

Review Article

The Role of Tertiary Education in Manpower Development in Nigeria

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Abstract: The study aimed at highlighting the role of tertiary education in manpower development. In order to clarify the variables that constitute this topic; education, tertiary education, manpower and development were discussed. These concepts were given meaning for better understanding. Manpower development as a term was examined, revealing that it has to do with the process of improving and developing the skills and potentials of the individual who in turn develops the organization or society where they operate. The role of tertiary education in manpower development were examined, stressing its importance in the inculcation of worthwhile knowledge, skills, creative abilities, values, and the spirit of commitment which is paramount to the overall development of the system. Certain challenges ranging from human, economic and financial related factors were identified as setback to the higher institution's drive for manpower development. Based on these identified challenges, recommendations were made for the way forward which includes: the tertiary institutions should fashion new ways of tackling the challenges inherent in the school System. The government and non-governmental bodies should ensure adequate funding of the tertiary institutions to enable it meet the financial requirement for adequate manpower training. It was finally submitted that if recommendations made are properly implemented, the course of manpower development will be greatly achieved.

Keywords: Tertiary, Education, Manpower, Development, Manpower Development.

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INTRODUCTION

For any organization, institution or even a nation to function effectively, there must be human and material resources. But among these resources, human resources are the most paramount, since other resources cannot be utilized without human beings. For this reason, these human beings who constitute the manpower resources in an organization, institution or nation must be well trained, informed and groomed. The act of training, educating and grooming of human resources connotes manpower development. Human resource management is different from manpower development because human resource management deals with recruiting, posting, staffing, directing and general personnel administration, manpower development deals with developing and improving the potentialities, abilities and capabilities of human beings for maximum benefits of the organizations, institutions and societies where these individuals are to operate. In the task of manpower development, tertiary education through its institutions is very vital. The essence of establishing tertiary institutions in the nation is among other things, to provide manpower needs of the society by the training of professionals in various fields of endeavours, all for the overall development of the nation. In this study, we shall discuss what constitute education, tertiary education, manpower, development and manpower development as a term. The role of tertiary institution in achieving manpower development will be examined, challenges of manpower development will be highlighted and at the end, possible solutions or way forward shall be recommended.

Education

This study tends not to bore the readers with the various definitions or connotations and understanding of the concept of education. However, an insight shall be given on what constitute education for manpower development. The importance of education for any National Development cannot be over emphasized neither would it be an over statement to state unmistakably that education remains the only heady instrument as well as the prerequisite for the harmonious functioning of the citizens of any society which translates to economic, social and political growth and development of the society that is committed to it globally in this 21st century. Driving home the essence of education in this direction, Gbenu and Olaniyounu (2016), sees education as the process of training and developing the knowledge, skill, mind and character of people. It can as well be seen as the process by which latent abilities of individual are develop so that they can be useful to themselves and the society at large.

Ajonuma (2010) sees education as the process of developing human capacity, skills, abilities, behaviours, and encompasses the social process of achieving competence, growth and development in an institutional or organizational setting. The National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004) has described education as an instrument 'par excellence' for effecting national development. It affirmed that education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because it is the most important instrument of change. In truism, it is very important to state that, for any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society, it has to be

preceded by an educational revolution because it is the surest means of developing the individual into a sound and effective citizen. However, education of any nation is sub-divided into primary, secondary and tertiary education. Therefore the focus in this paper is the tertiary education as a vehicle through which manpower development is to be achieved and sustained.

Tertiary Education

Tertiary education is the apex of the sub systems of higher education in any nation. Thus, Nigerian National Policy on Education (2004:24) defined tertiary education as "Education given after secondary education in Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, including institutions offering corresponding courses". As the apex of the nations' educational system, Nigeria like any other nation places high expectations on the tertiary education especially as it concerns human resource and research development. Owing to the above fact, it becomes necessary that tertiary education, its institutions and agencies must live up to expectations, so as to meet up with the manpower needs of the nation. Institutions of higher learning that make up the tertiary education system have assigned roles which they are to accomplish in accordance with the national goals and philosophy. It is not in contention that the most paramount role of the tertiary education is to develop the human resources who in turn harnesses the natural and material resources of the nation for the benefit and even development of the society, least the society remain stagnate and backwards in the scheme of human development. How best the tertiary institutions achieve these all-important tasks is the concern of this work.

