

Human Capital Development: A Panacea for Good Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract : Human capital development is seen as a sine-qua-non for the enthronement of good governance and development in Nigeria in particular and the globalized world at large. Nigeria's huge human and material resources and unique friendly environment are not frequently affected by forces of nature like tsunamis, hurricane, typhoons, earthquakes, wild bush fire etc. Nigeria is unarguably as the result of the aforementioned in a vantage position to be counted alongside other developed countries of the world but the reverse is the case as the country still grapple with underdevelopment caused by the prevailing governance challenges. Hence, these paper examine the impact of human capital development on good governance in Nigeria. The paper adopted qualitative relied heavily on secondary sources of data such as textbooks, journals etc. The paper applied the human capital theory as the framework of analysis and content analysis procedures which showed that human capital development has a significant impact on good governance in Nigeria. There is however inadequate attention given to human capital development which has negative effects on good governance in the country. The study therefore recommends that there is need to improve on human capital development strategies in both public and private sectors of the economy in order to enthrone good governance that will enhance socio economic development of the country. The study further recommended that minimum educational or skill requirements of the workforce should be adequately looked into for effective performance in both public and private sectors.

Keywords: Human capital, Human capital Development, Good Governance

1. INTRODUCTION

Human capital is about the most important variable and the highest asset of any country because no matter the amount of capital invested programmes of policies formulated in the country, its success or failure depends largely on the quality of people who plan and execute the policies or programme. The Nigerian public sector responsible for good governance is generally admitted by Nigerians as definitely not functioning at optimum capacity. There are various lapses according to Blacky in Alozie (2017) by government agencies which contribute to poor governance and by extension underdevelopment. The author stressed further that, it is a truism that no nation develops beyond the capacity of its public service and there is a broad consensus amongst Nigerians that our public service is broken and dysfunctional.

Nigeria's performance rating in human capital development indices which is a reflection of its human capital status is low despite its endowments in human capital potentials. It is not surprising then that Nigeria is grouped among the poor under-developed countries of the world. Recently it has attained the rank or the ranking of the countries with the highest poor population in the world, taking over from India. According to Akor (2018) the missing link is the country's ability to harness and effectively utilize its national endowments for national development is as a result of low human capital development and utilization. In the 2017 World Bank Group, Nigeria was dismally ranked 152 among the 157 countries captured (Ujah, 2018). This means that Nigeria is only better off than 5 countries in the measurable human capital indices (HDI) and by implication in the quality of life of the citizens. The

report also revealed that Nigeria is also one of the expensive countries from which to operate industries mainly because of poor infrastructure and lack of skilled labour. However, the country is bedeviled by poor governance characterized by insecurity and destruction of lives and property. This situation is perpetrated by insurgencies like the militating in the Niger Delta area, Boko Haram activities in the North East, the Fulani herdsman and farmers' clashes in the middle belt and south east, the bandit's attacks in the North western part of the country, electoral violence etc. The public and private sectors are hampered by high level corruption cases, lack of transparency and accountability, poor justice and electoral systems and what have you?

According to Kalu (2011), many have argued that Nigeria's problem is traceable to poor human capacity that sufficiently caters for the welfare (good governance) of the citizen, it is only a well developed manpower that can manage resources properly and regulate both internal and external relations as well as effectively control the nations policy process.

The challenge steering Nigeria in the face as it concerns providing good governance to the people largely depends on, but not limited to the capacity of her human capital development and management. It is expected that the focus, application and commitment of highly skilled manpower that can adopt and transparently implement good governance policies, can only be within the ambit of human capital development and management. Therefore one can expect that the extent to which good governance can be attained depends on the quality of available human capital. This paper therefore, focuses on the place of human capital development and how deliberate policy framework in that

regard will facilitate the enthronement of good governance and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Conceptualizing Human Capital Development Human Capital

Human capital actually refers to the knowledge, skills and competencies embodied in the individual as a result of education, training and/or experiences that makes him become more productive. It is human asset consisting of know-how, training values, innovations, competences, expertise, talents and capabilities which is expected to be used for national and economic development. It is usually acquired more often than not through formal education, on-the-job and life experiences.

