

## **Human Capacity Building and Sustainable Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Implications and Challenges in Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** *The study examines human capacity building and sustainable development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, implications and challenges in Nigeria. Human capacity building is the bed-rock of any nation; no nation could strive to sustainable development without reference to the structures and policies that enhance its human capital. Nigeria as a nation has established several programs geared towards improving human capacity building, such programs includes NAPEP, NDE etc. These programs have not yielded the desired result because of inadequate policy platform that guarantee sustainability among the stakeholders. The study has provided measures towards ameliorating these inadequacies and urges the relevant stakeholders to consider the recommendations for policy design and implementation strategy in achieving human capacity building and sustainable development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

**Keywords:** *Human Capacity Building, sustainable development, stakeholders, policy design and implementation strategy.*

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### **I. Introduction**

Human capacity building is the process by which individuals, organizations and societies develop abilities to perform functions, solve problems, set and achieve goals. The United Nation Development Program (UNDP) (2003) defined human capacity building to cover human resource development and the strengthening of managerial system, institutional development that involves community participatory creation of an enabling environment. In relating human capacity building to organizational manpower or human resource development, Okorie (2003:1) refers the scenario as the effective tool for management of people at work in an organization, giving them leverage opportunities of being more productive and have job satisfaction. That also place emphases on organization's honest interest on its philosophy, culture and goals for perpetuity which the human resource also key into for sustainability of the organization and the nation's economy. The Nigeria government has demonstrated its commitments in strengthening the human capacity of its citizenry through various programs, between 1986 - 2014, the government has established various programs geared towards sustainable development. Such programs include National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP) etcetera (etc); these programs have specific objectives to achieve, which include:

- 1) To proffer solution to unemployment problem through human capacity building and job creation.
- 2) To identify and strengthen the linkages between human capacity building and various institutions of sustainable development.
- 3) To eradicate poverty by empowering the poor to meet their basic needs, such as food, health, shelter and more.

These programs have failed to achieve the set objectives because it's human capacity building policies are inadequate, lack coordination and linkages to other institutions. These inadequacies have resulted to our inability to address the challenges of human capacity building which serves as a link towards sustainable development of any nation. The implication of these problems has resulted to high rate of unemployment and poverty among others.

According to Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS), no fewer than 5.3 million youths are jobless in the country, while 1.8 million graduates enters the labor market every year. The Daily Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014 reported on the Minister for Finance - Mrs. Okonjo-Iweala concern on the worsening employment crisis in the country as being partly a reflection of government's inability to design policies that will create more jobs or provide enabling environment that could encourage both individuals and the private sectors to expand employment opportunities without hindrance; the trampling of graduates job seekers to death during stampedes at Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) recruitment drive across the country in March 15 2014 presents a graphic picture of the problem.

Also there stated the World Bank statistics in 2013 that put the number of Nigerian living in destitution at 100 million, while its latest report released in 2014 puts Nigeria among the five poorest countries in the World. The high rate of unemployment and low per capital income in the country are just two of the indices used by the World Bank in arriving at this assessment.

The economy of a nation is reflected on her standard of living, knowledge, longevity, food sufficiency, housing, good health care delivery system and others. Any nation that does not have the above for her citizenry has economic problem, Eziefula & Umezurike (2014). Akoma (2011) opines economic problem as the undesirable gap between the desired economic condition and the economic actual condition, Akoma went further to emphasis that Nigeria has economic problem because the nation's mode of production, power consumption, import substitution are in disorder. To transform the economy, the government has to address the fundamentals by deciding which sectors should grow in which places and the aligning infrastructure, innovation, human capacity building and others investment are in disorder. To transform the economy, the government has to address the fundamentals by deciding which sectors should grow in which places and the aligning infrastructure, innovation, human capacity building and others investment are in disorder. This implies that the notion of segregation and marginalization of political regions for governmental economic investments should be checked by the policy makers and implementers through the monitoring of policy drives that will promote predetermined holistic economic development and growth for the nation. National economic programmes should be exclusively for Nigerian economy and not regionalized for the purpose of personal interest of individuals in authority of which portrays the slogan "what is there for me or my people (tribe or region)." This tilted spirit syndrome distorts effective human capacity building in diverse fields of skills and affects sustainable development of a nation; hence the slow progress in the sustainable development of Nigerian economy despite all the efforts in various agency programmes.

