



BUSINESS REENGINEERING IN VISUAL ARTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Business Process Reengineering (BPR) has become an essential management strategy for organisations seeking to improve productivity, competitiveness, innovation, and sustainability in rapidly changing economic environments. Within Nigeria's visual arts sector, traditional business models are increasingly challenged by technological advancement, global competition, changing consumer preferences, and digital commerce. This paper examines the significance of business reengineering in transforming the visual arts industry and its contribution to Nigeria's economic development. Drawing from existing literature and contemporary developments in the creative economy, the study explores how artists, galleries, creative enterprises, educational institutions, and government agencies can redesign operational processes to enhance productivity, expand market access, and create employment opportunities. The paper argues that integrating digital technologies, entrepreneurship education, innovation, strategic partnerships, and effective policy implementation can significantly strengthen the competitiveness of Nigeria's visual arts sector. Furthermore, business reengineering promotes value creation, improves resource utilisation, encourages investment, and supports sustainable economic growth. Despite persistent challenges such as inadequate funding, weak intellectual property protection, poor infrastructure, and limited digital literacy, the adoption of modern business strategies presents significant opportunities for national development. The study concludes that business reengineering is indispensable for repositioning Nigeria's visual arts industry as a strategic contributor to economic diversification beyond the petroleum sector. Recommendations are provided for government agencies, educational institutions, industry practitioners, and private investors.

Keywords: Business Process Reengineering, Visual Arts, Creative Economy, Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Economic Development, Nigeria.



1. Introduction

The creative economy has emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global economy, contributing substantially to employment generation, cultural preservation, innovation, and national income. Among the various creative industries, visual arts occupy a strategic position by providing aesthetic, cultural, educational, and commercial value. In recent years, countries have increasingly recognised the economic potential of visual arts in driving entrepreneurship, tourism, manufacturing, technology, and international trade. Consequently, governments and private organisations continue to invest heavily in developing their creative sectors as important drivers of sustainable economic growth.

Nigeria possesses one of Africa's richest artistic heritages, characterised by remarkable diversity in sculpture, painting, textile design, ceramics, graphics,

photography, digital arts, crafts, fashion illustration, and indigenous artistic expressions. The country's cultural diversity provides enormous opportunities for artistic innovation and commercialisation. Nigerian artists have gained international recognition through exhibitions, auctions, festivals, and collaborations with global institutions. Despite these achievements, the visual arts industry remains largely underdeveloped due to inefficient business practices, limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, weak marketing systems, and insufficient technological adoption.

Traditional methods of producing, marketing, and distributing artworks no longer adequately meet the demands of today's highly competitive global marketplace. Consumers increasingly purchase artworks through digital platforms, online galleries, virtual exhibitions, and electronic marketplaces. Similarly, collectors now demand authenticity



verification, digital cataloguing, online payment systems, and efficient delivery services. These changing market dynamics require artists and creative enterprises to redesign their operational processes in order to remain competitive.

Business Process Reengineering (BPR) offers an effective framework for transforming organisational structures, eliminating inefficiencies, improving productivity, reducing operational costs, and enhancing customer satisfaction. Unlike incremental improvements, BPR advocates the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in performance. Applying these principles within Nigeria's visual arts sector can significantly improve productivity, profitability, innovation, and market expansion.

Furthermore, Nigeria's pursuit of economic diversification beyond crude oil presents an

opportunity to reposition the creative industry as a major contributor to national development. The visual arts sector has the capacity to generate employment for artists, designers, curators, educators, photographers, gallery managers, art consultants, digital marketers, and numerous supporting professionals. Increased investment in business innovation and entrepreneurial development can further stimulate export earnings and attract foreign direct investment.

This paper therefore examines the concept of business reengineering within the context of visual arts and analyses its implications for Nigeria's economic development. It highlights existing challenges, emerging opportunities, and strategic recommendations for strengthening the competitiveness and sustainability of the Nigerian visual arts industry.



2. Conceptual Framework

Business Process Reengineering

Business Process Reengineering refers to the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of organisational processes with the objective of achieving significant improvements in productivity, quality, cost efficiency, service delivery, and customer satisfaction. The concept gained international prominence through the pioneering work of Michael Hammer and James Champy during the early 1990s. Rather than making gradual improvements to existing systems, BPR encourages organisations to completely rethink how work is performed in order to maximise value creation.