Human capital according to Encarta (2009) which is the collection of skills and knowledge that employees possess as a concept was made popular by George Schultz in 1961 who later in 1981 posted thus 'consider all human abilities either innate or acquired attributes, which are valuable and can be augmented by appropriate investment to be human capital'. Similarly, Bontis, Dragonetti, Jacobsen and Ross (1999) in Kalu (2011) further defined human capital as the human factor in the organization; the combined intelligence, skills and expertise that gives the organization its distinctive character. The human elements are those that are capable of learning, changing, innovating and providing the creative thrust which if properly motivated can ensure the long-term survival of the organization.

Human resource is the highest asset and the most vital in the life of any organization-public or private. Finances in term of money may be needed to procure needed materials, equipment and to pay workers remunerations and benefit. Without the requisite human resource, all other important resources, including money invested in the organization will be a waste. In furtherance of the concept of human capital, Harbison (1969:63) stated that it is the human resource, not capital nor income nor material resources (that) constitute the wealth of a nation. This in his view is true because capital (money) and natural resources are passive agents while the human person is not only active but bring about the development of other resources. It is a truism that any country that does not develop her human resources is not capable of developing anything else. This is because a nation will according to Onah (2003) depend on her human resources for the supply of physical labour, technical and professional skills and competences which definitely are germane to effective and efficient planning and implementation of development policies, programmes, projects and daily activities that ensures good governance of the state.

However, human capital development according to Fagbougbe (2008) in Kalu (2011) has to do with 'recruiting, supporting and investing in people, using training, coaching, mentoring, internships, organizational development and human resource management for its eventual realization. Since human capital represents human skills and capabilities

generated by investment in education and health, improvement in the educational levels of man is therefore paramount in human capital development. There is no gainsaying the fact that development in education will definitely develop the skills, judgment, abilities, knowledge, wisdom and competences of individuals for the production of goods and services that are needed for the rapid socio-economic transformation and development as well as effective and efficient service delivery.

In addition, human capital development involves the training and development of human resources for the acquisition of more knowledge and skills. The main intent according to Akpan (1982) is to equip people with the knowledge required to qualify them for various positions of employment, or improve their skills and efficiency in the positions they already hold. For Kalu (2010), in Kalu (2011) maintains that the achievement of the forth (4th) goal Of the MDGs which is to reduce child mortality can only be achieved if the mother is alive, healthy and knowledgeable. In other words, it can only take a developed human resource in the woman to have that goal achieved. Similarly, the 2004 report of United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) cited by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2004 noted that 'education, together with reproductive health, is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process.

Development, on the other hand is aimed at enhancing growth and acquisition of wide experiences for future strategic advantage of organizations. It is worthy of note that in the highly competitive world of the present day, Countries especially the Less Developed Countries (LDCs) must gear up in the area of training programmes that in the long run will offer them better chances and opportunities in a rather rapidly changing world. This is necessary because the ever growing changes in the technologies, economic, social and political affairs of the modern world will sooner than later render acquired skills and knowledge obsolete. For any Country to survive this constant flux associated with the global world, it must be prepared to train and retrain her citizens as much as these changes lasts.

Indeed man as the most vital resource generates growth and this perhaps explains why human capacity building cannot be exaggerated. According to Ugbo (2010) citing Eze and Chukwuemeka (1998) in Kalu (2011) noted that the difference between one organization that is doing well and another similar to it that has short-comings may be traceable to the quality and disposition of staff available. Taking this assertion to another pedestal, the difference between a developed Country and a less developed country does not usually lie in the quantity of natural resources available to them but essentially lie on the quality of human resource of these nations. The citizens of the developed nation have been so prepared and developed that they can produce goods and services at a far more efficient and cost

effective manner both in quantitative and qualitative terms as to be matched by the less developed nations. It is therefore pertinent to note that in order to break this intractable vicious circle of under development, less developed nations must come to terms with investing in their citizens at all levels of the economy.