According to Obadam (2004) cited in Thom\_Otuye (2014:115) identified some factors responsible for our inability to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria, these are:

- 1) Inadequate coordination of the various programs has resulted in each institution carrying out its own activities with resultant duplication effect and inefficient use of limited resources. Overlapping functions ultimately led to institutional rivalry and conflicts.
- 1) Political and policy instability have resulted in frequent policy changes and inconsistent implementation which in turn have prevented continuous progress.
- 2) Lack of accountability and transparency thereby making the programs to serve as conduit pipes for draining national resources
- 3) Most of the programs lacked mechanism for their sustainability.
- 4) Absence of agreed poverty reduction agenda that should be designed to suit all concerned. Federal Government, State Government, Local Government, Non Governmental Organization, and the International Donor Communities therefore should be involved in the vision/mission policy programmes that will facilitate the implementation and achievement of the sustainable development of the nation of which the human capacity building will drive.
- 5) Inappropriate programs design reflecting lack of involvement of beneficiaries in the formulation and implementation of programs. Consequently, beneficiaries were not motivated to identify themselves sufficiently with the successful implementation of the programs.

Therefore this paper seek to critically review, identify and evaluate the challenges affecting human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria and also to recommend measures that would help policies makers and implementers facilitate and drive the existing human capacity development in Nigeria towards improvement.

### **Objective of the Study**

Generally, the study armed at identification and evaluation of policies on human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria.

1. To identify factors affecting the development of human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria.
2. To identify measures towards enhancing the development of human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What are the factors affecting the development of human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria?
2. What are the measures that could enhance the development of human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria?

### **Significance of Study**

**Theoretical Significance:** Any study that picks on a theory as its subject matter will no doubt contribute immensely to the theory in question. In this regard, this study will contribute to the understanding of human capacity building and its relationship to sustainable development in Nigeria.

**Practical Significance:** It is expected that at the end of this study, recommendations will be made to mitigate problems associated with human capacity building in Nigerian. However, the study will be useful practically especially to government institutions and agencies, industrial organizations, nongovernmental organizations; it will also guide individuals in their choosing careers and assurance in their labour market field of various career endeavors after their academic and skill acquisition programmes.

**Literature Review:** NDP (2003) defined capacity building to cover human resource development and the strengthening of managerial system, institutional development that involves community participation and creation of an enabling environment. Capacity building in the context of development implies a dynamic process which enables individual agencies to develop the critical social and technical capacities to identify and analyze problem as well as proffer solution to them. Azikwe (2006a) cited in Azikwe (2008) defined capacity building as the process by which an individual's, irrespective of sex, are equipped with skills and knowledge they need to perform effectively and efficiently in their different callings. Azikwe also added that capacity building could also be defined as the ability that enable the people to make use of their creative potentials, intellectuals capacities and leadership abilities for personal as well as nation growth and development. Capacity building therefore means planning for people to acquire knowledge and advanced skills that are critical to a country's economic growth, its standard of living and individual's empowerment. It is the planned programs that will impart skills which will enable the recipient put the knowledge and skills acquired into productive uses to solve wide range individual and national problems. Capacity building from the human capital point of view could be explained to mean when people possess the needed knowledge and advanced skills that are critical to individual growth as well as the country's growth and development. The capacity needed by any country to sustainable development is primarily dependent on the adequacy and relevance of its entrepreneurship. According to Banjoko (2002:91) capacity building is needed in the Nigeria government parastatals because the link between needs and supply is weak. There is lack of realistic funding in the tertiary institutions, which make adequate manpower development difficult. Given this background, Banjoko believes that there is need for support and change. He also observed that training institutions are isolated and communities are poor. For him, development of teaching materials is inefficient in schools. Alternative ways of capacity building are not adequately recognized. Banjoko (2002:102) argues that the above three scenario make capacity building imperative, adding that Nigeria needs to use capacity building strategies and other ways of empowering people and changing current practices. As far as he is concerned, Capacity building is the means of achieving productivity and sustainable development.

