgment and choice (Plsek, 2003).

1.4.2 Schumpeter's Business Cycle Theory of Innovation

Schumpeter's Business Cycle Theory of innovation suggests that innovation leads to increased investments and business fluctuations. Schumpeter defines innovation as the changes in the method of production and transportation, production of a new product and change in the industrial organization. The model has two stages, namely the first

approximation and the second approximation. The first approximation emphasis on the primary impact of innovatory ideas while the second approximation focuses on subsequence responses obtained from the application of the innovations. In the first approximation, a firm that decides to undertake a new innovation may need financing through bank credit. The firm with then charge a higher price for the product to be able to repay the debts. Other firms try to imitate this product and also raise more funds from the banks. The innovation gets wide acceptance in the market, marking the period of prosperity and expansion. But at some point, the product floods the market making the prices and profits to decrease. The prices continue falling further marking the process of recession until a point of equilibrium in the economy is restored (Bwisa, 2011).

The second approximation is marked by a period of speculation. Informed by the primary wave of expansion, the investor borrows heavily for expansion purposes. Consumers also expect the price to increase in future making them go into debt. The heavy indebtedness becomes a disaster when prices falls. Both investors and consumers find it hard to meet their obligations which leads to panic and depression (Bwisa, 2011).

1.4.3 Critical Thinking Process Model

Creative thinking is the kind of thinking that relates to ideas that were previously unrelated with the purpose of discovering or developing something new. Ideas evolve through a creative process whereby imaginative individuals germinate an idea, nurture them and develop them successfully (Bwisa, 2011).

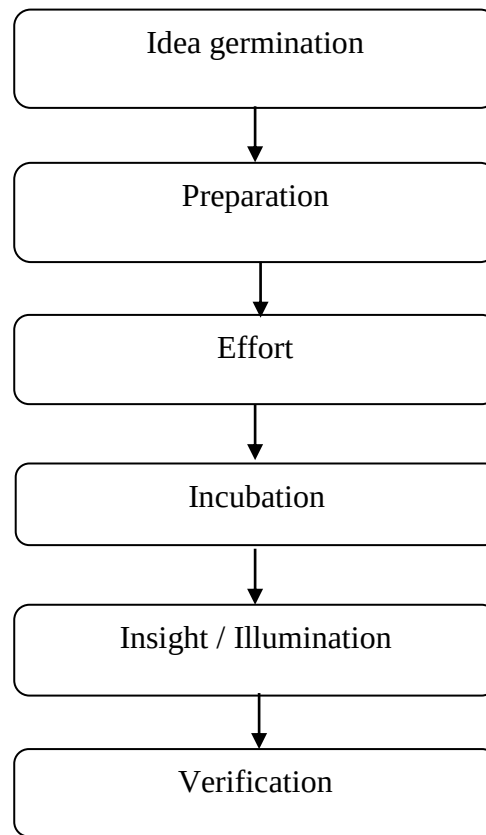


Figure 1: Critical Thinking Process Model

Idea Germination: This is the first stage of critical thinking model that involves an individual coming up with an idea through curiosity about a need or a gap that need to be filled.

Preparation involves a conscious answer to a problem. This entails looking for more information about the problem and how it can be solved.

The effort stage involves gathering of facts about the problem and analysis of that information gathered. At this point, a solution may be found or even a frustration after reaching a dead end.

Incubation stage is a process whereby the idea is allowed to grow without intentional effort by allowing the sub-conscious mind to assimilate information.

Insight or illumination stage occurs when an idea resurfaces as a realistic creation. This is the *eureka* moment that gives the answer to a problem.

Verification stage involves refining the idea into application. It is the last stage of this process where the idea or the product is finally produced into the market (Bwisa, 2011).

1.5The innovation Process

The innovation process is characterized by four inter-related phases which Tidd and Bessant (2009) identify as follows:

- Phase one of the process involves a search for new ideas. New ideas can be generated through copying others, market signals, regulations or even competitor behavior.
- Phase two involves the selection of the best ideas that are likely to make the organization succeed.
- Phase three is concerned with implementation by committing resources, time and energy to actualize the idea.
- Phase four involves the process of making the product or the new innovation beneficial to the organization or the individual especially in terms of commercialization.

