

## Entrepreneurship Success and Sustainability Strategy: A Challenges of Today's Entrepreneurs

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Publication Online: 31 July 2019  Corresponding Author: <b>Dr Habu Bah-yaye Adamu</b>	Over the years researchers and authors have been battling toward instituting entrepreneurial activities {Kruger, 2004} Alas! We are living in an exciting times that are characterized by major power shifts: there is no need for large and complex infrastructures and organizations to transform an idea into a tangible solution. Today, an individual that is empowered with a good idea, determination, and some easily accessible tools can challenge entire industries (pascual, Klink &grisales, 2011). This literature review focused on those successful entrepreneurs the means and strategy suitable for sustaining the success recorded, in which a brief definition, background/history of entrepreneurship was examined its importance to economic development to apt the reader especially those with little or absolute knowledge in entrepreneurship, but the sole focus of this paper was harnessing those strategy/model relevant for sustaining an entrepreneur. The debate all round was people fall in and out of entrepreneurship, because sustainability strategy-model has not been instituted in our business activity (Majid &Koe, 2012). Therefore, the paper debated on some models relevant for sustainable development.
<b>KEYWORDS:</b> Entrepreneur; Entrepreneurship; Success; Sustainability; development& Strategy	

### Introduction

Entrepreneurship has received the attention from researchers for many years. Traditionally, it has been linked to wealth generation and economic growth (Tilley, & Young, 2009). Then, this study has gone through a process of development throughout the years. Many fields of entrepreneurship have emerged; for instance, one of them is sustainable entrepreneurship (SE). SE can be considered as an emerging and new field in entrepreneurship study (Gibbs, 2009; Hall *et al.*, 2010; Hockerts and Wüstenhagen, 2010; Richomme-Huet and Freyman, 2011; Majid &Koe, 2012). Specifically, it links the objective of sustainable development to wealth accumulation among entrepreneurs (Tilley and Young, 2009, Majid &Koe, 2012) and has changed the ways entrepreneurs perceived on environmental resources issue (Graham, 2010, Majid &Koe, 2012). This notions gives birth to an idea to contribute toward enlighten our entrepreneurs a model to follow in shining away from liquidating.

Global climate change and the accelerating depletion of natural resources are just two of several phenomena indicating that the world is not well aligned with the concept of sustainable development (Brundtland Commission, 1987; Hockert& Rolf, 2013). The severity of global sustainability challenges leads to an increasing awareness that incremental solutions will not be enough to maintain critical levels of

natural and social capital (Russo, 2003; Hockert& Rolf, 2013), and hence there is an increased interest in sustainable entrepreneurship as a phenomenon and a research topic (Cohen and Winn, 2007; Dean and McMullen, 2007; Hockert& Rolf, 2013). Sustainable entrepreneurship research has evolved from two separate research streams on environmental and social entrepreneurship (Zahra *et al.*, 2009; Hockert& Rolf, 2013), and has traditionally focused on small firms, sometimes down to the level of the individual entrepreneur. This inclination to focus on sustainability-related start-ups and their founders is perhaps an adequate counter-trend towards the inherent large-firm focus in existing corporate sustainability literature. This paper had acknowledged the effort made so per equally added its suggestion base on the existing view. Our entrepreneurs of this days may note that acquiring sustainability strategy is per better than even venturing into entrepreneurship. Pulling a capital that will not be sustain and increase, is like throwing a bag of salt into a river, it will melt and never be gain again.

### 2. Background of Entrepreneurship:

Entrepreneurs are romanticized as being the cornerstones of a successful capitalist economy. But where did entrepreneurship begin? Who were the first entrepreneurs? (Geoffrey, &Wadhvani, 2006). Although this paper intent

capitalized on sustainability strategy but yet little need to be known about the history of entrepreneurship. Many had said a lot in different approach and cutting across the transition of the history. This paper decided to summarize from grassroots adapting the history traced by Johnson Hur, (2015)

- **The Beginnings of Entrepreneurship and Trade**  
Believe it or not, the first entrepreneurs can be traced back to nearly 20,000 years ago. The first known trading between humans took place in New Guinea around 17,000 BCE, where locals would exchange obsidian (a volcanic glass prized for its use in hunting tools) for other needed goods – like tools, skins, and food (trade by barter) This early type of entrepreneurship continued for millennia.
- **Entrepreneurship and the Agricultural Revolution**  
The first big shift in entrepreneurship took place during the Agricultural Revolution, which occurred about 12,000 years ago. This was a fundamental shift in human history. There was no longer a need for everyone in the community to be directly involved with food production. It was more efficient to let a smaller number of farmers handle food production while the rest of the population focused on other tasks
- **The Expansion of Trade Routes from 2000 BCE Onward**  
As cities sprang up around the world, entrepreneurship took an important turn again. The right international trade. Of course, In this way, entrepreneurs were responsible for spreading ideas and technologies around the world.
- **Entrepreneurship and the Invention of Money**  
One of the key developments in the history of entrepreneurship was the invention of money. Starting in 2000 BCE, early forms of money have been discovered. Obviously, currency changed the fate of entrepreneurship forever.
- **Beginnings of the Marketplace**  
Markets became more and more popular. Larger populations required larger marketplaces. The population spurt starting around 1470 solidified the New World from 1550 to 1800
- **Entrepreneurship in the 1800s Onward:**
  - **Machines and Markets**  
Many people see the last 200 years of entrepreneurship as being fueled by “machines and markets”. The competition of the marketplace regulates self-interest and leads to a type of entrepreneurship that rest on innovation, improves the standard of living, and increases the wealth of nations.