Azikwe (2008) opined that development simply implies a change in a forward direction, a modification in the positive sense, and a change of an improvement. Development is therefore seen as a process of change for the better. Sustainable development in another view implies constant and steady economic growth as a result of acquisition of knowledge and skills used for solving national problem that add value to lives and property. Simply put, it means sustained social, economic, political, scientific and technological growth of a nation and its members, Nwazor (2012). One of the eight Millennium Development Goals is to eradicate extreme poverty. A look at the Nigeria social- economic situation shows that unemployment is at about 60% with about three million new entrants into the labour market yearly, Yahya (2008).

Banjoko (2002:104) notes that ability of a country to follow sustainable development paths is determined to a large extent by the capacity as well as by its ecological and geographical conditions. According to him, the fundamental goal of capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial question related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on the understanding of environment potentials and limits of needs as perceived by the people of the country concerned.

**Ajayi (2006:32) captured the situations in these words:** 21st century workforce lacks new knowledge, generally apathetic to globalization, reluctant to adopt IT, averse to multi-skills and change. 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce lacks ability to apply Knowledge to real situation; frequency of job changes inhibits acquisition of Meaningful experience. Decline in moral Standards and corruption, the educational system has drastically affected quality of manpower Output at all levels. Inconsistency in Standardization of learning format, -6-3-3-4, Montessori, 9-3-4. and lack of data or access to Data on competency needs or gaps.

He opined that manpower is central to social existence and it is the core component of the citizenry of any country. To enhance Nigeria's competitive edge, the scholar suggests that special emphasis should be given to increasing productivity and efficiency through human capacity building, encouraging rural development activities as well as synergy of all stakeholders.

It is clear today that there is a desperate need to develop effective management in industries and organizations of both private and public sectors. This needs developed out of the realization that the industrialization and development of Nigeria greatly depends on the existence of an efficient, dedicated, innovative and productive workforce, Nwankwo (2014). Nwankwo went further to emphasize that various effort made to develop this type of workforce have not yielded fruitful result. Perhaps, the institutionalized orientations and attitudes of Nigeria management personnel towards performing their management functions may be a major contributing factor, (2014).

According to Stoner (2005), the world is shrinking, new telecommunication technologies continue to expand our reach and speed up our communications. In addition, the world is being reshaped both by technologies – such as genetic engineering, automated manufacturing and by changing political boundaries and alliances, therefore these new technologies and global political alignments means that managers are face with new possibilities for forging relationships that will carry their organizations into the future, it becomes imperative that capacity building will increase the horizon of the managers towards understanding the management techniques required in the challenging environment. Henri Fayol went further to identify three basic kinds of skills: technical, human and conceptual. He emphasized that every manager needs these skills for effective service delivery. **Technical skills** is the ability to use the procedure, techniques and knowledge of a specialized field, e.g., surgeons, engineers, musicians and accountants have technical skills in their respective fields. **Human skills** are the ability and capacity to work with, understanding, and motivate other people as individuals or in groups. **Conceptual skills** are the ability to coordinate and integrate all of an organization's interests and activities. It involves seeing the organization as a whole, understanding how its parts depend on one another, and anticipating how a change in any of its parts will affect the whole, cited in Stoner (2005:43). From the foregoing, Fayol is emphasizing on increasing Human Capacity Building in all ramification to understand any incidences that may occur in organizational operations.