Innovation process is thus demonstrated in the figure below:

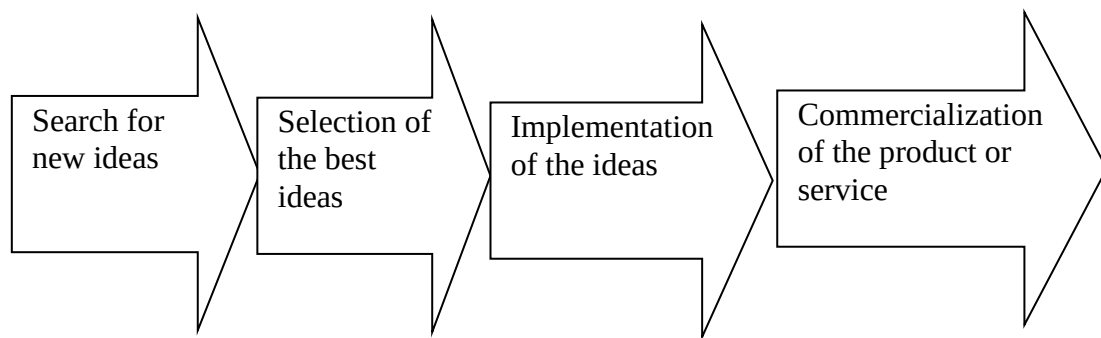


Figure 2: Innovation process

The illustrated innovation process requires that organizations create a sustainable culture and environment that allows innovation to flourish. This may include facilities to carry out experiments, evaluation and implementation. This environment should also allow people to openly question and challenge processes and allowed to offer suggestions for improvement without intimidations. An innovative organization demands that different components in an organization work in harmony to enable innovation to flourish. In this regard, Tidd and Bessant (2009) identifies several components that need to be focused on as follows:

- There should be a shared vision, appropriate leadership to steer the group to the right direction and the will to innovate. Innovation is essentially disruptive, risky and costly and therefore not for faint hearted.
- There is need for an organization to have the appropriate structure that enhances creativity, learning and interaction between all members.
- It is necessary to have a pool of key individuals who champions and energizes the other members towards coming up with innovative ideas.

- Teamwork is an integral part of the innovative organization where all members are able to contribute their ideas freely without any tension.
- High involvement innovation requires that all members are involved in continuous improvement of the processes in an organization.
- The working environment should be able to enhance creativity among members. A favorable climate should consist of aspects such as trust and openness, challenge and involvement, support, risk taking and freedom.
- The innovation team should be able to embrace an extensive learning network both internally and externally where ideas can be probed and tested.

1.6 Creative Problem Solving Techniques

There are some established techniques for improving creativity, which according to Nteere (2012) include the following:

- Brainstorming:** Brainstorming is ideal for both creative problem solving and generation of new ideas. This method encourages free flow of ideas where participants are allowed to suggest answers to a problem. These discussions are devoid of criticism or condemnation and is characterized by a free atmosphere.
- Reverse Brainstorming:** This method is meant to stimulate innovative thinking through identification of everything wrong about an idea followed by a discussion of how to overcome the problem.
- Gordon method:** The group members do not know the exact nature of the problem to avoid preconceived ideas and behavioral patterns. The facilitator then mentions a general concept associated with the problem, upon which the group members respond by expressing a variety of ideas. Then, a concept is developed, followed by related

concepts through guidance by the facilitator. The actual problem is then revealed to enable to group to make suggestions for implementation and final solution.