Human Capital Development Strategies

According to the revised guidelines for training in the federal civil service in Nigeria, a key goal of the extent of staff training and man power development policy, is to lend a systematic approval to training efforts in the service and by so doing enact government to drive higher benefits from the massive investments in manpower development (Okofoni and Erewo, 2005). The strategy for man power development in the public service takes different forms and largely determined by the objectives of the organization, the management staff, or the council board, as well as the environment of the organization etc. This is of course in addition to the pre-entry qualifications at the point of entry obtained from various educational institutions.

However some strategies for manpower development according to Chukwudi (2014) include:

- i. **On the Job method of manpower development:** This consists of strategies like coaching, job rotation, in house training and In-service training of staff outside the organization in higher institutions of learning or vocational centres.
- ii. **Committees/work group method:** This involves group discussion geared towards injecting inputs in form of decision making as regards solving the councils problems
- iii. **Orientation:** An internal part of recruitment exercise that focus on job specification and occupational demands placed on the employee and social interaction that takes place in the place of work which could either boost pro-activity or be detrimental to it.
- iv. **Vestible Training Method:** Here the training is by acquisition of skills where the trainee practices the skills with identical equipment that he uses or he is expected to use in his actual work place.

Good Governance

Good governance has assumed an entrenched position as an indicator for measuring the development progress of any nation as well as a central factor for development. As Oberota (2003) in Obinna Ukhurebor and Nwosu (2019) argues that: “politically, people may disagree about the best means of achieving good governance, but they quite agreed that good governance is absolutely imperative for social and economic progress”. That is why many nations are striving to be seen to offer good governance to its citizenry. According to the World Bank, Good governance consists of:

A public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable, and an administration that is accountable to the public. The key components of good governance include effectiveness and efficiency in public sector management, accountability and responsiveness of public officials to the citizenry, rule of law and public access to information and transparency, (World Bank 1992:81).

The above statements adopted the economic and management focus approach. Whereas to the United Nations, Good Governance is consensus –oriented, participatory, following the rule of law, effective and efficient, accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive. Good governance ensures high level international effectiveness and socio-economic development, complemented by a politically stable environment for the formation and implementation of government policies (Vande and Jooji, 2007). Similarly, Nigeria’s Vision 2010 document defined Good Governance as a means of accountability in all ramifications. It also means rule of law and unfettered judiciary; that is freedom of expression and choice in political association. Good governance means transparency, equity, and honesty in public office (Obinna, 2019). Uzoechi (2010) in a related view explained that good governance ensures the formulation of appropriate policies, programmes, and priorities to support the activities of the people to enable them earn a decent livelihood, their access to state resources and opportunities that help them lend a long, fruitful and productive life.

All these attributes are instrument of effective governance in the sense that they provide necessary anchor for that act of governance. As the definitions presented above suggest, there are clear similarities across the working definitions examined with minor differences. Irrespective of the arguments that find favour in current literature concerning the inaccuracies surrounding the definition of good governance concept and unending addition to the components of synthesis of these definitions more or less reveals that good governance constitutes two operative words, ‘Governance’ and ‘Good’. As such basic understanding of these operative words readily yields a simple incontestable fact that the act of governance can be good or bad (Obinna, Ukhonebor and Nwosu, 2019).

Nevertheless our focus is on Good governance. It is not just the democratic institutions of Government but involves promoting the rule of law, tolerance of minority and opposition groups; transparent political processes, independent judiciary as well as following the due process in the day to day activities of the government. Essentially good governance deals with how those entrusted with leadership positions make effort to achieve the goals or the ends of the state which include the maintenance of law and order, the provision of welfare for its citizens and the pursuit of national interest in the global world arena. Good governance

entails the existence of democratic institutions and values (Nwanegbo, 2016).

Thus from the foregoing, the researchers infer that Good governance as a concept is applicable to all sections of society such as the government, education, legislature, judiciary, private sector, corporate sector, trade union, including the non-governmental Organization (NGOs). The implication is that it is only when all these and other various sections of society conduct their affairs in a socially responsible manner that the objective of achieving larger good of the largest number of people in society can be achieved (Madhav, 2007). Good Governance is therefore an imperative for development.