**Theoretical Framework:** Human capital theory as developed by Barney (1991) is associated with the resource-based view of the firm. This study adopted human capital theory. The theory view people as assets and stresses that investment by organization in people will generate worthwhile returns. The theory therefore underpins the philosophies of human resource management and human capital management, Armstrong (2006).

This proposes that sustainable competitive advantage is attained when the firm has human resource pool that cannot be imitated or substituted by its rivals. Therefore, training and developing people is a means of attracting and retaining human capital as getting better return from these investments. These returns are expected to be improvement in performance, increase productivity, flexibility and the capacity to innovate that which should result from enlarging the skill base and increasing knowledge and competence. Schuller (2000) further suggests that: The general message is persuasive; skills, knowledge and competence are key factors in determining whether organization and nation will prosper. Therefore this theory suit the study because it emphasized that organizations or institutions etc, should focus on increasing the capacity of individuals or workers through entrepreneur skills for the sustenance and development of any nation.

## **II. Research Methodology**

**Research Design:** This research adopts qualitative design under which exploratory and descriptive methods were applied. The exploratory design enables a clear inquiry on what is already in existence in order to explore fresh insights, raise questions that will facilitate assessment from a new viewpoint. The advantage of this strategy is its flexibility. Descriptive design on the other hand helps in evaluating the data collected and drawing conclusions from it.

**Sources and Method of Data Collection:** To allow for a broader view in this study, multiple sources of evidence were explored in order to gather rich data. Hence, data were sourced from published documents such as textbooks, articles published in print and electronic journals among others. These sources are quite reliable and hence this makes them quite attractive for a study of this nature.

**Method of Data Analysis:** The method adopted for the data analysis in this study was the qualitative method. This method is most preferred given the nature of the data in the study. Secondary data cannot be subjected to quantifiable analysis hence the need for qualitative method.

### **Data presentation and analysis**

**Data Presentation:** The presentation is done in line with the research questions raised earlier in the study. Essentially, information sourced from existing literature will be used to evaluate the research questions.

**Research Question 1:** What are the factors affecting the development of human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria?

**Inadequate Funding:** Entrepreneur needs found in order to establish and expand his business. Many of unemployed youths in Nigeria today are creative but are incapacitated because they do not have enough found to start a business that could make them self – reliance. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) which was established by government could not give enough found to the teaming youths that applied to the found. The reason is not farfetched because government institutions and agencies are not properly founded to carry out their functions effectively, coupled with political appointees who are there to recover money spend during electioneer process. In addition to this, many of youths or entrepreneurs could not meet up with the requirement of lenders in terms of interest rates and collaterals. Chinonye (2010) submitted that some financial institutions are not willing to give financial assistance to small – scale enterprise because of high mortality rate of the business and inability to produce viable business plans and guarantors for the business.

**Inflation:** The present of inflation is critical to any business development. Inflation is an economic condition characterized by a general and continuous rise in the price level couple with failure in the value of money. This inflation is economically handfull to entrepreneur because of unstable market price.

**Inadequate Information:** The collection and analysis of relativity, dependable, reliable, and authentic data that may facilitate and enhance forecasting and planning is important. It is pertinent that the entrepreneurs may not be conscious of the existing forces of law of demand and supply that directly or indirectly affects consumers' behavior.

**Political Instability:** According to Nwazor (2012), political instability affect government policies (industrial) in any economy, therefore, this will not allow the entrepreneur to invest in economy even if he has invested, he might decide to fold up due to the prevailing hostile economic climate, North – East Nigeria are example of these effect. Chinonye (2010) listed other problems that entrepreneurs are likely to face, these are: management incompetent, inadequate and incompetent manpower, infrastructural constraints, sociological and latitudinal influences, stringent government policies, poor implementation of government policies, competitions from foreign business, poor manpower training and development, and personal problems.

**Research Question 2:** What are the measures that could enhance the development of human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigeria?