- d. **Free Association:** This process involves developing an entirely new solution to a problem by writing a word or a phrase related to the problem, followed by other new words which end up creating a chain of ideas and eventually a new product ideas.
- e. **Forced Relationship:** This is a process of forcing relationships among some product combinations. The new combination and eventual concept is developed through a five step process. Elements of a problem are isolated and an attempt is done to try to establish their relationship. The new relationships is recorded in an orderly manner. The resulting relationships is analyzed to establish ideas or a pattern. New ideas are then developed from this pattern.
- f. **Collective Notebook Method:** This is a technique where one carries a small notebook containing the statement of the problem. Blank pages and any other background data is distributed. The participants are asked to consider the problem and possible solutions. Recording of ideas at least three times in a day. At the end of the week, a list of the best ideas is developed, along with any suggestions.
- g. **Brain Writing:** This is a form of written brainstorming whereby the participants are given more time to think than in brainstorming sessions. It is a silent, written, generation of ideas by a group of people. Each member is supposed to write three new ideas on a piece of paper.
- h. **Attributes Listening:** This requires that the facilitator list down the attributes of an item problem and then look at them from different perspectives. Originally unrelated objects are brought together to form a new combination and possibly new ideas that can satisfy a need.

- i. ***Big-dream Approach:*** This approach requires that the facilitator dreams about the problem and its solution by thinking big. Every possibility is recorded and investigated without regard to the negatives involved or resources required.
- j. ***Checklist Method:*** This technique involves developing a new idea through a list of related issues or suggestions or statements to guide the direction of developing entirely new ideas or concentrating on specific idea areas.

1.7 Sources of Innovation

It is necessary to ask ourselves where innovations come from. Those ‘Eureka’ or ‘I have found it’ moments related to people like Archimedes when he discovered the laws of buoyancy in a bath tub. A number of sources are discussed below:

Knowledge push

According to Tidd and Bessant (2009), knowledge push is a notable source of innovation which comes about as a result of a scientific research. A lot of discoveries are made through scientific research.

Disruptive innovation

This source of innovation is generated out of the need to meet some needs that are lacking in a segment of the society. Through working with this segment, an innovative idea is likely to surface.

Mass Customization

Mass customization is the ability to offer highly configured bundles of non-price factors configured to suit different market segments (Tidd & Bessant, 2009). The need to customize products based on customer needs forces organizations to come up with innovative ideas.

Users as Innovators

This source of innovation is underpinned on the suggestion that customers have ideas of solutions they would want to have. Some of these innovations are driven by frustrations of not getting what they want. User-led innovation may also arise from a community which comes up with innovative solutions.

Extreme Users

This source of innovation originates from users living under extreme environmental conditions. Hence, any innovative idea that appears to solve some of their specific problems is likely to be applied back into the mainstream population.

Watching Others

Imitation or learning from others is a viable source of innovation. It is very common for organizations to visit others that they think are more superior with the aim of benchmarking. This method encourages transfer of good practices between organizations.

Recombinant Innovation

This source of innovation involves combining the old ideas into new contexts. In this case, a well known innovation from a different area is considered for a current situation and modified accordingly.

Regulation

Changes in rules and regulations or a policy is likely to force people into the drawing board. In the process, as people strive to comply with the new regulations, new ideas and innovations are generated.

Futures and Forecasting

Imagining and exploring future trajectories good stimuli for new possibilities and innovations. Creating models and prototypes of products is a better way of testing new products.

Accidents

Accidents, mistakes and unexpected events may be sources of innovations especially when critically analyzed. Flemming's discovery of penicillin is an example of such innovations. Alertness to notice such mistakes and capitalize on them is the key word.

1.8 Characteristics of Innovative People

According to Sternberg (1999) research into the lives of highly creative individuals shows that creators put a lot of enormous amounts of time and energy into their work, and they tend to be totally involved in and obsessed about their work. Some of them are known to take their work with them all the time to wherever they go. Hence, total prolonged emersion into their delightful work is likely to generate creative ideas.

Nteere (2012) observes that a creative person should be open-minded, adventurous and has the urge to discover. They should be analytical, curious and not satisfied with the current state of the affairs. They are also purposeful, decisive, courageous, self-motivated and persistent. Concurring with the above views is Chamorro-Premuzic(2013) who notes that an innovative individual need to have an opportunistic mindset to enable them identify gaps in the market. They also need to have some formal education or some kind of training to enable them interpret opportunities. They also need to be proactive and possess a high degree of persistence and a dose of prudence by being cautious and risk-averse. These individuals also need to be able to mobilize resources from various sources.

