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Nike Davies-Okundaye: building a family social enterprise

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The entrepreneur: Nike Davies-Okundaye

Monday 23 May, 2011, was Nike Davies-Okundaye's [1] 60th birthday. As she reflected on the years gone by, she considered the number of lives that had been transformed as a result of the skills acquired in her workshops. Nike had taught various people to use art as a means to earn a decent living. Many, who previously thought they had no future, were now living fulfilled lives as respectable citizens of society. In 1982, Nike used her meagre savings at the time, to set up a workshop to train people in arts and crafts and so equip them with a means of livelihood. Some of those women, who had been pulled off the streets by Nike, were now employers of labour and property owners. She reached out to people in need long before she was able to attract any form of support for her work. Her painful experiences while growing up gave her a sense of solidarity with those in need and moulded her personal philosophy:

You don't need to have a lot before you can help others. With the little you have, you can always do something to help [...] I suffered a lot while growing up and I don't want to see other people suffer.

Nike's enterprise has since grown from having one "gallery" which was a part of her house, to having three purpose-built workshops and galleries. The galleries housed different forms of art works ranging from textile art to wooden and bronze sculptures, beadwork and hybrid forms of art. The Nigerian artists represented ranged from the renowned to completely unknown roadside artisans, in line with Nike's belief in "giving everyone a voice". She accepted works of art that had been rejected by other galleries. She wanted to give the young artists an opportunity to showcase their works alongside those of better known artists and hopefully enable them make some sales to earn a living.

Nike dedicated her whole life to learning, teaching, producing and trading arts and crafts. Anyone who cared to learn was welcome at any of her workshops and they could choose to learn as many types of arts and crafts as they wanted. Nike was so intent on improving anyone who walked into her workshop, that even when they lacked interest in art, she offered them a role in administration. Without government support and with only an elementary school level education, Nike over the years transformed thousands of lives. She lifted people in, a good number of cases, from penury to prosperity.

Nike's top management team was, however, not recruited on the open labour market. Her immediate family (husband and children), held various positions in the enterprise. Now that she was getting on in years, Nike wondered about when she could no longer run the enterprise. She also wondered whether her children would remain faithful to her core philosophy of helping the needy. Nike had always run the workshops and the gallery business as a single entity although the gallery was the cash cow that funded the workshops. Nike's suffering while growing up had led her to develop an immutable determination to pull others out of poverty. However, Nike's children had had a much less challenging upbringing and she could see that her children and husband leaned more strongly on the business side

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of her enterprise though they always supported her in running the workshops. She wondered what she could put in place to ensure that when she was no more, her children would continue her work with the less privileged (Exhibits 1-3).

Arts and craft in Nigeria

The context of this case is a traditional rural setting in Nigeria. Nigeria is located on the west coast of Africa. The country is home to over 250 ethnic groups with varying cultural traditions, therefore encompassing a highly culturally diverse people. With an estimated population of 163 million people (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2011), Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, and the seventh most populous country in the world (United Nations Development Programme, 2011). Its urban and rural population distribution is estimated at 50.5 and 49.5 per cent, respectively, (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2011). The informal sector is a significant contributor to country's economic activity and is estimated to be worth a minimum of \$187 billion (International Labour Organisation, 2011). It represents between 50 and 75 per cent of non-agricultural employment (International Labour Organisation, 2011).

Similar to most emerging economies, huge income disparities exist between the rich and poor in all the states. This influences the dominant behaviours exhibited in the different settings. Nigeria is currently the third largest economy in the Africa (after South Africa and Egypt) and the largest economy in the West African region[2]. With a year on year growth rate of 8.9 per cent between 2001 and 2010, Nigeria is currently among the ten fastest growing economies in the world (*The Economist*, 2011).