The philosophy of business reengineering emphasises innovation, technology integration, organisational flexibility, customer orientation, continuous improvement, and strategic management.

Successful implementation often requires changes in organisational culture, leadership, employee skills, information technology infrastructure, and performance evaluation systems.

Within the visual arts industry, business reengineering may involve transforming traditional studio operations through digital technologies, online marketing, automated inventory systems, virtual exhibitions, customer relationship management platforms, and innovative revenue models such as digital licensing, print-on-demand services, and online art education. Such transformations enable artists and creative enterprises to expand beyond local markets and participate effectively in the global creative economy.

2.1 Visual Arts: Concept and Scope



Visual arts encompass artistic expressions that communicate ideas, emotions, cultural values, and experiences through visual media. They include painting, sculpture, drawing, ceramics, printmaking, textile design, photography, graphics, architecture, digital illustration, animation, mixed media, installation art, and emerging digital creative practices. Beyond their aesthetic value, visual arts perform educational, social, historical, cultural, and economic functions within society.

In Nigeria, visual arts have evolved from indigenous artistic traditions to contemporary creative practices that attract both domestic and international recognition. Renowned artistic centres, galleries, museums, and higher institutions have contributed significantly to the development of artistic talent and cultural preservation. Today, Nigerian visual artists participate in international exhibitions, art fairs, online marketplaces, and global auctions,

demonstrating the increasing relevance of the sector within the global creative economy.

The emergence of digital technologies has further expanded the scope of visual arts by introducing digital painting, computer graphics, three-dimensional modelling, virtual exhibitions, non-refundable tokens (NFTs), animation, and multimedia production. These innovations have created new opportunities for artists to commercialise their works beyond geographical boundaries while engaging wider audiences through digital platforms.

Despite these opportunities, many practitioners still rely on traditional business methods characterised by limited marketing, inadequate record keeping, poor customer management, and restricted access to international markets. Consequently, there is a growing need for business process reengineering to modernise business



operations within Nigeria's visual arts industry.

2.2 Economic Development:* Concept and Indicators

Economic development refers to the process through which a nation improves the quality of life of its citizens by increasing income levels, reducing unemployment, enhancing productivity, promoting industrialization, and ensuring equitable access to opportunities. Unlike economic growth, which primarily focuses on increases in national output, economic development encompasses broader improvements in human welfare, technological advancement, education, innovation, and institutional effectiveness.

The creative economy has become an increasingly important driver of economic development across the world. Countries such as the United Kingdom, South Korea, China, and the United States have

demonstrated how investments in creative industries can stimulate innovation, attract foreign investment, generate employment, and increase export earnings. Nigeria possesses similar potential due to its rich cultural heritage, youthful population, and expanding digital economy.

The visual arts sector contributes to economic development through several channels, including job creation, entrepreneurship development, tourism promotion, cultural diplomacy, manufacturing, education, urban regeneration, and international trade. It also stimulates demand for complementary industries such as printing, construction, interior decoration, advertising, packaging, fashion, media production, and information technology.

However, realising these benefits requires efficient business structures capable of adapting to changing market conditions.



Business process reengineering provides the strategic framework for improving organisational efficiency, enhancing innovation, and increasing the competitiveness of creative enterprises.

3. Literature Review

Business Process Reengineering has attracted considerable scholarly attention since its emergence as a management philosophy during the early 1990s. Hammer and Champy described BPR as the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in performance measures such as cost, quality, service, and speed. Since then, researchers have applied the concept across manufacturing, healthcare, banking, education, government, and service industries.

Several studies have demonstrated that organisations adopting business reengineering strategies experience

improvements in operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, innovation, and organisational competitiveness. Information and communication technologies remain central to successful implementation because they facilitate automation, data management, communication, and decision-making.

Within the creative industries, scholars have increasingly recognised that artistic talent alone is insufficient for long-term sustainability. Modern artists require entrepreneurial competencies, digital marketing skills, financial management knowledge, branding expertise, customer relationship management, and innovation capabilities. These competencies enable artists to transform creative talent into sustainable business enterprises.

