

Human Resource Development Research as a Route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The Human Resource is the most important and active factor of production. As a factor of production, the Human Resource is the labour force. It refers to the knowledge, potentialities, skills, creative ability, talents, values and beliefs of the work force. This resource plays an important role in deciding the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. Their development would lead to organizational development. Development is the process by which a society moves from a lower socio-economic condition to a higher socio-economic condition due to the education and training of the people. Human Resource Development is the increase in the socio-economic condition of the workers due to an improvement in their abilities, skills, knowledge and competences. Human Resource Development Research which entails searching again on Human Resource Development issues could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria. Sustainable Development which has Economic Development, Social Development, Environmental Development and Cultural Diversity as its pillars is defined as meeting the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the needs of future generations. Human Resource Development could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to determine empirically if Human Resource Development Research could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, to ascertain empirically if Human Resource Development Research at the macro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria and to find out empirically if Human Resource Development Research at the micro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Development is the process of increasing the socio-economic condition of the workers so that their skills, abilities and competences could be increased to improve their performance (Sheikh, 2006). Performance could be seen from three perspectives. The first perspective of performance is in terms of the extent to which the goals and objectives of the organization are achieved (Osaze and Yomere, 2000). The second perspective of performance is the extent to which the promises made to stakeholders are being fulfilled (Shell, 2012). The third perspective is the extent to which the workers behave in such a way as to willingly strive towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives (Ohiorenoya, 2012).

Human Resource Development is used at the macro and micro levels. At the macro level, it is the core of developmental efforts at the aggregate level which is aimed at the improvement of the quality of life of the people of a country. The Human Development efforts of the Government come under this category. To increase the standard of living, longevity up to 85 years and education for all of the people needs the country to improve its Human Development Index (Jhingan, 2008).

Human Resource Development at the micro level is aimed at individuals, households and firms. At the individual level, micro level Human Resource Development entails the improvement of the quality of life of executives, managers, supervisors and staff of the organizations. It entails the improvement quality of life and the enhancement of productivity (Sheikh, 2006). Total factor productivity is enhanced by ensuring that both capital and labour contribute to make total output to be more than total input. Labour Productivity is enhanced when only labour contributes to make total output to be more than total input with capital being kept constant. Capital Productivity is enhanced when only capital contributes to make total output to be more than total input with labour being kept constant (Nwachukwu, 2006).

Human Resource Development Research is the process of searching again and taking a cursory look in Human Resource Development issues of interest. The purpose of Human Resource Development Research in particular and Research in general is to proffer solutions to problems (Asika, 2004). A problem is a negative event that will hinder an executive, manager, supervisor and worker from doing well in their job. The survey is the most widely used Research Design in Human Resource Development Research in particular and Management Research in general (Podsakoff and Dalton, 1987). In the survey, the Researcher does not have control of the independent variables that have an effect on the dependent variable because they have already occurred (Stone, 2006).

One of the benefits of Human Resource Development Research is that it could lead to an increase in the output of a country from one year starting from the preceding year as the base. This could lead to Economic Growth. The Nigerian Bureau of Statistics gave the Gross Domestic Product Growth Rate of Nigeria from the last quarter of 2013 to the first quarter of 2014 as 7.4%. This rebasing made the Economy of Nigeria to be bigger

than that of South Africa which hitherto had been the biggest Economy in Africa and made the Nigerian Economy the biggest in Africa (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2014). Unfortunately, this Economic Growth of Nigeria has not been matched with an increase in the employment of School Leavers, Poverty Alleviation and improvement in the Literacy Rate.

If the proceeds of Economic Growth are properly distributed and if there is a spontaneous change that ushers in a positive macroeconomic transformation this leads to Economic Development (Anyanwu and Oaikhenan, 2000). Economic Development is the totality of Economic Growth plus Distribution of Proceeds of Growth plus Spontaneous Change. It is one of the pillars of Sustainable Development. Sustainable Development is defined by the Brundtland Report as the process of meeting the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Jhingan, 2008).