➤ **The Industrial Age and Entrepreneurship**

The Industrial Revolution marked yet another profound shift in the history of entrepreneurship. Starting in the 18th century, entrepreneurship moved from small-scale production in small towns to large-scale production in big cities.

➤ **Post World War II Entrepreneurship**

After World War II, entrepreneurship began to change for a few different reasons.

First and most importantly, the economy was increasingly global and becoming more global every decade. Better means of shipping and communication made it easy for entrepreneurs to sell products and services to a global audience.

➤ **Modern Entrepreneurship**

The global economy – combined with modern infrastructure and communications – has introduced a new age of competition to the world of entrepreneurship. No longer are you competing with entrepreneurs in your tribe, town, village, or city: you’re competing with entrepreneurs all over the world.

**Where Does Entrepreneurship go from there?**

As years went by, the means of entrepreneurship changed dramatically but the core reasons for entrepreneurship remained the same. Everywhere in the world, entrepreneurs arose to address demand by providing supply. They innovated and invented new technologies to solve problems that nobody had ever solved before.

At the same time, competition has ensured that the entrepreneur’s self-interest doesn’t cause an overall negative impact on society. Competition prevents entrepreneurs from overcharging for goods or underpaying employees, for example.

These foundational structures of entrepreneurship aren’t going to change anytime soon. For that reason, entrepreneurs will continue to have a special place in society and will continue to be found at the forefront of innovation” (Nagarajan, 2011; Hur, 2015)

**Who is an entrepreneur? entrepreneurship to nation building:**

The roles of entrepreneurs towards national development cannot be over emphasized. Entrepreneurs plays vital role in moving the economic state of any nation to higher and better one. Entrepreneurship makes people think deep (creative thinking), proffer solutions, offers services and create employment. Some of the key roles of entrepreneurs towards nation building among others are

- Innovation

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- Economic Development
  - Job Creation
  - Wealth Creation & sharing
  - Balanced Regional Development
  - GDP and Per Capita Income
  - Improved standard of living
  - Increase exports level
  - Improves community development (social responsibility)
- ([Relivingmbadays](#), 2013; Aladekomo, 2014; Idimudian, 2016 & evoma, 2017)



**Figure 1:** 7 key roles of an entrepreneur in economic development of a Country: Adopted; evoma; (2017)

### Overview of some sustainability model:

Sustainable entrepreneurship is in essence the realization of sustainability innovations aimed at the mass market and providing benefit to the larger part of society (Schaltegge & Wagner, 2010) “Without sustainable organizations there is no sustainable development, thus, no future.” (Weidinger, 2014). Sustainable entrepreneurship has been widely acknowledged as the answer to the environmental (Dean & McMullen, 2007; Cohen and Winn, 2007; York, Venkataraman, 2010; Schaltegge & Wagner, 2010) and social challenges (Zahra et al., 2009; Schaltegge & Wagner, 2010) that we as society face in this Century.

- **Triple bottom line (TBL) or 3P** – People, Planet and profit. In 1997 Elkington introduced the concept of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), or 3P (People, Planet and Profit) with the book *Cannibals with Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of Twenty-First Century Business*. This definition attempts to provide a more practical direction suggesting to balance the three dimensions of sustainability: the economical, the human and the environmental systems. Despite the critics behind using the TBL (Elkington, 1997) to define sustainable development, the framework is widely used to explain how sustainable entrepreneurs operate. Balancing economic health (profit), social equity (people) and environmental resilience (planet) through entrepreneurial behaviour is what identifies

a sustainable entrepreneur (Hockerts & Wüstenhagen, 2010).

- **Social, environmental and CSR as sustainable entrepreneurship:**

The concept of social entrepreneurship has emerged in the late 1990s and it has only recently reached the academic literature (Hockerts and Wüstenhagen, 2010). The concept of social entrepreneurship is getting increasingly more attention by the scientific community within the sustainable entrepreneurship field (Cohen, Smith, & Mitchell, 2008). Today the concept of CSR is related to societal expectations for a business to behave ethically (Hall, Daneke, & Lenox, 2010). CSR can take many forms and can be, to a greater or lesser extent, integrated in the business model of a company and/or it could refer to the activity it generates (to clients, employees, shareholder, communities, environment and society). CSR makes sure that a company does not harm to the society or environment where it operates. CSR aims at “doing less bad rather than more good” (Hall, Daneke, & Lenox, 2010). Sustainable entrepreneurship lays “in between for-profit and not-for-profit, in between cash and cause. The main goal of the business activity of the sustainable entrepreneurs should be ‘looking for prosperity’” (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2011).