Similarly, Newquist (2015) was of related opinion when he opined that innovative people need to have divergent thinking by not just looking for one correct answer but search for a

multitude of ideas and possibilities. Insatiable curiosity appears prominently as an important attribute coupled with infectious passion to fuel the innovative fire and unshakable perseverance to succeed. Likewise, compelling leadership is essential to be able to mobilize a team that can help to realize the dream.

CHAPTER TWO

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION FROM INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 Introduction

Companies that have been able to withstand competition and technological changes are those that are able to evolve by being creative and innovative in the ever changing world. Similarly, it is clearly evident that companies that are reluctant to change with time are easily swept away by the wind of change. For instance, giant companies that failed to change and innovate such as Kodak Camera and Nokia in the recent past were easily overtaken by the versatile ones such as Samsung, Sony and Apple. However, we have cases of companies that have consistently embraced creativity and innovation to their advantage. Some of those companies include Google from United States and Safaricom's Mpesa from Kenya. This chapter discusses the two products with the aim of highlighting their core areas of innovativeness.

2.3 Creativity and Innovation from an International Perspective: A Case of Google

Of all the world innovations, Google stands out as one of the most revolutionary. No other invention compares with that of Google in terms of providing fast access to tonnes of affordable information of any kind. Google is definitely indispensable to the modern man whose first call for information is almost always the Google search engine. In fact, to many people, Google is synonymous to the Internet.

Google was launched in 1998 by Sergey Brin and Larry Page who were then university students at Stanford University in the Computer Science department. Propelled by the popularity of their innovation, these two innovators are currently some of the richest individuals in the world. Larry is rated as the 9th richest individual in the world with a net

worth of US \$ 51 billion while Sergey is the 13th wealthiest individual in the world with a net worth of US \$ 47.2 billion. Google business model is based on its ability to undertake powerful and superior searches that operate on its patented, custom designed sophisticated programs running on hundreds of thousands of machines that they custom make (Vise, 2008).

According to Google Inc. (2014), the company has come up with eight principles of innovation. These principles can be summed up as follows: Improving products ten times better than those of competitors (Think 10x), launching products and then listening to the feedback, sharing information through collaborations and hiring the right people. Google also advocates the use of 70/20/10 model, which entails doing 70% of projects that are dedicated to their core business, 20% to those related to their core business while 10% is dedicated to projects unrelated to their core business. Others include looking for ideas everywhere, use of data instead of opinions and to focus on users instead of the competitors.

To remain relevant, Google has continued to innovate and is also in a buying spree acquiring any innovative company they think could add value to their production line. To indicate the seriousness of Google to remain relevant, the current number of acquisitions amount to more than 184 companies where Google has spent over 28 billion US Dollars. Some of these high value acquisitions include Motorola Mobility (12500 USD), Nest Labs (3200 USD), DoubleClick (3100) and YouTube (1650 USD), to name but a few (Varma, 2012).

Acquisition of these companies has not been in vain. For instance, upon acquiring Motorola, Google was able to raise the subsidiary's revenues from \$10.8 billion to \$17.5 billion in a short while (Varma, 2012). In this respect, the Google Motorola deal was meant to wade of tough competition and foothold from both Samsung and Apple. Similarly, Google was able to add more patents to its growing portfolio while inheriting the long history of innovation in communication technology from Motorola Mobility.

The Google creativity and innovation model is explained in Figure 2 below.