The specific objectives of the study are;

1. To determine if Human Resource Development Research could be used as route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.
2. To ascertain if Human Resource Development Research at the macro level could be used a route to Economic Development and beyond it in Nigeria.
3. To find out if Human Resource Development Research at the macro level could be used as a route to Economic Growth and beyond it in Nigeria.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (HRD) RESEARCH

The Research Designs used in HRD include the Survey, Experimentation, Observation, Case Study, Use of Secondary Data, Content Analysis, Library Search, Internet Search and askme.org. The survey is the most widely used Research method in the Social Sciences and Management Sciences. The survey has the merit that one research instrument could be used to reach a large sample of respondents. It has the demerit that because it is one shot or atmost two shots when the interest is to establish the reliability of the research instrument, it becomes difficult to use it to determine cause effect relationships (Stone, 2006).

The survey does not use a laboratory unlike Experimentation. In Experimentation, in the Management Sciences, there are two groups, the experimental group and the control group. The experimental variable is introduced to the experimental group and any increase is adduced to be due to an increase in the independent variable. This ability to manipulate the independent variable is what distinguishes the survey and the experiment. In the survey the independent variables have already occurred and so cannot be manipulated. So the experiment is the most widely used technique in the Sciences and Engineering where inanimate objects are studied. In the Management Sciences, there is the problem of the Human factor which makes experimentation very difficult. When people get to know that they are being studied as happened in the Hawthorne Experiment, they perceive themselves as members of a congenial and cohesive group and there is a change in their behaviour (Nwana, 2000).

Ovservation is a very technical Research method. In researching in the lives of electric bulbs, a seller could commission a study to determine how long it takes a particular sample of bulbs to burn out depending on the electric current and voltage which determine the power. In studies on cultism, the Researcher may need to join the cult group in order to get a comprehensive list of the cult members. So the Researcher could become not just an observer but a participant. Observation is also important when the use of a questionnaire may give socially desirable answers that might lead to serious sampling errors (Stone, 2006). In the case study, a few variables are studied in depth.

The use of Secondary Data is the most widely used technique in Economic Research. Every study in the Social Sciences and Management Sciences starts with a search for Secondary Data. If it is available, it is less costly and time saving. However, Secondary Data has the demerit that because the Researcher is not the original collector, the biases and errors of the original source could be inherited. This is why it is necessary to evaluate Secondary Data before using it. This is to ensure that the data is internally consistent, not obsolete and there is a coincidence of the units of analysis (Unyimadu, 2007). In Content Analysis, the Secondary Data is collected and content analysed. In library search, a lot of secondary data is collected from published sources. In internet search, a lot of secondary data is downloaded from the internet. The askme.org is available in the internet to give instant answers to a lot of questions.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING

The term sustainability reflects the need for careful balance between economic growth and environmental preservation. Although many definitions exist, sustainability generally refers to meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of the future generation. In a classic definition, a development path is sustainable if and only if the stock of overall capital assets remains constant or rises over time. But in this regard, natural resources and other forms of capital are substitutes only at a limited scale and to a limited degree. Rather, after the environment has been degraded to some extent, natural resources and other

forms of capital likely act as complements. Manufactured capital is generally unproductive without a minimum of available environmental services. While future technological fixes may be imagined, there is certainly no guarantee that they will emerge (Todaro and Smith, 2008).