**Electronic Training:** According to Nwazor (2012), the world is now a global village and we need to meet up with the changes in our environment. In this type of training, the entrepreneur can get himself trained through the internet; he can be acquainted with some information relevant to skills development. Electronic training involves the use of computer. An entrepreneur who is computer literate will be able to share information with other entrepreneurs around the world.

In January 2012, the Human Resource Development Council of South Africa (HRDSA) entered into a partnership with Google, Vodafone and the DTI to provide free websites to small business. This initiative was launched at a high profile event which received widespread press coverage in both local and international, reaching millions of people. The essence of the initiative is to have access to local and international markets and assist them in becoming more profitable. According to the HRDCSA, the initiative has been launched in Gauteng and Kwazulu –Natal. The EETTT reported that it has entered into partnership with Regeneava Business School to make free educational materials available to every small business and individuals in South Africa. Participants will be able to access the full content to tap business qualification online, video clip, access to e-books, study guides. This is fully free and open to entrepreneurs and the objectives of the free educational project are:

1. To contribute to the reduction of unemployment by providing people with the opportunities to acquire entrepreneur education and knowledge.
2. To support entrepreneurs and small- scale business development.
3. To promote economic development and competitiveness within the context of an emerging knowledge economy.
4. To provide life- long learning and opportunities.

Hence these measures have worked in South Africa; Nigeria should adopt the measures towards upgrading our entrepreneurs.

**Off-The-Job Training:** According to Nwankwo (2013), this type of training involves a situation whereby an employee is released by the employer to attain refresher courses or granted training leave or sponsored to attend seminars, conferences and workshops in order to update his or her knowledge and skills in consonance with new development in the job. This helps him or her to update their knowledge and share ideas on current issues as long as the business is concerned and the duration of this kind of training could be from two to one year.

**Vocational Entrepreneurship Training:** This is similar to traditional education, under this type of training, young school leavers who want to go into small-scale enterprise for various businesses such as carpentry work, metal work, motor maintenance, etc are grouped together for intensive entrepreneurship training. The duration for this kind of training does not exceed one year and are usually to help them start up their own business.

**On-The-Job Training:** This is a situation whereby the entrepreneur is given an opportunity to be trained on his own business operation or site. A trainer will be invited to monitor the entrepreneur's performance as long as the business activities are concerned and performance will be further evaluated, analyzed by the trainer and correction will be made if any deviation is recorded, Chinonye (2010).

**Entrepreneurship Education:** Every nation strives for sustainable development, and education becomes the bedrock of any development. Developing and implementing our educational curriculum towards entrepreneurship will assist the economy to become among the industrialized nations by 2020. Curriculum could be referred to as knowledge, attitude and skills imparted to the learner to achieve a worthwhile behavior. Knowledge means fact, information and understanding which a learner needs to acquire through experience in the course of instruction. Ivowi (2008) asserts that curriculum is a tool designed for educating a person in order to change the orientation, behavior, actions and values of that person whose concern is not only to develop self but also bring development to the world around him/her.

**Government Policies and Programs:** Government policies and programs to this study refers to guidelines and procedures set up by government and its agencies in regulating and implementing rules and actions guiding organizations in carrying out their activities. It also covers how government intends to provide social amenities that will enable organizations function effectively in carrying out their business. Therefore it becomes imperative that for human capacity building to be achieved in Nigeria, government policies and programs should focus on the following: infrastructure development, adequate implementation of policies relating to youths empowerment and industrialization, regulate importation of foreign goods and services, institute of manpower should be established to complement the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) programs and National University Commission (NUC) should ensure that all tertiary education in Nigeria establish entrepreneurship development centre as part of general studies courses.

**Financial Institution:** The financial institutions of any nation play a major role in industrialization; Japan's record of success in industrial development is as a result of its financial institutional support. Unfortunately, Nigeria financial institutions focused their assistance to oil and gas industries rather than encouraging entrepreneurial development, even when they create opportunity for assisting some entrepreneurs, the politicians who are board members will decide who to give, thereby making entrepreneur development difficult. This study suggests that the financial institution should establish department of entrepreneur development in order to facilitate the funding and educate the entrepreneur on investment procedures and other relevant information.

