POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The quality and quantity of human resources determine a nation’s growth and development. It is the available human resources that mobilize and galvanize other resources for political, economic, scientific and technological development. This study is therefore to ascertain the quality of postgraduate education and human resources development in Nigeria. Education is an indispensable ingredient of development and a fundamental right of every individual. Also, as a power catalyzing agent, it provide mental, physical, ideological and moral training to individual, so as to enable them have full consciousness of their purpose in life and equip them to achieve that purpose. Postgraduate educations, all over the world, are accepted as the citadel of knowledge and human development. To this end, this paper discusses the concept of postgraduate education and human resource development in Nigeria. The challenges and recommended an effective, efficient and productive postgraduate education and human resource development curriculum as panaceas for the nations comatose and quagmire economy.

INTRODUCTION

Postgraduate Education is believed to be the most powerful and dynamic instrument for social, political, economic, scientific and technological development of nations. Fadipe, (2000) and Aghenta, (2001). Stresses the efficacy of postgraduate education that resulted in increasing commitment of government and various groups to the establishment of educational institutions and hysterical expansion of postgraduate enrolment at the various department of the Nigeria education system. Nigeria has always seen education as an instrument for empowering people and equally the best legacy any nation can bequeath to the citizenry. Aghets (1992), and Adeleyemi (2006) writing on the role of education in National development agreed that for development to take effect, a Country must have a very considerable proportion of trained, educated citizens not only to act doctor, engineers, teachers, agriculturist, scientist and the like, but must create a new classes sufficiently large and hence, sufficiently strong to establish its own value of justice, selection on merit, flexibility, empiricism and efficiency.

Hence, the pursuit of educational achievement has been one of the paramount focuses of most Countries of the world – Nigeria inclusive. Harbinson (1993), asserted that human resources (the
product of education) capital income not material resources constitute the ultimate basis of the wealth of Nations.

Factors of production: human being are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations and carry forward national development.

A country which is unable to develop the skill and the knowledge of the people and to utilize them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else.

The goal of education is the production of manpower that possesses the requisite knowledge, skill and attitude for harnessing other resource and bringing them into a cooperative relationship yielding the goods and services demanded by the society for the satisfaction of their wants and needs. This implies that the mandate of education is to produce relevant and required human resources which are the wealth of any nations. It is realization of the need of human resources development through education that Adeyemi. (2006, 2007) summing as the national objective of Nigeria education as stated in the Nigeria policy on education (2004) described education as the integration of individual into sound and effective Citizens.

The broad, Objectives of Nigerian education therefore includes:

1. The training of the mind in building valuable concept, general actions and understanding of the world around them.
2. The acquisition of appropriate skills, ability and competencies both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to live in his society.
3. The inculcation of the right of values and attitude for the survival of the individual and society.

The education society of Nigeria has passed through different phases and stages. With these myriad of changes, one ponder if these changes is expected and inevitable, as all natural phenomena in life, the education system in Nigeria has experiences many challenges and problems in terms of continuity and inconsistency due to restructuring of the system from time to time. Nwagwu in Oyesiku at al, (2009). Stressed that Nigeria has experienced growth without development. He opined that looking at the past and contemporary endeavors in education: one sees and apparent lack in synergy and interactive harmonious relationship between educational growth and educational development.

Similarly, Moja (2000) noted that over a decade in Nigeria, the political instability generated a negative effect on the education system.

The political unrest plagued not just the education system but the school of post graduate system in particular.

The last decade of the 20th century witnessed a process of swift and irrevocable change leading to what is now understood to be the third industrial revolution—the advent of new technologies which have facilitated the ongoing march of globalization. Today the knowledge society and the knowledge Economy place cognitive resources at the centre of human activity and the social
dynamites. This situation thus has critical implications for countries human capital base: its citizens and workers.

What is a knowledge society? UNESCO’s (2005), reports towards knowledge societies, defines this entity as a society that is nurtured by its diversity and its capacities. (UNESCO: 17). Therefore access to education and training for all is clearly the right of all citizens and an obligation for governments. Furthermore each society already has its own kinds of knowledge assets which should be recognized and protected so as to link with the new forms of knowledge promoted by the knowledge economy.

There are several guiding principles”

- This society can offer a fresh and relevant approach for the development of countries of the south.
- This sort of society must foster knowledge sharing.
- ICT creates new opportunities for reaching this objective.

In this context human capital assumes new importance because people must possess the necessary capacities to direct their communities as they continue to develop in a globalised world.

Post graduate education constitutes a particular investment whether personal or national in human capital. Its overall objective is to educate highly skilled citizens and professionals able to address the specific issues of their national context as part of a wider globalised society. The wealth drawn from people and from their expertise and talents forms a base for finding variable solution to the issues of sustainable human developments, particularly in poverty reduction, wide access to health care, education for all, population, good governance, equitable arrangement for globalised economic trends.

This trend has already become common place in Europe and, more widely, in other countries. However, there is still much to be learnt about such postgraduate degrees as they are emerging in other regions of the world. Here again the demand is driven supply and adapt to the growing interests in this types of qualifications. The issue of quantity and measures to ensure this constitute another dimension of this shifting landscape.

An attendant area of interest is the impact of these new degrees on the mobility patterns of students. Traditionally, there are five main receiving countries for international study: U.S.A, UK, GERMANY, FRANCE, and AUSTRALIA. However, with the exponential growth of post graduate education provision and ever increasing climate of competition, other countries are emerging as desirable study destination. Questions also arises concerning the optimal location for this new types of advanced degrees in other to balance exposure to international expertise with the acquisition of skills and knowledge directly related to national context.
CHALLENGES FOR POST-GRADUATE EDUCATION

Today, post graduate education faces multiple challenges in terms of demand, supply, quality and retains, both for provides and the Chantal concerned. Why students decide to pursue this level of study and the incentives offered by institutions and employers are critical factors in changing and understanding trends.