Nigeria's art can be traced back over 2000 years (Chesi and Merzeder, 2007), revealing a well-developed artistic and technologically based civilization (www.motherlandnigeria.com/arts.html (accessed November 29, 2011)). For instance, the Ife art tradition was very attractive to Europeans in their trade with Nigerians in the twelfth century. The Nigerian art tradition has also gone through different artistic expressions, characterized by different eras such as the neo-traditional era after the Benin Massacre of 1879 and the neo-colonial era after the introduction of European academic realism (Chukueggu, 2010). Today, the Federal Ministry of Cultural and Social Welfare governs the art industry in Nigeria. Nevertheless, most of the artistic and literary creations result from individual initiatives. Thus, the arts and crafts segment of the industry remains highly fragmented. It is also largely in the informal sector, though a significant number of players currently operate in the formal sector.

Women in rural communities in the western part of Nigeria tend to be actively involved in the production of arts and crafts and form professional guilds to build network support for each other. In addition to providing a vehicle to make ends meet by reviving production and patronage of traditional arts and crafts, the guilds aim to attract support from the government and other institutions (Akinbogun and Ogunduyile, 2009). The industry includes a wide range of arts, including entertaining arts, sculptures, masks and paintings. In the entertaining arts segment, the film industry in Nigeria, popularly known as Nollywood, has grown to become the second largest movie industry in the world after Bollywood in India as reported by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) in 2009 (www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30707 (accessed November 29, 2011)). Art is an intrinsic part of African tradition and is extensively used in cultural activities such as ceremonies festivals, dances and theater (Exhibits 4-6).

The making of an entrepreneur

Nike's husband and most of her children were fully involved in the enterprise. Her great grandmother, grandmother and mother passed down the skills with which she started the business. Indeed, Nike's mother was a fifth generation craftswoman and started teaching Nike arts and crafts from the age of two. She was given little chores like picking threads and cutting them to a particular length for weaving cloths. As she grew, a little loom was made for her to learn to weave traditional cloths. When Nike was six, her mother died, leaving her and her four-year-old brother with their father who was too poor to take care of them. As a result,

Nike lived with her grandmother, who also passed on the following year. After her passing, Nike was left to the care of her great-grandmother, Ibitola.

Although far from wealthy, Ibitola was very talented and hardworking and was thus able to keep a roof over their heads. Ibitola taught Nike how to make traditional tie and dye fabrics, known locally as adire. The fabrics were designed using natural indigo dye from plants. Starch made from boiled cassava and alum, was applied to the fabric using chicken feather-tips to make various designs on the cloth, which was then dipped into the dye. Just as Nike's mother and grandmother had done, Ibitola taught Nike various types of crafts like woodwork, ironwork and beadwork. Nike explained:

In those days, parents taught their children whatever profession they practiced. If one was a farmer or a teacher, the children were taught to farm or to teach other children. If one was a carpenter, their children learned carpentry. These days, they call it child-labour but it isn't child labour. It was how children were traditionally prepared for the future. I was an expert cloth weaver by the age of six.

Nike's life was challenging growing up. To ensure Nike got some education, her great grandmother, Ibitola, moved to a town where the cost of primary education was very low. Each student was required to pay 15 shillings per term. Although Ibitola traded the art works she made, all the money she earned went towards rent payment, utilities and food. Nike therefore had to pay her way through school, by doing menial jobs after school, such as working as a labourer, carrying heavy buckets of concrete at construction sites. On a daily basis, before going to school, Nike woke up as early as 5 a.m. and walked about three miles to the stream to fetch water. The water was for drinking and cooking, so she could only wash her feet before leaving for school – often without breakfast. For food, Nike depended largely on the fruits in season. She harvested them directly from the trees and these were sometimes, the only “meal” for the day. When Nike eventually began to sell some of the art works she produced, she and her great-grandmother were able to feed better. In spite of the biting poverty, Nike's great-grandmother inculcated in her the values that were to become her guiding principles in life:

My great-grandmother taught me to be clean, hardworking and honest. She constantly told me my future was in my hands because I could be anything I wanted to be as long as I worked hard and was honest.

Eventually, Nike's great-grandmother died, and she had to go back to her father. To enable Nike continue her education for free, Nike's father joined the Catholic church so she could go to the free Catholic school in the town where he lived. Nike's education, however, did not continue beyond primary school level (sixth grade). Nevertheless, by this time, she had become well versed in the various forms of art she learned from her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother and was selling her works to support the family.