Key Components of Good Governance

In a bid to determine the qualification for effective use of foreign aid, by the World Bank and Donor agencies, World Bank researchers attempted to address these by developing components (Indicators) that rank countries according to quality of governance by aggregating data from many available sources. Indicators are based on 340 variables produced by 32 different sources, including commercial information providers, surveys of firms and household non-governmental organizations and public sector organization (Obinna, 2019)

All the components from the various sources were merged and summarized as follows.

1. Rule of Law
2. Transparency
3. Government Effectiveness and Efficiency
4. Accountability
5. Participation
6. Equity and Inclusiveness
7. Political stability and Absence of Violence
8. Regulatory quality
9. Responsiveness
10. Control of Corruption
11. Conscientious Oriented

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper adopted the Human Capital theory as its theoretical framework of analyses, Human Capital Theory views schooling and training as investment in skills and competences (Adelakun, 2011). The theory holds that a more educated / Skilled work force makes it easier for an organization (State) to adopt and employment of new technologies, thus reinforcing returns on education and training.

The proponents of the theory include Adam Smith, Theodore Schultz, Gary Becker, Samuel Bowles, William Petty and Jacob Mincer. They introduce the notion that people invest in education so as to increase stock of human capabilities which can be formed by combining innate abilities with involvements in human beings (Adelakun, 2011). The Proponents justified investment in human capital as being equally or even more equally worthwhile than that in the physical capitals. The Theory emphasizes how education/Training increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of cognitive stock of economically productive human capacity which is a product

of innate abilities and investments in human beings (Almandance, 2011). Human capital theory stress the need to allocate significant resources for development of human capital as they held that, productivity is high when population is educated. They posit that the more a population is educated, the more productive a nation will be.

The theory is applicable here because this paper is based on the premise that human capital development entails the development of the Nigerian workforce/human capacity through education and training that enhances good governance of the Nigeria State. The theorist believes that it is only through human capital developments that a nation or institution can develop sufficient and qualitative human capital required for national growth and development. Hence it's apt for the study. It is in line with this theory's assumption that various institutions in Nigeria should at various levels and time organize staff development courses and programmes for their staff to enhance productivity. For instance, there are universities designated to provide training in specific areas, administrative institution like Administrative Staff College (AS CON) Lagos, National Policy and Strategies Studies (NIPPS) Jos, Staff College Jaji, and other Private and public training institutions of learning. The training institutions are designated to develop the human capital for effective service delivery in the Nigerian Public sector to enhance good governance so to raise the standard of living of the citizenry.

Human Capital Development and Good Governance In Nigeria

On one hand, human capital development has to do with recruiting, supporting and investing in people, using training, coaching, mentoring, internships, organizational development and human resource management for eventual realization of desired goals. Improvement in educational levels of man is of paramount in human capital development. This is in view of the fact that education will develop the skills, judgment, abilities, knowledge, wisdom and competences of individual for the production of goods and services that are needed for the rapid socio-economic transformation, development as well as effective and efficient service delivery.

Good governance on the other hand is seen as the efficient management of nations resources and affairs such that it is participatory, equitable, accountable, transparent and responsive to people's needs. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in the society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in the decision making over the allocation of development resources. Good Governance is the term that symbolizes the paradigm shift of the role of government.

Hence one thing leads to another. This submission show that the act of human capital development leads to good governance that enhances people's standard of living and development holistically. Human capital development thus provides education and skills that helps to acquire

adequate knowledge and technical knowhow of the social, political and economic conditions that enhances good governance.

Good Governance accomplishes the public good in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption and with the regard for the rule of law. The true test of good governance is the degree to which it delivers on the promise of human rights and provision of basic necessities to enhance the lives of citizens. This therefore elicits the simple question of whether the institutions of governance in Nigeria are effectively guaranteeing the right to good health, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality education, gainful employment, fair justice, personal security etc. Your guess in answering this question is as good as ours especially when one considers the basic attributes of good governance earlier outlined in this paper. In good conscience, majority of patriotic Nigerians will not answer in the affirmative. For instance, a random conversation with Nigerians across board irrespective of age, sex, religion, tribe, occupation etc reveals a growing sense of disenchantment and disillusionment about the failure of the Nigeria State (Governance) at all levels in establishing a democratic state for the pursuit of the common good. This situation could have been obviously different if human capital development has been adequately given attention, hence the imperative of human capital management to provide capacity to overcome the deficiencies in governance. This was also the view of Akpochafor (2018) as she rightly asserted that ‘to turn the table around, Nigeria must invest in education to build capacity for development’.