It is thus important to effect a stock taking of trends in post – graduate education, primarily with regard to the changing content and structure of advanced to the origins, profiles and choices of the students concerned.

The current landscape of advanced degree is increasingly varied. This has resulted from the many changes and developments in recent years within the higher education sector where supply must adapt to more device demand.

On one hand, postgraduate degree continue to denote advanced career, in this respect expertise in research methology and investigative skills are acquired on the other hand, there is a growing demand for Master’s and doctorate related to a specific field of professional activity such as business studies or administration.

Through sometimes referred to as “tough qualifications” which may be undertaken concurrently with actual workplace activity, these involve a certain degree of postgraduate study both for the professors and the students involved.

Curriculum Development

The word “Curriculum” has been viewed and defined by many scholars in multi-dimensional ways. However, for the purpose of this study, two working definitions by different authors are quoted in Olorundare (1997). According to Stenhouse (1977), Curriculum is the means by which the experience of attempting to put an educational proposal into practice is made publicly available. To him Curriculum involves both content and method, and its widest application takes account of the problem of implementation in the institutions of the educational system.

In their own view, Tanner and Tanner (1980) see curriculum as the reconstruction of knowledge and experience, systematically developed under the auspice of the school (or university) to enable the learner to increase his or her control of knowledge and experience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To ascertain the quality of postgraduate education and its effect on human resource development in Nigeria.
2. To determine the factors militating against postgraduate education in Nigeria.
3. To investigate the relevance of postgraduate education in professional acquisition.

DIFFICULTIES AND MOTIVATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS.

Motivation in students:

Motivation helps students to stay focus and psychologically empowered to overcome obstacles and difficulties during studies. Motivation energizes people to overcome setback in study,
Motivation drives students to achieve goals. Postgraduate students should be interested in the area of study and full of enthusiasm that should not wane as the study advances and as problems are confronted.

The Nigeria postgraduate students may desire to move up the hierarchy to attend the level of self actualization but this progress may be hindered by difficulties which could hamper the areas of needs in maslow’s theory that postgraduate students must overcome, this study will also look at other difficulties and obstacles confronting the Nigerian postgraduate’s students in the areas of:

- Prolonged semesters or session due to strike and students unrest.
- Getting research materials.
- Interaction between lecturers and students
- The postgraduate students need self-fulfillments and use of potentials.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT:

Human resource development according to Peretomode and Peretomode (2004), is both a field of study and practice focusing on the whole process of planning, finding, building, coordinating utilizing working force and handling the formal systems for the management of people within the organization until and after their retirement.

Goodale {1996} considered human resources development as the process of bringing people and organization together so that the goals of each are net.

Thus human resources development is a systematic process of providing skill, values and knowledge for individuals so as to enable them function effectively in the society in terms of social economics, political, scientific and technological advancement.

The concept of training and development employees of labour are concerned with those activities aimed at improving the performance of employees for better and more effective functioning. According to Garavan, Costine, and Heraty {1995}, training and development encompasses three main activities training education and development.

Training as an acting is both focuses upon and evaluated against the job that an individual currently holds. Education is the activity that focuses upon the job that individual may potentially hold in the future and is evaluated against those jobs. Development in the other hand is used to employ those activities that focus upon the activities that the institution that employed the individual may partake in the future.

Onah {2003} for instance sees training as an organized and coordinated development of knowledge, skill and attitudes needed by an individual to master a given situation or perform a certain task within an organizational setting.
CHALLENGES OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT:

1. Inadequate teaching experience
2. Inadequate research experience
3. Lack of industry/practical experience
4. Lack of professional training in teaching
5. Low academic qualification
6. Poor attitude to work
7. Low morale and lack of motivation
8. Poor funding of education
10. Excess workload
11. Inadequate use of teaching aids.

Also, according to Aje cited by Oladije {2005}, a survey carried out in 2004 by NUC, revealed that postgraduate education for work. This is said is manifested in a number of deficiencies exhibited by the graduates in the workplace. These include:

1. Lack of analytical and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.
2. Lack of professionalism and professional ethics.
3. Inadequate practice skill to lack of linkage with commerce and industry during their education.

Conclusion

The aspects discussed in this paper have sought to cover a panorama of issues related to postgraduate education and to situate this issue against the wider context of human resource development. This concept, originating from Theodore Schulz, the American economist who won the 1979 Nobel Prize, requires investment of physical resource and monetary capital. Postgraduate education cannot exist without this investment because of knowledge, societies are to flourish, they need to train and retrain adequate cohorts of highly scaled experts. This is true for all countries whatever their social economic status effort should be made to encourage men and women embrace postgraduate education and training that would make them live gainfully, productive live, reduce poverty and other serious social problems in Nigeria. There is need to train more postgraduate lecturers, review and restructure the curriculum, develop text books, train modules and teaching aids, while national university commission (NUC) must be alive to its responsibilities and mandate.

Recommendations

In order for postgraduate education to meet the challenges of human resource development in Nigeria, it is here by recommended that.

1. Unemployment should be fought by providing postgraduate education with self reliance skills achieved through integrating business, pedagogic and entrepreneurial skills in the curriculum.
2. The curriculum of postgraduate education should be revised as to expose the trainee education lecturers to the manipulation of device instructional resources.

3. The federal ministries of education should invigorate with instructional supervision and inspection exercise with high degree of emphasis on instruction resources.

4. Post graduate education lecturer at all levels of education should learn and be trained in the use of high technology materials, such as overhead projector, computers, the internet and so on.

5. Only jobs holders should be allowed to lecture courses at all levels of education.

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