When Nike turned 13, her father tried to give her in marriage to a wealthy man. However, Nike thought otherwise and ran off with a theatre group to another town called Kaba. While with the theatre group, Nike developed dance skills and according to her, acquired one more form of art she could sell as an entertaining artist.

New experiences

Nike continued to sustain herself through the sale of her art works. In 1968, she started working with a very popular artist in Oshogbo town. They fell in love and Nike married him in spite of her father's refusal. Although polygamy was traditionally accepted in that town, Nike could never have imagined he would marry 14 other women after her. He treated them all very badly once they became his wives and did not cater financially for them or their children. According to Nike, “You practically had to queue for a kiss!”

Nike had always been able to take care of her children using the earnings from the sale of her works. She therefore did not depend on her husband to fend for herself or her children. Through her art works, she had achieved a certain level of popularity among art connoisseurs. In 1972, Nike was recruited by a US agency in Nigeria as part of a group of ten African artists, to teach indigenous African art in the USA. The initial team of selected artists

were all male and the agency insisted on having at least one female artist on the team. Nike made it into the group because someone in the agency was told about her work and immediately went in search of her. During the trip to the USA, each artist was paid for teaching African arts to US students. Although Nike could not speak English fluently, she found a way to communicate with her students and other artists. It was also arranged for them to meet other US artists to exchange ideas and learn new skills. The experiences on this trip expanded Nike's knowledge of art and gave her new ideas. Among other things, she also learnt that American women were the only wives of their husbands. She was surprised that a woman could actually have the privilege of having a husband to herself as she had been brought up to believe that polygamy was a normal way of life. The concept of a one-man-one-woman marriage was in sharp contrast to her situation at the time, and definitely a preferred alternative for her.

Spreading new knowledge

Nike returned to Nigeria with new ideas of ways in which she could apply her art. Her connection with the international community facilitated the sale of her works. Through the US embassy in Nigeria, she was connected to an association of foreign spouses married to Nigerians. The ladies sometimes organised tea parties to which Nike would be invited to exhibit her works. At that time, Nike could speak hardly any English, but the ladies who were charmed by her personality and amused at her attempts to communicate with them, frequently bought up her art works. They also visited her gallery often with friends who in turn invited other friends to the gallery. Business was good for Nike.

Apart from producing and trading a wider variety of works, Nike tried her best to disseminate the knowledge she had acquired. Part of the information she disseminated to the women she taught was that marriages abroad were between a man and only one wife. Just like Nike, the women who had been indoctrinated otherwise in the predominantly agrarian town, were shocked and exclaimed, "Please take us to that place where we can have a man to ourselves!"

Nike had also resolved to teach her "co-wives", with whom she tried to maintain amiable relationships. She taught them various forms of art as a means to cater for themselves and their children. They appeared to have no alternative source of income besides what their husband infrequently provided. Given her husband's behaviour and her lessons abroad, Nike decided to take charge of her future and started thinking of building a house for herself and her children.

Once the house was ready, she told her husband she had rented a house and wanted to move there with her children to decongest his home. He agreed to her plan especially as she was quick to add that she would be at his house daily to continue to fulfil her responsibilities as a wife as well as her duty to him since she was part of the team of artists that worked for him. Nike's husband, however, soon discovered that the house was actually hers. He was furious and made life even more difficult for her. In those days, Nike's action was unheard of. Women were completely financially dependent on their husbands and were culturally indoctrinated to believe that their role in society was to get married and be both subservient to and financially dependent on a husband. Children were also customarily considered to belong to their father. Nike thus had to battle to get full custody of her children when she finally decided to leave her husband. She eventually won the battle through the traditional legal system, by proving that he could not cater for the children. Eventually, Nike was able to begin a new life with her children in her new home. These experiences made her even more determined to help liberate women from a seemingly hopeless future. In her words:

I want women to be aware that being poor is not the end of the world and that they can make it in life with or without a man. I suffered abuses because I was poor and I don't want anyone else to go through that type of suffering [. . .]. When you're poor, you're vulnerable. You're like a lion without teeth.