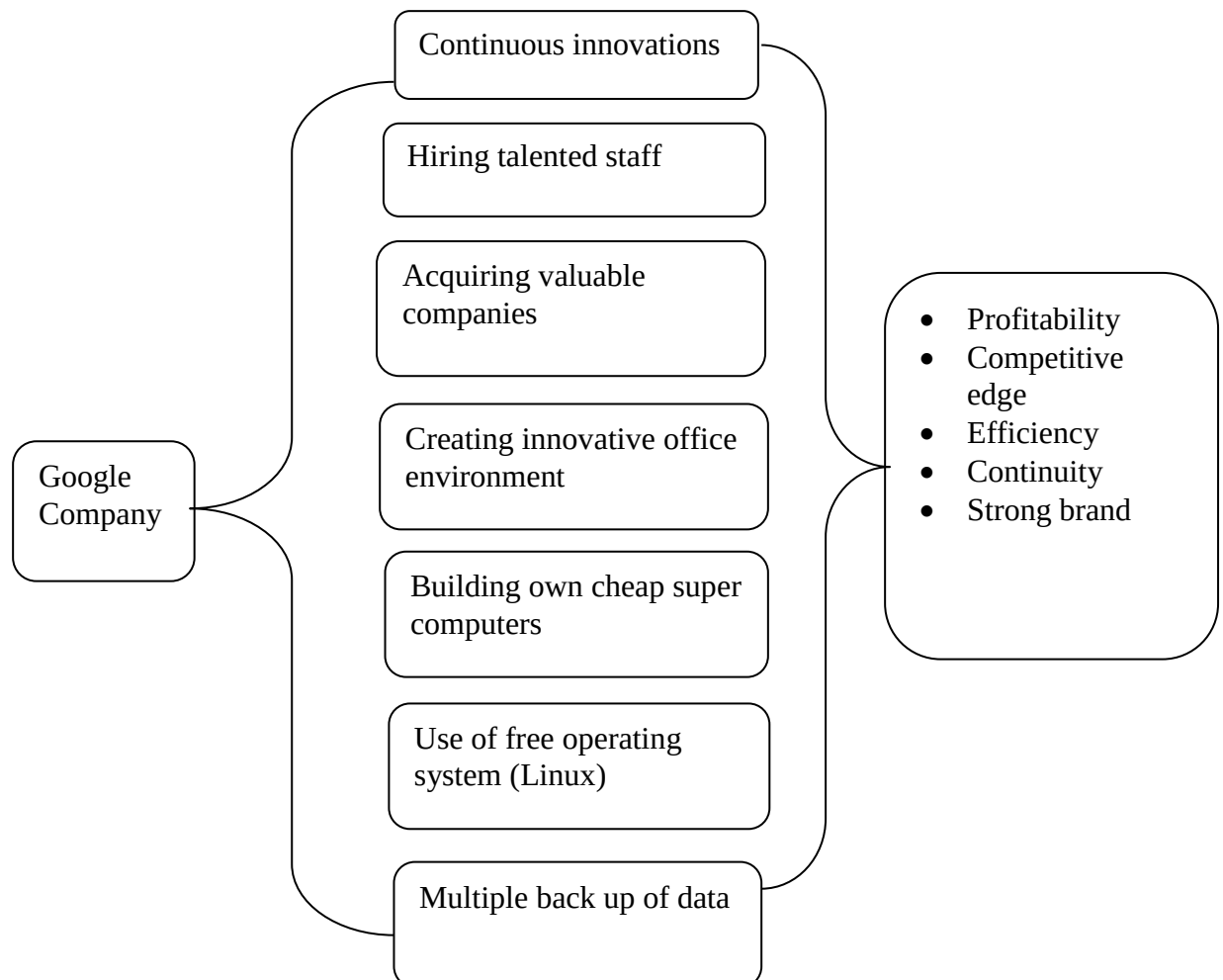


Figure 3: Google innovation model

Figure 2 illustrates how Google has used innovative means to remain relevant, profitable and at a competitive edge. Some of these strategies include continuous innovations, hiring skilful and talented staff and acquiring valuable companies. Other strategies include creating a working environment that allows creativity, building cheap super computers, using free operating systems and carrying out multiple back up of their data for security purposes.