Research on Nigeria's visual arts industry indicates that many practitioners continue to experience challenges associated with



limited financing, weak institutional support, inadequate business education, piracy, poor copyright enforcement, and limited access to international markets. These constraints reduce productivity and restrict the sector's contribution to national economic development.

Recent studies also highlight the growing importance of digital transformation within the creative economy. Online galleries, social media marketing, virtual exhibitions, e-commerce platforms, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and digital payment systems have fundamentally transformed the way artworks are produced, promoted, sold, and distributed worldwide. Nigerian artists who embrace these innovations have demonstrated improved visibility, increased sales, and stronger global competitiveness.

Nevertheless, gaps remain in understanding how business process reengineering can systematically transform Nigeria's visual

arts industry. Much of the existing literature focuses on entrepreneurship or artistic development without sufficiently integrating organisational transformation strategies. This paper addresses that gap by examining business reengineering as a comprehensive framework for improving productivity, innovation, and economic contribution within the Nigerian visual arts sector.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Business Process Reengineering Theory developed by Michael Hammer and James Champy. The theory argues that organisations should fundamentally rethink existing work processes instead of making minor improvements to outdated systems. According to the theory, competitive advantage is achieved by redesigning workflows to eliminate unnecessary activities, reduce operational costs, improve quality, and maximise customer value.



The relevance of this theory to Nigeria's visual arts sector lies in its emphasis on innovation and strategic transformation. Many artistic enterprises continue to rely on conventional business models that limit productivity and market expansion. Applying BPR principles enables artists and creative organisations to redesign production processes, improve marketing strategies, strengthen customer engagement, integrate digital technologies, and expand into international markets.

The theory further emphasises continuous learning, technological adaptation, employee empowerment, and customer satisfaction as essential components of organisational success. These principles align closely with the objectives of strengthening entrepreneurship, improving competitiveness, and promoting sustainable economic development within Nigeria's creative economy.

Accordingly, the Business Process Reengineering Theory provides an appropriate analytical framework for examining how organisational transformation can reposition Nigeria's visual arts industry as a significant contributor to employment generation, wealth creation, cultural preservation, and national development

5. Business Reengineering in Nigeria's Visual Arts Industry

Business reengineering has become increasingly relevant to Nigeria's visual arts industry due to the rapidly changing nature of the global creative economy. The traditional approach to producing and marketing artworks—where artists depend solely on physical exhibitions, referrals, and local patronage—is no longer sufficient for sustainable growth. Increasing competition, digital innovation, changing consumer behaviour, and global market integration demand that artists and creative enterprises



fundamentally redesign their business processes.

The application of Business Process Reengineering (BPR) within the visual arts sector requires artists, galleries, museums, educational institutions, and creative organisations to evaluate every stage of their operations. This includes sourcing materials, artwork production, branding, pricing, marketing, sales, customer engagement, logistics, financial management, and after-sales services. Eliminating inefficient practices while embracing technology-driven solutions enables practitioners to improve operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

One major aspect of business reengineering is digital transformation. Modern artists increasingly utilise websites, e-commerce platforms, online galleries, virtual exhibitions, and social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Pinterest,

and LinkedIn to showcase and market their artworks. These platforms eliminate geographical barriers and provide direct access to collectors, corporate organisations, tourists, and international buyers.

Another important dimension is customer relationship management. Traditional artists often maintain informal relationships with clients, making repeat patronage difficult to monitor. Through digital databases and customer management systems, artists can maintain detailed customer records, provide personalised services, announce new collections, and strengthen long-term relationships with collectors.

Business reengineering also encourages strategic collaboration among artists, designers, architects, interior decorators, fashion designers, advertising agencies, tourism operators, educational institutions, and government organisations. Such partnerships broaden market opportunities



while encouraging innovation across multiple sectors of the economy.

business reengineering within the visual arts sector.

Furthermore, restructuring internal management practices enhances accountability and transparency. Proper financial records, inventory management, taxation compliance, and strategic planning increase investors' confidence and improve access to financial support from commercial banks, development finance institutions, and government intervention programmes.