A fresh start

Two of her co-wives who had been working with her secretly, also abandoned their husband and moved in with her. Part of Nike's house was used as a workshop and "gallery" for exhibiting finished works. Nike presented the other two wives to the public as her sisters and so they became known as "the three artistic sisters". Having learnt a lot from Nike, they exhibited their works along with hers. In spite of having three children to cater for, Nike eked out some money to help other indigent women in the neighbourhood. She invited women to her home to learn arts and crafts free of charge. She was determined to make them self-reliant and encouraged them to specialise in whichever type of art they liked, in order to earn a better living. She also encouraged them to learn more than one form of art to diversify their source of income. In addition, she went on to educate them on how to save. She also taught them to re-invest into their work when they made good sales rather than spend on new clothes and shoes or on parties as tended to be the norm among them.

Nike's works and her home gallery gradually became a tourist attraction and this contributed to Nike's popularity. She received a second invitation to the USA where she was paid to teach African art in workshops at various art colleges. She was also taken around to visit various galleries and art exhibitions in different states in the USA. Several other invitations followed. She suddenly found herself continuously receiving invitations to different countries around the world. She participated in exhibitions and workshops in other African countries, the USA and several European countries such as Germany, Belgium, UK and France. Eventually, the invitations started coming from universities and schools of art around the world, especially in the USA, for her to host training workshops at a premium fee of \$1,000 per hour.

These invitations made Nike realise the value of her works even more. Some of her art pieces were sold for as high as \$10,000-\$250,000. This motivated her even further to get more people to learn art. As she expressed:

If I could be given these opportunities because of the work of my hands, I want other women to have the same opportunity. I want other women to know they can achieve what I have through the work of their hands.

With this in mind, whenever it was possible, Nike took some of her workshop apprentices as her team members, to the workshops and exhibitions. Her intention was to provide them with exposure to enable them think beyond their local horizons. Sometimes, if she had been to a particular country before, she would ask one of the trained artists from her workshop to represent her there while she went (on invitation) to countries she had not visited. When the other wives heard about the way Nike and the other two wives lived and their travels, all 12 moved out of their husband's house and began to work with Nike. In the meantime, the number of people who were coming to Nike's home to learn art was growing. She realised that her house could no longer contain them and that a proper workshop was needed.

Workshops to change lives

Nike was determined to change the fate of women in her community for the better, but she needed funds. Luckily, as a result of her long standing association with the US embassy, she was able to get 50 per cent of the money required to build the workshop from USAID, while the rest of the funds came from her personal savings. Nike's first proper workshop and gallery opened in 1982. She registered it as a limited liability company and wanted to call it "Oshogbo Artists' Cooperative". She was, however, advised to name it after herself to ensure that it was not perceived as a government-owned enterprise as the term, "cooperative" might imply. This was to avoid the attendant complications and regulatory bureaucracies that accompanied government owned enterprises. She therefore named her enterprise "Nike Centre for Art and Culture". It started with 20 girls taken from the streets. She felt they were vulnerable to all sorts of dangers and wanted to protect them. Nike provided them with free accommodation and food while training them in her workshop and the galleries provided a sales outlet for their works. Whatever they sold was all theirs. Nike's first daughter, Seyi, who was working with her mother, explained the business model as follows:

My mum did not charge her students or any of the young artists anything for having their work in her gallery and whenever possible, she put them in direct contact with customers who admired and bought their work. Her source of income comes from the sale of her own art works. Whatever my mum makes from her work is divided into three; to provide for her family, to fund her artworks and to maintain the galleries and workshops. The more established artists who can afford to pay something are only asked to give 5% of the profit they make and the money is used to train other artists.

Nike sometimes held silent auctions to raise funds when there was a lull in sales at the galleries. The auctions would typically feature selected top grade art works with initial prices pasted on them. Invited guests, mainly art collectors, would go round observing the pictures and were expected to write down their price offers. This allowed contending buyers to see what other intending buyer's had offered to pay so they could put up higher bids. At the end of the auction, the highest bidders got the works and were expected to pay for them. These auctions allowed Nike to provide for the growing number of attendees at her workshop and to pay salaries during low sales periods. Within a few months of attending the workshop, the women were able to earn a reasonable income from selling their works or fulfilling customer orders for designed fabrics. They were visibly transformed at the thought of being able to earn a reasonable living from their work and being able to contribute to the upkeep of their families. One of the workshop attendants had this to say:

Nike has changed my life. I can now take care of my children and myself without depending on my husband. I learnt how to make tie-and-dye and now many customers patronise me. I have also been to Belgium on three different occasions for art exhibitions and workshops, as part of Nike's team.