2.4 2.3 Creativity and Innovation from Local Perspective: A Case of Mpesa in Kenya

Prior to the coming of mobile money services, few Kenyans owned bank accounts and very few had access to financial services (Adam, Collier & Ndung'u, 2010). Lack of access to financial services is one of the main hindrances to economic development among many people especially in developing countries. Financial services facilitate savings, borrowings and investments. To address the problem of financial access and inclusion, a mobile phone based money transfer service dubbed 'Mpesa' for sending and storing money was unveiled in March 2007.

One cannot talk about innovation in Kenya and fail to mention Mpesa which is a product of Safaricom Mobile Phone Company. *Mpesa* is a mobile phone based electronic payment system that has revolutionized the way people send money to one another; store it and how they pay bills from the comfort of their seats. 'M' in 'M-pesa' stands for mobile while 'pesa' is a Swahili word meaning money. Mpesa can therefore be loosely translated to mean mobile money. This mobile payment platform is now being used by close to 29.6 million subscribers out of which 20.5 million are active monthly Mpesa users. The ease at which people are able to send money to one another, make purchases from online businesses and pay all manner of bills using the Mpesa platform has endeared itself to majority of the Kenyans, who some couple of years back were not banked. As a result continuous creativity and innovativeness, Safaricom, the parent company is the most profitable company ever in Kenya raking in 233.7 billion Kenya Shillings in a year.

According to Adam et al (2010), the Mpesa business model is based on simultaneous high number of transactions from one person to another that are anchored around multiple access points around the country through agencies. The agents handle deposits and withdrawals while offering other auxiliary services such as mobile line registration, replacement and sale of air time. Customers' funds are held in a special trust account with commercial bank by the name Commercial Bank of Africa. Similarly, customers using the Mpesa application platform are able to send, receive and save money, pay bills, buy airtime and even access money from different banks. The most important thing about these transactions is that they are real-time. A closer look at Safaricom Company shows that they have continued being creative and innovative by coming up with new ideas and products that resonates well with the common ordinary person. For instance, for purposes of saving money using the same platform, a new product by the name *Mshwari* was unveiled where one can save and even get credit facilities.

To begin with, Safaricom managed to establish an extensive network of retail agents scattered all over the country to ensure that whoever needs Mpesa services in any corner of the country is adequately served. A robust marketing campaign has also created awareness and trust among most Kenyans. In the process, Safaricom has created not only a conducive environment to conduct businesses but has also created employment to so many people in the country.

Mpesa has now partnered with other financial institutions such as the microfinance institutions and banks as a way of entrenching their foothold in the financial sector. The latest partnership is with PayPal, a reputable international money payment platform. This partnership implies that most Kenyans can conduct business with the rest of the world by transferring money between PayPal and Mpesa.

The future of Mpesa can only be bright. For instance, McKinsey Global Institute (2013) which is a management consultants firm predicts that by 2025, most Africans will be conducting online business transactions in form of goods and services to the tune of \$75 billion (Sh 7.5 trillion). Hence, most of these online payments will be facilitated by mobile money platforms such as Mpesa.