Implicit in these statements is the fact that future growth and overall quality of life are critically dependent on the quality of the environment. The natural resource base of a country and the quality of its air, water, and land represent a common heritage for all generations. To destroy that endowment indiscriminately in the pursuit of short-term economic goals penalizes both present and, especially, future generations. It is therefore important that development policy-makers incorporate some form of environmental accounting into their decisions. For example, the preservation or loss of valuable environmental resources should be factored into estimates of economic growth and human well-being. Alternatively, policymakers may set a goal of no net loss of environmental assets. In other words, if an environmental resource is damaged or depleted in one area, a resource of equal or greater value should be regenerated elsewhere (Iyoha, 2008).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the last section, a Sustainable Development and Environmental Accounting was handled. In this section, the Research Methodology will be handled to describe how the primary data is to be collected, analysed and how the reliability and validity of the research instrument are to be got. The Research Design chosen is the survey. In the survey, a research instrument is used to collect primary data by interviewing the subjects in their work settings (Stone, 2006). Both primary and secondary sources of data are used. The primary sources are from fieldwork while the secondary sources are from textbooks and journal articles. The population consists of 800 Senior and Junior staff of the Federal Ministries of Economic Development, Finance, Interior and Environment who know how HRD Research could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria. The population sizes are distributed at the rates of 320, 240, 160 and 80 respectively totaling 800.

The Taro Yamane's formula is used to compute the sample size from the population size. The formula

is $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$ (Asika, 2004), where n is the sample size, N is the population size and e is the error term

which is 2.5% for a two-tailed test at 5% level of significance, and 1 is a constant. For $N = 800$ and $e = 2.5\%$, $n = 534$. The sample size is distributed to the Federal Ministries of Economic Development, Finance, Interior and Environment at the rates of 214, 160, 107 and 53 totaling 534.

The questionnaires used for the fieldwork contain Likert Scale statements related to the objectives eliciting responses of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The data presentation tools are tables. The data analysis tools are percentages. The test – retest method of Reliability of the Instrument is used. The questionnaires were administered to the 534 respondents at two points in time and the responses were correlated. A Spearman's Rank Correlation coefficient of 0.95 and a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.90 showed that the instrument was reliable. The content validity of the instrument was used. The stratified sampling method in which the population sizes and the sampling sizes were of the ratios of 0.4, 0.3, 0.2 and 0.1 for the four Federal Ministries. The same version of the research instrument was administered to the 534 respondents. This gave the instrument content validity.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 shows the summary of the distribution of the questionnaires.

Table 1: Summary of the Distribution of the Questionnaires

- a. Number of questionnaires administered = 534
- b. Number of questionnaires returned = 500
- c. Number of questionnaires not returned = 34

- d. Response rate = $\frac{b}{a} = \frac{500}{534} = 0.933$

- e. Non-response rate = $\frac{c}{a} = \frac{34}{534} = 0.067$

- f. Total response and non-response rate = $\frac{b}{a} + \frac{c}{a} = \frac{500}{534} + \frac{34}{534} = 1$

Source: The number of questionnaires administered, returned and not returned are got from Fieldwork (2014).

From Table 1, it is shown that out of 534 questionnaires administered, 500 of them were returned. This gave a response rate of 0.933. Out of the 534 questionnaires administered, 34 of them were not returned. This gave a non-response rate of 0.067. The total responses and non response rate was 1.

Table 2 shows the analysis of the responses related to the three objectives.

Table 2: The Analysis of the Responses related to the Three Objectives

Statements	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1. HRD Research could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.	Strongly Agree	298	59.60	59.60	59.60
	Agree	102	20.40	20.40	80.00
	Undecided	33	6.60	6.60	86.60
	Disagree	33	6.60	6.60	93.20
	Strongly Disagree	34	6.80	6.80	100.00
2. HRD Research could not be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.	Strongly Agree	34	6.80	6.80	6.80
	Agree	33	6.60	6.60	13.40
	Undecided	33	6.60	6.60	20.00
	Disagree	102	20.40	20.40	40.40
	Strongly Disagree	298	59.60	59.60	100.00
3. HRD Research at the macro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.	Strongly Agree	300	60.00	60.00	60.00
	Agree	105	21.00	21.00	81.00
	Undecided	31	6.20	6.20	87.20
	Disagree	31	6.20	6.20	93.40
	Strongly Disagree	35	6.60	6.60	100.00
4. HRD Research at the macro level could not be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.	Strongly Agree	33	6.60	6.60	6.60
	Agree	31	6.20	6.20	12.80
	Undecided	31	6.20	6.20	19.00
	Disagree	105	21.00	21.00	40.00
	Strongly Disagree	300	60.00	60.00	100.00
5. HRD Research at the micro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.	Strongly Agree	302	60.40	60.40	60.40
	Agree	108	21.60	21.60	82.00
	Undecided	29	5.80	5.80	87.80
	Disagree	30	6.00	6.00	93.80
	Strongly Disagree	31	6.20	6.20	100.00
6. HRD Research at the micro level could not be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.	Strongly Agree	31	6.20	6.20	6.20
	Agree	30	6.00	6.00	12.20
	Undecided	29	5.80	5.80	18.00
	Disagree	108	21.60	21.60	37.60
	Strongly Disagree	302	60.40	60.40	100.00