Nike also applied art as a tool for moral transformation. In June 2000, Nike was contacted by the Italian Government to assist in solving the problem of trafficked Nigerian women in Italy. On her arrival in Italy, she was able to counsel and convince them that they could earn a better living through the "work of their hands". It took a while to cajole and train them, but Nike eventually resolved within a year, the problem the Italian Government had tried to solve unsuccessfully for five years. She was able to train the women in various types of art and infuse them with confidence to return home and earn a decent living. This helped them discontinue the damaging and dehumanising body trade abroad. In May 2006, the Italian Government presented Nike with a national award of merit for her achievement. In the same vein, Nike also helped to bring peace in some areas of unrest in Nigeria, by teaching art to young people as a way of distracting them from restiveness.

Managing controversy

A silent revolution had begun in Oshogbo town. As more women gained financial leverage, an unexpected outcome of the new wave generated by Nike's work with women set in. The male folk of the town were getting uncomfortable with the changing situation. They felt that self-reliance would make the women less subservient to them and blamed Nike for this. In their anger, they went as far as trying to get her arrested by the police. They accused her of seeking to convert their wives into rebellious feminists, destabilising their families and threatening cultural norms. Nike had to run away on three different occasions to escape arrest. She was, however, determined to continue her work with women. So whenever the uproar calmed, she would return to the town and go to the police to explain herself. She clarified that her workshop was aimed at providing women with a means to earn a living to support their husbands' income and take better care of the home. Emphasising that it had nothing to do with the rebelliousness she was accused of fostering.

Eventually, Nike developed a proactive strategy to stop the rumours around her and the consequent turbulence they generated. Each time a new police commissioner was appointed to the town, she would go to him and introduce herself. She would explain that she was an artist and that she held workshops to help alleviate poverty especially among women. Once this formal introduction had been done on time and to the appropriate authorities, any eventual rumours about Nike were quickly dispelled. The next turn of events was even more surprising. Men wanted to be admitted to Nike's workshop to learn art and she welcomed them.

Nike's willingness to help others was infectious. Soon, the graduates from her workshop were volunteering to stay on as tutors to new entrants. Some of them were employed full-time to co-ordinate the activities of the centre. They were paid a base salary in addition to the sales they made from the sale of their works in Nike's galleries. Furthermore, even after graduating from the workshop, former students were allowed to use the facilities at the workshop later on in the day, when the class sessions were over.

A social enterprise in a family business

Nike's family was fully involved in running the business. While Nike was the main performer (CEO) and administrator of the company, her current husband, Reuben Okundaye, a former police commissioner, was the Executive Director in the company and responsible for all her media communications. He also oversaw the finance and accounting functions. Her first daughter, Seyi was in charge of the gallery and workshop in Abuja. She also led the cultural dance troupe, which had become quite popular and was often invited to perform at important ceremonies. Nike's other daughter Aina, who studied Business Administration, oversaw the administrative affairs of the Lagos gallery. Her other daughters helped out during the summer holidays from school. Also, although her last son practiced as an electrical engineer and was in corporate employment, his art works were exhibited and sold in the gallery.

Just as her family instilled art skills in her as a young child, Nike started teaching her children arts and crafts from the moment they could walk and talk. Her first son, Olabayo was signed up as an apprentice to a local drummer while in primary school and he went for classes daily after school. Seyi, her daughter started dancing with Nike's dance troupe from the age of two. Nike went as far as sending her to learn to dance on stilts, a typical stunt in traditional dances that was reserved for male folk only. Nike did not see why it should be the preserve of men and felt that since she was a bit too old to learn it, her daughter could. She hoped that other female dancers would be encouraged to do the same when they saw her daughter dance on stilts.