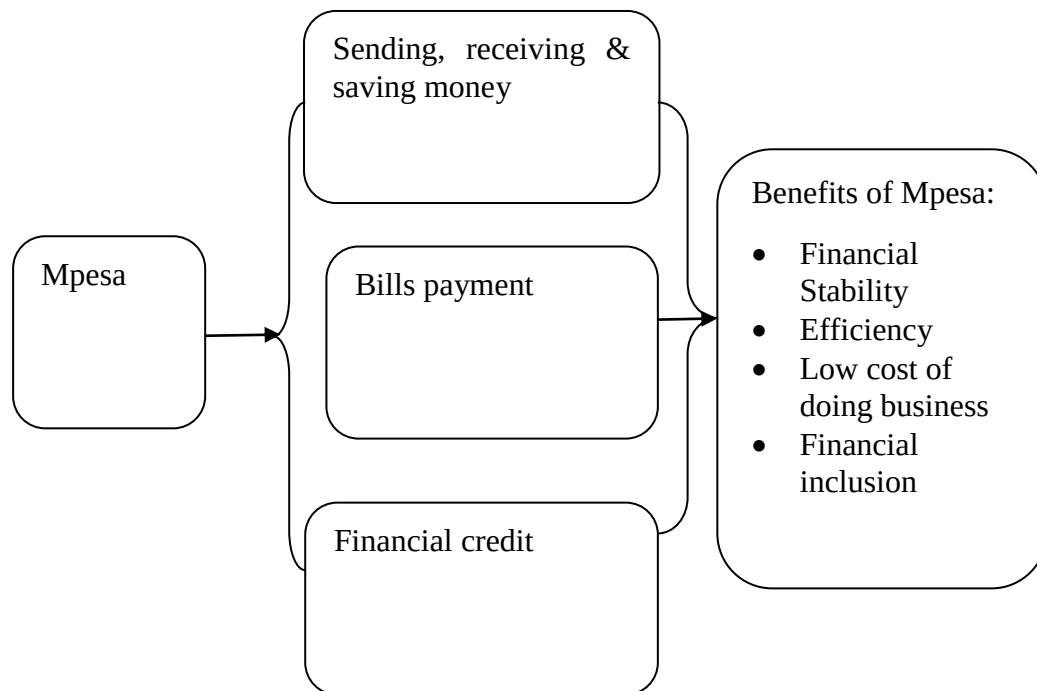


Figure 4: Mpesa Innovation model

CHAPTER THREE

CONSLUSION / LEARNING EXPERIENCE

3.1 Innovation in the Education Sector: The Case of RACHEL (Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education Learning)

The internet is an important tool for providing information to students, researchers and ordinary citizens. Universities are some of the heaviest consumers of information from the internet. This implies that internet is a necessity to any university that is involved in research and creation of new knowledge. However, the developing world is experiencing a digital divide due to either expensive or inadequate access to the internet. World-wide, about 5 billion people lacks internet access. Access to the internet in many African countries is still expensive and slow compared to the developed world.

To minimize the digital divide, the university came up with an innovative idea of acquiring equipment that can simply be regarded as ‘internet in a box’ having been loaded with a lot of academic content from the internet and elsewhere. It contains tutorials, e-books, e-journals, videos, Wikipedia among many others with the ability to disseminate this information through an inbuilt Wi-Fi hotspot. Moreover, the beauty of it all is that it can be accessed not just from computers but also from a variety of other gadgets such as tablets and smartphones.

The gadget behaves and feels like the internet only that it is offline. This therefore, implies that its content is accessed free of charge.

This gadget is known as RACHEL (Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education Learning). It was founded by the World Possible. It enables people to access world class content without internet access. Moreover, it allows one to add their own preferred content while allowing learners to learn at their own pace as they can repeat tutorials until they

understand the concepts. It emits wireless signal enabling students to connect to its contents within the range of 150 feet.

One of the advantages of this kind of innovation is that it is a cheap way of accessing quality information by countries that do not have proper access to the internet or to avoid exorbitant internet access fees as the gadget has no recurring costs.

This innovative gadget can be accessed by 20-50 users simultaneously and has the capacity of 500GB where 300GB is loaded with academic content, which can remotely be updated while 200GB is left free for one to load their own content. The gadget can also be operated in areas without stable electricity as its battery life is 8 hours after charging.

Hence, this innovation has enabled universities in the developing countries where internet is both expensive and slow to cheaply access world class academic content thereby reducing the digital divide.



A picture of RACHEL-Plus gadget

3.2 Indigenous Cultural Knowledge

A closer look at the African traditional culture reveals that there is a tremendous pool of indigenous knowledge that if tapped can have far reaching impact to the modern Africans. It is for this reason that our university strives to hold annual cultural weeks that culminates in a major Cultural Day. During these celebrations, different students from different nationalities display their traditional cultures with the aim of educating one another about different aspects of the African culture. The benefits of these cultures to the modern students and others alike cannot be overemphasized. The following creativity and innovation can be adapted to the modern world for the benefit of humanity.