Digital illustration software, graphic design applications, three-dimensional modelling, animation technologies, artificial intelligence-assisted design tools, and virtual reality have expanded artistic possibilities beyond conventional media. These technologies improve production efficiency while creating innovative artistic products capable of attracting international markets.

6. Digital Transformation and Innovation

in Visual Arts

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has transformed virtually every sector of the global economy, including the creative industries. Digital technologies have changed how artworks are conceptualised, created, marketed, sold, and preserved. Consequently, digital transformation has become an indispensable component of

Online marketplaces have equally transformed commercial activities within the visual arts industry. Artists no longer depend exclusively on physical galleries or exhibitions to generate income. Instead, they utilise e-commerce websites, digital payment systems, online auctions, and virtual exhibitions to reach customers globally. These platforms reduce operational costs while increasing market visibility.



Social media has emerged as one of the most powerful marketing tools available to contemporary artists. Through consistent digital branding, storytelling, audience engagement, and targeted advertising, artists can build strong professional reputations and loyal customer communities. Successful Nigerian visual artists increasingly combine artistic excellence with strategic digital marketing to expand their influence beyond national borders.

Innovation also extends to educational delivery. Universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education now integrate digital learning platforms into visual arts education. Online workshops, webinars, virtual studios, and collaborative learning environments improve students' entrepreneurial competencies while exposing them to international best practices.

Despite these opportunities, digital transformation remains constrained by poor

internet connectivity, unstable electricity supply, and limited access to advanced technologies, inadequate funding, and insufficient digital literacy among many practitioners. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated investment by government, educational institutions, private organisations, and development partners.

7. Contributions of Visual Arts to Nigeria's Economic Development

Nigeria's visual arts industry contributes significantly to national economic development through employment creation, entrepreneurship, cultural preservation, foreign exchange earnings, tourism development, and innovation. Although its contribution is often underestimated, the sector possesses enormous capacity to support economic diversification and inclusive growth.

Firstly, the visual arts industry creates employment opportunities for painters,



sculptors, ceramic artists, photographers, textile designers, illustrators, printmakers, art educators, gallery managers, museum curators, conservators, graphic designers, and digital content creators. Numerous indirect jobs are also generated within supporting industries such as printing, framing, transportation, advertising, construction, hospitality, and event management.

Secondly, visual arts stimulate entrepreneurship by encouraging self-employment and small business development. Many graduates establish private studios, design firms, galleries, craft centres, photography businesses, advertising agencies, and digital creative enterprises. These businesses contribute to poverty reduction by generating income for individuals and communities.

The sector also promotes tourism by attracting visitors to museums, galleries,

cultural festivals, heritage sites, art exhibitions, and craft markets. Tourists purchase locally produced artworks, thereby increasing local income and supporting indigenous cultural industries. International exhibitions further enhance Nigeria's cultural diplomacy by projecting a positive national image.

In addition, visual arts support manufacturing and industrial development through product packaging, textile design, furniture production, interior decoration, ceramics, branding, architecture, advertising, and creative technology. These inter-sectorial linkages strengthen productivity across various segments of the economy.

The export of artworks and creative services generates valuable foreign exchange earnings while increasing Nigeria's participation in the global creative economy. As international demand for African



contemporary art continues to expand, Nigerian artists are increasingly recognised in prestigious galleries, museums, biennales, and international art fairs. This global recognition presents enormous opportunities for economic expansion if supported by effective business reengineering strategies.

8. Challenges Affecting Business Reengineering in Nigeria's Visual Arts Industry

Despite its considerable potential, several challenges continue to hinder the effective implementation of business reengineering within Nigeria's visual arts sector.

One major challenge is inadequate access to finance. Many artists operate as small-scale entrepreneurs with limited capital, making it difficult to acquire modern equipment, establish digital infrastructure, organise exhibitions, or expand production capacity. Financial institutions often perceive creative enterprises as high-risk investments due to

inadequate collateral and irregular income patterns.

Poor infrastructure also limits productivity. Frequent electricity interruptions, inadequate internet connectivity, poor transportation networks, and insufficient studio facilities increase production costs while reducing operational efficiency.