Seyi danced really well and thrilled audiences. During one of her performances in which a senator from the Virgin Islands was present, she was singled out and given a high school scholarship to study in the Virgin Islands. In exchange, the senator wanted her to teach dance as well as the various arts and crafts to the teenage girls in the Virgin Islands. They suffered a high incidence of teenage pregnancy and the Senator felt that if the girls were kept busy or had a skill with which they could earn a living, they would stay out of trouble. When Seyi finished high school in the Caribbean, she was offered admission to Manhattanville College. The tuition was \$27,000. Nike negotiated a significantly reduced tuition fee for her daughter in exchange for running art exhibitions and workshops at the university. Seyi commented, "My mum believes in trade by barter".

Indeed, Nike was also able to negotiate the fees of her oldest son, Olabayo, using the same means. She got his tuition fee significantly reduced in exchange for teaching art classes at his university. Olabayo who received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Fine Arts from the College of Santa Fe in the USA and his Masters in Fine Arts (MFA) from the University of Iowa. He had since become a renowned artist^[3] and was based in the USA. He nevertheless performed in Nigeria and supplied his mother's galleries with highly priced works of art that sell well.

Growth and expansion

Having developed a successful model of workshops and galleries, Nike was encouraged to replicate the same model in other cities. In 1996, another workshop and gallery was started in Kogi state, located in the southern part of Nigeria where Nike was born before her parents moved to Oshogbo. Her decision to open a workshop and gallery in Kogi state was her way of helping her kinsmen, as the population in Kogi was largely low-income. Her workshop in Kogi recorded the same success in terms of the financial upliftment of several individuals, especially women, as was happening at her first location in Oshogbo. Some years later, Nike received traditional titles from the ruling elders in both Kogi and Oshogbo, in recognition of

her contribution to societal welfare. She was made a chief, in an elaborate ceremony that drew local dignitaries from neighbouring towns and villages.

Given the low-income level of the population in Kogi state, Nike realised that to sustain the workshop there, she would have to open more galleries. Her target was cities with a higher population of middle to high-income earners who could afford to pay premium prices for art works. The premium prices for the works in her galleries would provide for the indigent candidates Nike recruited for her workshops. Thus, by 2002, a third workshop and gallery were opened in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria. Abuja was much more cosmopolitan and had a much larger population of middle to high-income nationals and foreigners. This demographic appreciated art and paid good money for valued works. Nike's gallery-cum-workshop model was quick to thrive there as well.

In 2006, Nike took a bank loan of N10 million[4] to construct a state of the art gallery in Lagos, the commercial centre of Nigeria, and home to a bustling population of both high- and low-income earners. The gallery was opened to the public in 2009 and hosted a collection of art works from her workshops as well as works by prominent Nigerian artists including herself. The sales from the galleries in Lagos and Abuja provided sufficient working capital to keep the enterprise going. The works in the galleries were priced in both local currency (naira) and US dollar denominations, as a significant proportion of the galleries' customers were foreigners. The works ranged from prices as high as \$250,000 to as low as \$500. Sales were not quite predictable as they rose or fell depending on the state of the national economy. The galleries were located in high-income areas where wealthy buyers could conveniently walk into buy art works as decorative pieces for their homes. Also, luxury hotels opening up in the area picked up several artefacts for their decor[5].

The basic tenets of her business model, however, did not change. The galleries financed the workshops and provided a sales outlet for the workshop trainees. Rom Isichei, one of the prominent artists who had a long-standing relationship with Nike, described her business model as follows:

Nike collects different works of art from artists for different reasons; some works she collects to generate money for the gallery, while others are collected to help artists whose works will not be accepted in other galleries, because they aren't strong enough. Nike feels everyone should be given a chance so she gives those artists a voice, an opportunity to be seen and heard, using her gallery. Nike believes in promoting artists. Since I've known her, every year, she has helped several artists procure visas to go abroad with her for workshops and exhibitions. She sometimes funds their travel expenses, all in a bid to ensure they are given an opportunity to grow, by being exposed to what other artists abroad are doing and how they do it[6].