In our view, sustainable entrepreneurship strives to create value that is beneficial for society through opportunity creation, and development in an uncertain environment. This implies risk-taking abilities, innovative attitude and alertness together with determined ethical concerns.

- **Success of start-ups as sustainable entrepreneurs**  
Start-ups are an important cluster of the sustainable entrepreneurship literature. *What makes sustainable start-ups successful?* Is one of the questions addressed, from different point of views, by several scholars. For example, new venture creation is an outcome of the nexus of individuals, environment, and process (Kirzner, 1979), In fact, some of the main topics addressed in the SE literature are business model innovation (e.g. Boons and Lüdeke-Freund, 2013; Bocken, 2014; Jolink and Niesten, 2015), team composition, individual (entrepreneur) traits (Ardichvili et al., 2003; in Gibbs, 2009; Nwaigburu and Eneogwe, 2013. Lans et al., 2014), financing means (Miller et al., 2010; Bocken, 2015), policy interactions (e.g. Pinkse and Groot, 2015; Barrutia, and Echebarria, 2012; Bianchi and Noci, 1998), institutional influence (e.g. Spence et al., 2011; Stephan et al., 2015; Katre and Salipante 2012; Lepoutre et al., 2013). In the field of social entrepreneurship, studying 33 social ventures, identified as contribution to success: the entrepreneur’s social network; dedication and team contribution; managerial experience; capital at the funding stage; acceptance of the idea in the public discourse (legitimacy); ratio of volunteers to salaried employees; cooperation with public and non-profit sectors (stakeholder network) and market readiness’ (Sharir& Lerner, 2006; & Graham, 2010). Social network and business models was identified as the main factors for a social entrepreneur’s financial and social successes” (Gibbs, 2009). In the field of clean-tech, it was found that business model design is determinant for sustainable energy technologies’ (Wüstenhagen&Boehnke, 2006). In the area of sustainability (TBL), Juravle and Lewis (2009) identified tactics that sustainable entrepreneurs adopted to remote sustainable investment: making the business case for sustainable investment; forming coalition with mainstream investors; industry networking and gaining credible expertise. Bocken (2015) found that the business model design is a key factor for success of sustainable start-ups’, while according to his study, lack of suitable venture capitalists is one of the main threat for success. (e.g. Nwaigburu and Eneogwe, 2013; Lans et al., 2014).

- Koe et al. (2014) identify the correlation that sustainable small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) have between a **propensity for sustainable entrepreneurship and conscious sustainable attitude**; (2) social norms (social pressure to undertake environmentally behaviors); (3) perceived desirability (a person’s perception on attractiveness of a behavior); and (4) perceived feasibility (a person’s perception on his or her capabilities, also associated to self-efficacy and the desire to be ‘self-employed’). Koe et al. (2014) conclude that social norms have a great impact on both, entrepreneurial and sustainable behaviour. All factors have a positive correlation with a propensity for sustainable entrepreneurship.

While exploring the drawbacks of start-ups in comparison to large establish firms, Hockerts and Wüstenhagen (2010) argue that start-ups are normally focusing on one single environmental or social issue for which they try to excel (and are not fitting the purpose of addressing multilateral issues).

### Limitations and Research gaps

This literature review has been developed based on a careful selection of papers. Despite this, the study shares some of the well-known limitations that offer opportunities for future research. Although the literature selection was carefully done, we might have overlooked potential contributions mainly due to the interdisciplinary nature of the selected topic. The entrepreneurship discipline is in itself a complex and generic field within business studies and the same holds true for sustainability; both are heterogeneous fields and addressed in different sciences. Future research may explore research lines other than the ones we addressed here.

Additionally, the analysis was restricted to the main topics that currently dominate the field of research. These are important discussions and already offer a challenging research agenda. Future research may complement the analysis and include other themes.

### Conclusions

The definitions of some keyword was explored not necessarily the concern of the paper, but rather keep the reader apt to the knowledge of entrepreneurship. The topic sustainable entrepreneurship equally discoursed in narrow shape considering the time frame of the program and viewer/listeners precious time. Sustainable entrepreneurship strives to create value that is beneficial for society through opportunity creation, development and impact creation, in an uncertain environment. This implies risk-taking abilities, innovative attitude and alertness together with determined ethical concerns. It is a solution for the economic, environmental and societal challenges. Reviewing the existing literature, its’ explored the prominent role played by

both, start-ups and established for profit firms as well as for non-profit sector in innovation and the creation of sustainable added value for our society. The latter represents today’s challenge for a new hybrid-type of organizations: effectively balancing societal gains, environmental protection and economic benefits. This is the key driver for sustainable entrepreneurship research. The paper in particular highlighted the importance of understanding of a successful sustainable entrepreneurship.

With the limitations acknowledged, we believe that this paper provides an in-depth overview of state-of-the-art research in the emerging field sustainable entrepreneurship identifying a research agenda for scholars and practitioners.

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