### **III. Discussion of Findings**

There are basically two dominant findings in this study which aligns with research questions.

First, the study identified factors challenging human capacity building and how these factors have affected sustainable development in Nigeria. The study reviewed that human capital is the key in any development planning because of its roles in coordinating other resource capitals towards sustainability, therefore, for any nation to achieve meaningful development, it must reinforce its human capacity building through relevant skills and training required to meet the present technological advancement in the global world, this gesture will also reduce unemployment which aids crime and other social vices in the society. According to "2012 National Baseline Youth Survey Report" issued in Abuja by the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Youths Development about 54 per cent of youth population were unemployed. "Of this, females stood at 51.9 per cent compared to their male counterpart with 48.1 per cent were unemployed", the report said out of 46,836 youths recorded against different types of crimes, 42,071,

representing 75,5 per cent were males, while the remaining 24.5 per cent were females, “2012 National Baseline Youth Survey Report” (NBS).

Second, the study identified measures towards enhancing human capacity building in Nigeria. These measures rely on government modification of its policy framework on sustainable development, there should be a functional polices platform that will regulate production and consumer process as well as importation of goods and services in Nigeria to reduce wastage on locally produced goods and services. The study reviewed that no meaningful development could be achieved without government enabling policies and programs especially in critical sectors of the economy such as human capacity building, infrastructure development and financial policy accessibility. Therefore, the study has filled the gap which the previous studies has not because it reviewed the critical factors that required reinforcement if human capacity building and sustainable development is to be achieved in Nigeria.

#### **IV. Conclusions/Recommendations**

Sustainable development of any nation depends largely on its human capacity building. Human capacity building also depends on the kind of knowledge and skills acquired and its application towards the socio-economic transformation of the society. The institutional policies and programs of any nation is a vital instrument that facilitate skills acquisition relevant to technological advancement, these could be done through the establishment of skills and development centers across the states and local government areas to complement the moribund training centers and even prompt upgrade of such abandoned government training facilities. The local content policy initiative should be straightened to accommodate the marketing products of our entrepreneurs and regulate the importation of similar goods and services produced locally.

Finally, no meaningful development could be achieved without adequate infrastructures. Infrastructural development and industries are ingredients that aid socio-economic transformation of both human and material resources of any nation; also our financial institutions should tensely support the entrepreneurs programs and make them real to the people. This could be done through the removal of bottle neck policies that frightened small – scale entrepreneurs from accessing their funds. This study has also provided useful data for the design and development of youth focused programs for federal and states ministries of youth’s development and other partner in the country.

#### **V. Recommendations**

- 1) Government should strengthening policies of human capacity building in all strata of the economy, federal, state and local government level.
- 2) The private sectors should complement government effort by establishing youths’ empowerment programs within the areas of operations to enhance the capacity building of the people.
- 3) The educational sectors should restructure their curriculum to include entrepreneurial studies, technological innovation and globalization.
- 4) Faith Base Organizations should also strengthen their members’ capacity through skill acquisitions and empowerment for self realization.
- 5) Nigerian Import and Export Promotion Council (NIEPC) should be strengthening to properly regulate the import of goods and services that could be produced locally and make available information where goods and services could be source within Nigeria market.
- 6) National Orientation Agency (NOA) should intensity effort toward educating the youths on the important of skill acquisition and education as the bedrock of any society.
- 7) Nigerian Consumer Protection Agency (NCPA) should educate Nigerian on the benefit of buying goods and services produce in Nigeria and ensure the quality of the products, these measures will strengthening all the relevant stakeholders in the quest for human capacity building and sustainable development in Nigerian.
- 8) Very importantly too, the need for fiscal policies that will encourage one digit interest rate financial borrowing will strengthen and motivate entrepreneurs and industrialization which in turn facilitate human capacity building and sustainable development. This measure is not new as it is already in effect in other countries.

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