Doing good and doing well

The number of women engaged in thriving businesses, thanks to the training received from Nike's workshops, numbered over 3,000 as of 2011. Although Nike could no longer afford to provide free accommodation and food to workshop attendants as the downturn in the Nigerian economy had affected the level of sales from her galleries, tuition continued to be free[7]. Nike's enterprise attracted a wide range of stakeholders, from the needy, who sought a means of survival through skill acquisition, to local and international celebrities. She also attracted art aficionados who bought exquisite works of art for decorative or collection purposes. Art students from universities all over the country also requested to be admitted into her workshops. They would typically carry out their three-month internship, which was a course requirement that could be practiced in any art related enterprise of their choice.

Nike's business model grew and expanded in the 19 years following its launch. At the beginning of 2011, she was looking for a new location near needy communities where she could start a new workshop in Lagos. According to Nike:

Now that the gallery has been completed, I'm hoping to get a place for a workshop near the market in the centre of Lagos, because there are many needy women in that area. We can begin the workshop in a rented location teaching a few crafts and then, when I'm able to get a property there, we can expand the range of what we can teach in the workshop.

Nike has been invited to give workshops in almost all the states in the USA and invitations from Ivy League schools such as Harvard University were not uncommon. In recognition of her service to society, Nike has received several awards (Exhibit 7), which she rarely speaks about. She has also been offered professorship titles with full-time positions on three different occasions in Universities in the USA, to teach art. On each occasion, she declined saying, "I want to go back to my country to help my people." She, however, smiled as she commented, "However, when I am broke, I happily take up training workshops where I am paid \$1,000 per hour".

Future directions

At age 60, Nike felt fulfilled. She was already able to see the children of the ladies she had helped raise from abject poverty get a good education and develop into professionals. In some cases, these children had become talented artists whose works sold for good money in her galleries. Nevertheless, several nagging questions flooded her mind. Her children were more inclined to the business side of her enterprise. At some stage, her sons, concerned with the decreased sales in the galleries due to the economic downturn, suggested that they begin to charge the workshop students tuition fees. Nike bluntly refused, stating emphatically, that as long as they were with her, they would never pay. She thus wondered what would happen to the workshops when she became too old to participate in the management of the enterprise. What was the best way to ensure that the social side of the enterprise would continue in existence? How was she going to convince her children to sustain free tuition in the workshops, considering the economic downturn, which had affected sales in the galleries in recent years, while the number of attendees was growing? Nike's popularity had contributed greatly to the patronage at the various galleries. She had good friends in all age groups and these friends brought many customers to the gallery. Would this continue to happen when she was gone? How will the enterprise continue to sustain itself in future? Most important of all, which of her children should succeed her as the head of the organisation? How should she go about having these conversations?

Notes

1. This case was written based on firsthand information received by the lead author from the featured entrepreneur Nike Davies-Okundaye and other individuals quoted. Information provided in the case has been mentioned in other public interviews granted by the protagonist. The protagonist has also read the case and signed the consent to publish-release form.
2. List of African countries, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_African_countries_by_GDP_\(nominal\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_African_countries_by_GDP_(nominal)) (accessed November 29, 2011).
3. Olabayo has written, directed, and produced his own traditional Yoruba theatre, and has seen great success in the USA, Canada, the Caribbean, and Nigeria. His resume includes: 12 international solo and 20 + group exhibitions; hundreds of lectures and workshops ranging from Yoruba art and philosophy to story-telling, drumming, dance, and theatre, to batique, beadwork, etching and sculpture presented at grade schools, high schools, universities, museums, and art and culture fairs world-wide. He has been an artist-in-residence in Santa Fe, NM, St Thomas, VI, and the National Black Theatre in Harlem. He has been featured in 50 press articles and is a recipient of numerous grants and fellowships (<http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/u/?/dp,1262>).
4. At an exchange rate of N154/\$ this is equivalent to \$65,000.
5. The entrepreneur did not make figures regarding sales and turnover available. We can only guess that for the bank to have granted her a loan, she must have provided sufficient proof of the financial health of her enterprise.
6. Direct quote from telephone interview with Rom Isichei on September 6, 2010.
7. Permission was given to the lead author to publicise a *CNN* documentary available on the facebook page of the case protagonist Nike Davies-Okundaye, which can be accessed on the following link: http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/04/12/nigeria.nike.davies.okundaye/index.html?is_LR=1. Also a four minute video on Nike Davies-Okundaye and her works is available on the following YouTube link www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjZM7UbdLTA (accessed November 2011).