Governance challenges in Nigeria attributable to poor governance is enormous and quite disturbing. Some of these are highlighted below:

High poverty level where Nigeria is ranked among the poorest nations of the world. A recent rating showed that Nigeria has overtaken India with the highest population of the poorest people in the world. Nigeria has about 10.5 million out of school children out of the 20 million in the world (UNESCO, 2016). Illiteracy figure is rising and being worsened by the insecurity issues especially that of Boko Haram, Armed Bandits and Armed herdsmen activities, that has displaced high number of people in the troubled areas. Illiteracy number in Nigeria has risen from 60 million in 2010 to 65 million in 2015 (UNESCO, 2015). Illiteracy has grave consequences for the individual, the society and for socio-economic development of a nation in view of their low capacity as a result of ignorance.

High unemployment rate is also ravaging the country. Unemployment according to Akpochafo (2018) is 19.7% in 2017. Mainwhile about 1.8 million graduates from Nigerian and foreign universities enter the job market annually.

Nigeria faces security challenges in many fronts; from Boko Haram in the North East, to Militancy in the Niger Delta, the Badoo killers in Lagos and Ogun State, challenges posed by the Pro-Biafra activists, the armed Herdsmen killings in Benue and other Middle belt States, cultists and kidnapping

especially in southern Nigeria, armed bandits in Zamfara, Katsina and Sokoto States and high level rate of corruption in all segments of the society in Nigeria among others.

Poor infrastructural state is all over the country. This ranges from bad roads to poor health facilities, inadequate of facilities, poor justice system, poor water and power supplies, inadequate industrial and technological programmes, etc. All these are signs of failure or challenges which points to one thing, lack of good governance and Nigeria cannot continue along this path of self-destruction. There is a need to chart new paths through intensifying human capital development to enthrone good governance. The Concrete link between human capital development and good governance as x-rayed within the ambit of selected components of good governance is briefly discussed hereunder.

The Rule of Law

The rule of law is implied in the existence of law and other judicial systems within societies and is enshrined in the texts of the law itself. The rule of law is fundamental to the stability and smooth functioning of society only when the rule of law is respected and citizens can have confidence in democratic process over the long term and invest in the sustainable development of their society. The rule of law depends heavily on the development of an independent and honest judiciary and the will of any particular government to restrain itself and show respect before the law.

Human capital development through educational institutions like the Universities, Polytechnics etc produces specialists (lawyers) and other skilled workforce for the judiciary to function effectively. They acquire the education that affords them the opportunity to learn the meaning of objectivity, how to subject their own biases prejudices and convictions to impartial evaluation. Credible judicial manpower development produces judicial staff that are impartial and free from bias, leaving no room for injustice and favouritism.

Accountability and Transparency

A current issue in many governmental reforms process is transparency. As state bureaucracies have grown into large opaque entities, practices of secrecy often cover the hidden struggles and interests of particular sectors and civil servants beyond their stated missions. There are often conflicts of interest in practice of governance that are hidden by the secrecy of administration.

Accountability refers to rendering by stewardship of public officers to the populace and stakeholders. It points to the responsibility for judging those practices and their effectiveness by various activities, including the public. Accountability includes a sense of moral accountability to the public with various kinds of sanctions guaranteed by the rule of law. Where the public is free to examine the transactions of the government and to hold its representatives accountable for their actions, the public simultaneously takes responsibility for the proper functioning of their government through this form of participation.

Human capital development can play a crucial role. It strikes the balance of expectations from the government and the governed. In this regards Human capital development uses various strategies of trying to implement work ethics of public administration which is concerned with what is morally good and bad, right or wrong. Ethics questions; is it right to be dishonest in a good cause? Can we justify living in opulence while the people we serve are starving? (Obinna Ukhoreber and Nwosu, 2018) Ethics in public administration and philosophy of education courses can effectively address such issues in manpower development programme.