3.2.1 Instilling Moral Values

To begin with, the traditional African culture has strong moral values that were grounded on a strong religious foundation. Indeed, according to Mbiti (1990), the African is notoriously religious, which implies that whatever they did, the fear of God and the will to do justice to others was the guiding factor. Hence, there is a lot to learn from the African traditional culture especially if we want to live in harmony with one another.

3.2.2 Traditional Foods

The modern world is characterized by consumption of fast foods that are not healthy leading to poorer diets and nutritional losses. These kinds of foods are believed to induce the onset of diseases such as cancers, diabetes, and high blood pressure among others. One of the activities carried out during the Cultural day event is cooking of various African traditional foods that are normally rich in nutrients, fibre and are organic.

3.2.3 The African Traditional Justice System

In many of the presentations of the different African traditional cultures, the theme of conflict resolution is very common. Unlike the modern justice system, the traditional justice system was more concerned with ensuring healing of relationships and not so much about law enforcement and restoration of justice. As Melton (2005) puts it, while the Western style justice system is adversarial and conflict oriented the African justice system aims at building a trusting relationship and promoting resolution healing among the disputants. The mediatory role of the elders who were respected and impartial was the basis of the strengths of the traditional conflict resolution mechanism. It is instructive that Africans advocate for returning to normalcy as soon as possible after a conflict. This attribute is exemplified by Magesa (2014) when he describes how the colonialists were fascinated by the ability of Africans to forgive and forget within a short period of time.

Similarly, Kariuki (2012) notes that western style courts are prone to corruption; they are lengthy and torturous, bureaucratic and expensive, unlike the traditional dispute resolution mechanism that is easily available, inexpensive and not prone to corruption. The traditional system was entrusted to elders who are revered and respected in the society and thus their judgment is usually acceptable to those seeking their services.

In supporting the role that the traditional indigenous knowledge can play in alleviating modern problems, Mutembei (2014) observes that community elders, chiefs and witchdoctors are playing an important role in reducing the large number of disputes that could have ended up in Kenya's law courts.

3.2.4 Traditional Medicine

Many Africans cannot access the mainstream health services due to financial constraints. This has driven many of them into seeking services of the traditional herbalists. For instance, in South Africa, as is the case in other African countries, many people are known to use

traditional remedies for their physical and mental well-being before visiting modern health-care centres (Burris & Christenson, 2007). African herbalists have a vast knowledge of different kind of herbs and the ailments they are able to cure. This implies that many people are able to cheaply access medication from locally available resources.

Many African traditional communities are known to have treated forests as sacred places and no one was allowed to destroy such forests that not only provided them with places of worship but also medicine for their healthcare. The knowledge of types of plants, their names, and ailments, how to prepare and use traditional treatments was passed on from one generation to the other through apprenticeship. Grenier, (1998) suggests that to preserve this kind of knowledge, it is important to carry out research in areas of nutrition, human diseases, traditional medicine and use of herbal remedies, locations of medicinal plants, proper times for collection, most useful parts and methods of preparing and storing medicines. These cultural practices are preserved through cultural events held annually. This innovation is thus ideal even to the current generation. It is therefore necessary to create a herbal farm to grow the traditional herbs and plants for the benefit of the society.

3.2.5 Illustrations of the Cultural Diversity



**Dr. Ezekiel Mutua CEO, KFCB and Br. Francis Veye fms
Ag. Principal Marist International University College Cultural celebration 2017**

Guest of honor launching the cultural day celebrations



Cultural Attire of the people of Madagascar





Cameroonian traditional Attire



Rwandese dance exhibition









Malagasy Traditional Dance



Attentive audience during a cultural day activities



A traditional dance



- **Dress code**
- **Dance**
- **Food**
- **Cultural Creativity and innovations**
- **Education and environment**
- **Knowledge creation and sharing (indigenous knowledge)**
- **Unity and diversity**

3.7 Raffia palms: A Case of North West Region of Cameroon

- **Social drink**
- **Furniture**
- **Fruit**
- **Firewood**



The Author and a student admiring a creative combination of rose flowers









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