Manpower

Manpower is a vital tool for achieving organizational or national goal. According to Dencenzo and Robbins (1999), it is people, not buildings, equipment or brand names that make the institutions or organizations. In the word of Murphy (2004), resources are all the assets which may be used to attain organizational or educational goals. Blair (2005) sees manpower as all people who perform the activities of an organization. George and John (2004) sees manpower as those acquired functional knowledge and skills which individuals can supply and gainfully utilize for purpose of achieving productivity. According to Onah (2000), Manpower/Human resources exist within people and consist of a person's potential abilities as knowledge, skills, aptitudes, attitudes, physical and mental traits needed to perform job.

Development

Development involves the activity or task of improving upon an already existing phenomenon. According to Olisa and Obiukwu (1992), development involves strategy designed to improve economic and social lives of the people. Development therefore constitutes the process of planned change for which one approach or the other is adopted for the improvement and or transformation of the lots of the people.

Manpower Development

Manpower development can be said to mean a system by which the management of an organization help each staff or individual of the organization to realize his/her potential, develop it and bring it to bear for the growth of the organization (Cannel, 2004). It Involves activities such as indoctrination and training programmes, which could be conducted at various points, systematically performed in physical location and in the individual supervisor's performance appraisal, apprenticeship systematic coaching, sponsorship and other comparable activities in which a selected and group of young employees are groomed systematically for high level jobs. Also, Manpower development according to Nedler (2007), involves other specific educational devices such as participation in conference and training programmes and the likes. It also covers a range of elaborate schemes of selection approval and placement. The goal of any organization or nation cannot be achieved without manpower

development. According to Dencenzo and Robbins (1999), it is people, not buildings, equipment or brand names that make the institutions or organizations. Murphy (2004), resources which includes manpower in terms of human are all the assets which may be used to attain organizational or educational goals. Manpower/Human resources according to Blair (2005) are all people who perform the activities of an organization. Pitfield (2009) is of the opinion that the objectives of manpower development is to: provide the skills, knowledge and aptitudes necessary to undertake required job, and efficiently develop the workers so that if they have the potentials, they would make progress, increase efficiency by reducing spoilt work, misusing of machines and lessening physical risks. Olabisi (2007) submits that manpower development aimed at developing competences such as technical expertise to lead others; the need to perform one's job efficiently and the desire to meet organizational objectives of higher productivity and profitability. According to her, the main objective of setting up a company is to make profit and to achieve organizational goals; adequate manpower and development programmes should be put in place to enhance workers' performance. It is obvious from the arrears of definitions by these and many other scholars that one thing is deductible and that is the fact that manpower/ human resources of an organization are people who perform its activities.

The Role of Tertiary Education in Manpower Development

Tertiary education being the agent in focus in this context has the role of ensuring manpower development for adequate resources needs of the society and institutions thereof. The goals of tertiary education as stipulated in the Nigeria Education Policy document are among other things to;

- i. Contribute to national development through high level manpower training.
- ii. Develop the intellectual capacity of individual to understand and appreciate their local and external environment.
- iii. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which enables individual to be self-reliant and useful members of the society looking at these goals as stated, one may agree that the major role of tertiary education through its institutions is that of manpower development, which involves the task of inculcating the skills, aptitude, attitude, knowledge, morals, values, creative ability, etc.

Ogunu (2000), sees manpower or human resource development as cited above gives an insight on the role of tertiary education in manpower development. His definition indicates that the tertiary education through its institutions has the role of improving those who are committed to it in all ramifications. First, it has the role of developing the skills of the learner through well packaged educational programmes and entrepreneurial training. Again, it has the duty to develop the creative ability of the individual learner which can only be achieved according to John Dewey, by giving the learner challenging tasks.

Tertiary education has the statutory role of imparting worthwhile knowledge in the learner so as to equip him to contribute meaningfully to the nation's growth and development. It equally has the role of instilling in the learner, the spirit of commitment, good morals and values. This way, individual learners would be intellectually, morally, physically, mentally and psychologically sound, suitable for organizational, institutional and societal use.