Inclusiveness

Members of the society need to work together for any developmental goal to be achieved. This makes for rapid development of communities both in urban and rural areas. Rodney (2005) sees development from the level of social groups. He defines it as increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships. Men in society need to feel a sense of belonging in that society and human capital development through public enlightenment programmes in various medium like the National Orientation Agency's programmes are for the active participation in the society socially, economically politically and otherwise.

Participation

Greater participation is crucial for good governance in two ways: greater participation by citizens in decision-making process allows greater transparency which can help to ensure that political decisions are adapted to the needs of the people affected by them. Second, greater participation is important for democratic legitimacy which depends on the investment people have as citizens in their own governing.

Human capital development provides education or enlightenment that emphasize the freedom of expression of individuals views. Human capital development embarks on formal, informal and non formal strategies in transmitting knowledge, skills and dispositions that make the individual more or less active members of the society. Causes in political science and public administration advocates that everyone should have a voice in policy decisions, either directly or indirectly or through legitimate institutions that represent their interests. This participation should be built on the freedom of association as well as ability to participate constructively. The transmission of knowledge in political awareness, tolerance and participation is done through education (training). Encourage democratic participation through education as in courses like civic education, (NOA programme, political science courses etc) and organization of voters education for the electorates is an integral part of human capital development to enhance good governance.

Political Stability and Absence of Violence

Human capital development through education approach advocates for a just state for individuals to live in and be happy which creates the atmosphere for political stability. It seeks the common good of all members of the society. The common good here refers to a bilateral

relationship between Nigeria and Nigerians and between the country and its citizens (Eboh 2001). This makes for harmonious coexistence capable for easing the prevailing instability in the country. Promoting the common good through providing the basic infrastructure needed by the citizenry for the development of their potentials, inevitability makes the citizens happy and fulfilled members of the society which is the hallmark of a just state.

Moral growth is the acquisition of a capacity for communal life (co-existence) as well as personal fulfillment; we become more fully who we are as they become more able to offer ourselves to others. The only indisputable sure way of imbibing good governance principles is education. Human capital development uses various educational strategies as a socializing system which employs formal, informal and non-formal methods in transmitting knowledge, skills and dispositions that make them more or less effective members of the society that enhances good governance.

Conclusion

Our discussion so far has established the fact that human capital development is a sine-qua-non to good governance in Nigeria. The essence of man is to live well, ensuring this; man must be protected from various forms of injustice and unfair treatment, allowed relevant opportunity to develop in every way. When people live together in communities, societies and even nations, they must have the capacity or learn to live in peace, share common values and protect the lives of one another. Since societies and nations are governed by a few representatives of majority of the people, the need for good governance then becomes a necessary tool in administrations. The challenges of insecurity in the country, corruption, poor public service delivery, threat to unity of the country; incessant crises ranging from violence to crimes of various dimensions are attributable to failure in governance. Hence the need for human capital development to produce quality leadership.

This is not just our personal judgment but the submission of every person who has either been a keen observer or ardent follower of Nigerian politics and governance since independence. This is based on the fact that quality leadership pre-supposes incorruptibility, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness, board based anticipated and strict adherence to the rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights. Above all quality leadership inspires patriotism and the fear of God in the art of governance and overall conduct of human affairs.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this paper, the following recommendations are made.

1. There is urgent need for both public and private sectors in the country to improve and sustain human capital development of their workforce to promote good governance.
2. There should be enthronement of good governance and justice at all levels of government to address the

poverty, poor infrastructure and unemployment challenges in the country as a way of mitigating security upheavals.

3. A benchmark on minimum educational or skill acquisition requirement of prospective workforce be strictly adhered to at the point of employment in both public and private sectors to have the recruitment of high caliber persons to ensure effective job performance.
4. Funding of human capital development activities in the country should be given priority. This is in view of the fact that the realization of good governance requires the collective power of human assets which can only be enhanced through sustained human capital development.

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