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Exhibit 1

Plate 1 Nike Davies-Okundaye



Source: <http://www.nikeart.com/artcenters.htm>

Exhibit 2

Plate 2 The atrium, Nike Art Gallery in Lagos



Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/73542590@N00/4203749248/>

Exhibit 3

Plate 3 *Poetic Patterns of Love*, 1981 by Nike Okundaye mixed media on board, 8ft. x 4ft. \$21,000:00



Source: <http://www.nikeart.com/shop.php>

Exhibit 4

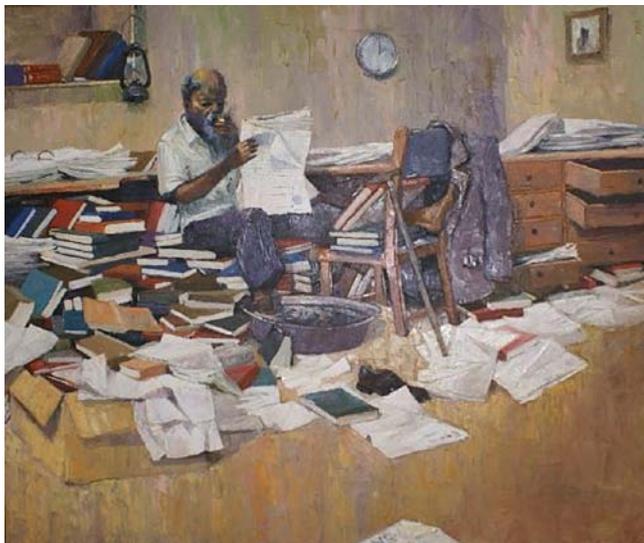
Plate 4 Frontal view of Nike's workshop in Oshogbo



Source: Picture taken by lead author

Exhibit 5

Plate 5 Book Worm Professor, 2006, by Emmanuel Dudu



Notes: Emmanuel is the son of one of the first women trained in Nike's workshop in Oshogbo; he is now one of the most well known artists in Nigeria

Source: <http://www.nikeart.com/shop.php>

Exhibit 6

Plate 6 A view of the traditionally decorated gate to Nike's art gallery



Source: Picture taken by lead author

Exhibit 7. Some awards and merits

- In 2002, Nike was bestowed with an award of distinction by the National Association of Kogi State Students in recognition of her efforts in promoting Art awareness among the youths in Nigeria.
- In 2002, Nike was awarded and admitted as a fellow of the institute of The Pan-African Circle of Artists of Nigeria in recognition of her commitment to the promotion of art education in Nigeria.
- In 2003, a certificate of merit was awarded to Nike by the Okun Yoruba people of Kogi State of Nigeria in recognition of her efforts in youth development in Nigeria.
- In 2004, Nike was awarded an honorary certificate of merit by the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Osun State Chapter in recognition of her contribution to the advancement of Nigerian cultural heritage.
- In 2005, the National Commission for Museum and Monument of Nigeria awarded Nike a certificate of excellence in recognition of her efforts in the development of Nigerian cultural heritage.
- In 2005, the Department of Fine Art, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife awarded Nike a certificate of merit in recognition of her efforts in the promotion of art education in Nigeria.
- In May 2006, Nike was awarded one of the highest Italian national awards of merit by the government of the Republic of Italy in appreciation of her efforts in using art to address and solve the problems of Nigerian prostitutes (sex workers) in Italy. See more on this in paragraph 20 below.
- In 2009, The "CEPAN Foundation" of Nigeria awarded Nike a plaque of honor for being the African Art Icon of the year.
- In 2010, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) of Nigeria presented Nike with a golden plaque of honor in recognition of her noble role in the fight towards drugs free Nigeria society. Source: www.nikeart.com/profile.htm (accessed October 20, 2011).

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