Source: The statements, responses and frequencies are got from the questionnaires returned.

Table 2 shows that for the statements that HRD Research could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, the responses are Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). They have frequencies of 298, 102, 33, 33 and 34 respectively out of 500. These gave percentages and valid percentages of 59.60, 20.40, 6.60, 6.60 and 6.80 respectively. These give cumulative percentages of 59.60, 80.00, 86.60, 93.20 and 100.00 respectively.

For the statement that HRD Research could not be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, the responses are Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. They have frequencies of 34, 33, 33, 102 and 298 respectively out of 500. These give percentage and valid percentages of 6.80, 6.60, 6.60, 20.40 and 59.60 respectively totaling 100. These give cumulative percentages of 6.80, 13.40, 20.00, 40.40 and 100 respectively.

For the statement that HRD Research at the macro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, the responses are Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. They have frequencies of 300, 105, 31, 31 and 33 respectively out of 500. These give percentages and valid percentages of 60.00, 21.00, 6.20, 6.20 and 6.60 totaling 100. These give cumulative percentages of 60.00, 81.00, 87.20, 93.40 and 100 respectively.

For the statement that HRD Research at the macro level could not be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, the responses are Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. They have frequencies of 33, 31, 31, 105 and 300 respectively out of 500. These give percentages and valid

percentages of 6.60, 6.20, 6.20, 21.00 and 60.00 respectively totaling 100. These give cumulative percentages of 6.60, 12.20, 19.00, 40.00 and 100.00.

For the statement that HRD at the micro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, the responses are Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. They have frequencies of 302, 108, 29, 30 and 31 respectively out of 500. These give percentages and valid percentages of 60.40, 21.60, 5.80, 6.00 and 6.20 respectively totaling 100. These give cumulative percentages of 60.40, 82.00, 87.80, 93.80 and 100 respectively.

For the statement that HRD at the micro level could not be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, the responses are Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. They have frequencies of 31, 30, 29, 108 and 302 respectively out of 500. These give percentages and valid percentages of 6.20, 6.00, 5.80, 21.60 and 60.40 respectively totaling 100. These give cumulative percentages of 6.20, 12.20, 18.00, 39.80 and 100.00 respectively.

CONCLUSION

The Human Resource was the most important and active factor of production. As a factor of production, the Human Resource was the labour force. It referred to the knowledge, potentialities, skills, creative ability, talents, values and beliefs of the work force. This resource played an important role in deciding the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. Their development would lead to organizational development. Development is the process by which a society moves from a lower socio-economic condition to a higher socio-economic condition due to the education and training of the people. Human Resource Development is the increase in the socio-economic condition of the workers due to an improvement in their abilities, skills, knowledge and competences.

Human Resource Development Research which entailed searching again on Human Resource Development issues could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria. Sustainable Development which has Economic Development, Social Development, Environmental Development and Cultural Diversity as its pillars is defined as meeting the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the needs of future generations. Human Resource Development could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to determine empirically if Human Resource Development Research could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria, to ascertain empirically if Human Resource Development Research at the macro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria and to find out empirically if Human Resource Development Research at the micro level could be used as a route to Sustainable Development in Nigeria.

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