Weak intellectual property protection remains another significant concern. Copyright infringement, piracy, and unauthorised reproduction of artworks discourage innovation and reduce artists' income. Strengthening intellectual property enforcement is essential for promoting creativity and attracting investment into the sector.

Business management deficiencies also affect many practitioners. While artists often possess exceptional technical skills, many lack formal training in entrepreneurship, accounting, strategic management,



marketing, taxation, and digital commerce. Consequently, profitable artistic ventures sometimes fail because of weak managerial practices rather than lack of creative talent.

Furthermore, government policies supporting the creative economy remain inadequate in several areas. Although initiatives promoting entrepreneurship and cultural industries exist, implementation challenges, bureaucratic delays, and inconsistent funding frequently limit their effectiveness. Greater collaboration among government agencies, educational institutions, financial organisations, and industry stakeholders is therefore required to create an enabling environment for sustainable business transformation.

9. Strategic Recommendations

To maximise the contribution of business reengineering to the visual arts sector and Nigeria's economic development, the following recommendations are proposed:

9.1 Strengthen Entrepreneurship Education

Higher institutions offering visual arts programmes should integrate entrepreneurship, business management, digital marketing, financial literacy, innovation management, and intellectual property studies into their curricula. This will equip graduates with the competencies required to establish and manage sustainable creative enterprises.

9.2 Increase Government Investment

Federal, state, and local governments should increase investment in the creative economy through grants, low-interest loans, innovation hubs, business incubation centres, and dedicated funding schemes for artists and creative entrepreneurs. Public investment should also focus on improving infrastructure such as electricity, internet connectivity, and modern exhibition facilities.



9.3 Promote Digital Transformation

Artists and creative organisations should adopt digital technologies to improve productivity and market access. This includes developing professional websites, utilising e-commerce platforms, participating in virtual exhibitions, implementing digital payment systems, and using social media strategically for branding and customer engagement.

9.4 Strengthen Intellectual Property Protection

Government agencies should strengthen the enforcement of copyright and intellectual property laws to protect artists from piracy and unauthorised reproduction of their works. Increased awareness campaigns and simplified registration procedures would encourage more artists to secure legal protection for their creative outputs.

9.5 Encourage Public–Private Partnerships

Collaboration between government institutions, private investors, financial institutions, galleries, museums, universities, and international organisations should be encouraged to support innovation, research, skills development, and commercialisation within the visual arts sector.

9.6 Improve Access to Finance

Financial institutions should develop specialised loan products tailored to the unique characteristics of creative enterprises. Flexible collateral requirements and business advisory services would enable artists to expand production, acquire modern equipment, and explore international markets.

9.7 Promote Research and Innovation

Universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and research institutions should



intensify research on business innovation, digital technologies, cultural entrepreneurship, and sustainable development within the visual arts industry. Evidence-based research will provide policymakers and practitioners with practical solutions to emerging challenges.

10. Conclusion

Business Process Reengineering has emerged as an essential strategy for transforming organisations operating in dynamic and highly competitive environments. Within Nigeria's visual arts industry, the adoption of business reengineering principles offers significant opportunities for improving operational efficiency, innovation, productivity, and global competitiveness. By fundamentally redesigning business processes and embracing digital technologies, artists and creative enterprises can overcome many of the structural limitations that have historically constrained the sector.

The study has demonstrated that the visual arts industry possesses substantial potential to contribute to Nigeria's economic diversification through employment generation, entrepreneurship development, tourism promotion, export earnings, cultural preservation, and technological innovation.

However, achieving these outcomes requires coordinated efforts among government, educational institutions, financial organisations, industry practitioners, and private investors.

Persistent challenges—including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, weak intellectual property protection, limited digital literacy, and insufficient managerial capacity—continue to hinder the growth of the sector. Addressing these barriers through strategic policy interventions, institutional reforms, entrepreneurship education, and technological innovation will significantly strengthen the competitiveness of Nigeria's creative economy.



Ultimately, business reengineering should not be viewed merely as a management technique but as a strategic framework for repositioning the visual arts industry as a catalyst for sustainable national development. A modern, technology-driven, and entrepreneurial visual arts sector has the capacity to create wealth, generate employment, preserve cultural heritage, and contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's long-term economic transformation.

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