In achieving these all encompassing role, there is need for effective teaching and learning, research development culture, effective staff development programmes, unending generation and dissemination of knowledge, adequate and functional students industrial work experience scheme, maintenance of minimum educational standard through appropriate agencies, inter- institutional cooperation, dedicated services to the community through extra-mural and extension services, adequate

and frequent training and re-training of the teaching staff of the tertiary institutions to enhance techniques and methodology in teaching.

Furthermore, the overall emphasis of tertiary education shall be on the development of the learner's skills and competence. The administration of tertiary education should be second to none in terms of personnel management, policy implementation, student-staff relationship, maintenance culture among other things. This way, the tertiary education would have assumed its proper position in the development of human resources.

In achieving these lofty goals of manpower development by the tertiary institutions, it is obvious that some impediments are always there to be confronted, which the tertiary institutions and its management must as a matter of necessity take cognizance of and ready to address. However, the highlights of these challenge become necessary so that the pit falls are identified for possible avoidance.

CHALLENGES OF MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

One of the challenges of manpower development is Training which requires adequate funding. In most countries like Nigeria, tertiary institutions are not properly funded. This poor funding results in poor infrastructure, under staffing, poor personnel administration and so on, this unfavorably affects the institution's drive for manpower development. However, tertiary institutions are posed with a lot of challenges such as rapid technological, economic, political and socio-cultural transformations. In this regards, Zeleza and Olukoshin (2010) asserts that the powerful and internal forces like demographic and socio-political issues are re-configuring all aspects of tertiary education. This implies that, the dynamism associated with globalization call for more work on the tertiary institutions. For instance, the issue of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education is now important because the world has gone scientific. That is to say that the universities and other institutions of higher learning are expected to come up with new strategies, techniques and methods to enable them implement ICT in education in its entirety, this will boost manpower developments as expected of the higher institutions.

As earlier stated, tertiary institutions as citadels of higher learning are expected to be the domain for research and information generation and dissemination, but for it to live up to its expectations in this regard, there is need for adequate internet facilities, qualified staff, problem solving culture and so on, which in most cases are inadequate in the universities, polytechnics, monotechnics and other corresponding institutions. Where these things are lacking or grossly inadequate, the task of manpower development assigned to tertiary institutions must be defeated. The effect of these challenges on the society, organizations and institutions is that ill-equipped manpower is produced by the tertiary institutions resulting in low productivity in all ramifications. Hence there is need for change and improvement.

CONCLUSION

However, the importance of education for any sincerely national development; be it political, economical, socio-cultural or technological cannot be over emphasized. It is therefore pertinent that every possible effort should be geared towards providing qualitative and quantitative education to the citizenry of every nation. This is important because, educationally developed nation is invariably a developed nation. With educated manpower, the nation will adequately harness her natural endowed resources for an overall development. To achieve this, tertiary education institutions is important machinery that provides solid foundation through articulated educational programmes aiming at Manpower Development. On this note, the writer is hopeful that if the below recommendations made are properly implemented, there will be positive result.

Recommendations

Having examined the important roles assumed by tertiary education through its institutions in accordance with the aims, goals and objectives of the nation, the need for adequate manpower development, and the challenges associated with, the following recommendation are made which includes ;

- i. The tertiary institutions should fashion new ways of tackling the challenges inherent in the school System.
- ii. The government and non-governmental bodies should ensure adequate funding of the tertiary institutions to enable it meet the financial requirement for adequate manpower training.
- iii. Having underscored the importance of education as a yardstick for human and societal development which the ancient philosopher, Plato referred to as "one great thing", the government should as much as possible ensure access and equality in educational opportunities to all her citizenry.
- iv. There should be a cordial relationship between the tertiary education institutions and the other sectors of the nation's economy especially in the areas of staff training and overall personnel management.
- v. Intensified efforts should be made by the universities, polytechnics, monotechnics and other corresponding institutions to facilitate the implementation of science and technology in education such as the e-library and ICT in education in order to upgrade the intellectual capacity of the graduates produced by these institutions in order to make them relevant in the secular society.
- vi. Efforts should be made to provide adequate training and re-training of teachers who are the primary implementers of the school curriculum because any effort in education that fails to recognize the importance of the teachers in its implementations are bound to fail.

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