

Skills of Men of Diaspora and Reading Culture as Correlates of Human Resources Development for Employment Generation

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the correlation between skills of the men of Diaspora and reading culture with human resources development for employment generation in Nigeria. It adopts descriptive survey research design. The study employs a self-designed questionnaire validated by experts of Test and Measurement unit of School of Education, EACOED, Oyo to collect required data. A sample of 300 Secondary School Teachers was randomly selected from the three Senatorial Districts of Oyo State for the study. The data collected were analysed using regression and correlation analysis methods as well as Statistical Package in Social Sciences (SPSS-20). A fully modified Ordinary Least Square Regression Analysis was carried out via SPSS-20 software package. The results reveal that skills of men of Diaspora have significant effect on human resources development for employment generation in Nigeria. Based on the results, suggestions were provided on how to tap skills of men of Diaspora for human resources development for national development among which are, cultivation of good reading culture among Nigerians, resuscitation of public library with state of art equipment like ICT and vogue books, provision of conducive environment for Diaspora engagement, among others.

Keywords: *Diaspora, reading culture, human resource development and employment*

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that Nigeria is a rich country because it is blessed with mineral wealth like oil and gas and formidable human population, but paradoxically a rich country with poor people, which are even classified to be part of the extremely poor people of the world. As the World Bank President, Dr. Jim Yong Kim recently averred, “the fact is that two thirds of the World’s extremely poor are concentrated in just five countries-India, China, Nigeria Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo” (Nigerian Tribune, Friday, 11 April, 2014:19). Inferred from this is that a large number of people in these countries don’t have economically befitting jobs to make living. Therefore, there cannot be but the current spate of violence and crimes across the different parts of the country like Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east, kidnapping and human trafficking in the East and South-south as well as killing of human being for money making rituals like the “Soka” episode at Ibadan in recent time in the West. No country can develop and have meaningful

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progress in these socially reprehensible circumstances. Thus, there must be a way to the paradise. The government of Nigeria had attempted solving the problem, but reliance on the oil sector as a major source public financing of governance has not helped matters and as a result there is need for paradigm shift, from reliance on petroleum resources to human capital development for skill acquisition for employment generation. There is awareness that men of Diaspora possess skills that can be tapped for the development of their home societies. This is nonetheless possible only if the people of the home country possess the absorptive capacity i.e. reading culture to receive the information they bring in the development of their skills. Etymologically, **Diaspora** is a Greek word meaning “scattering, dispersion”. It applies to a scattered population with a common origin in a smaller geographic area. Diaspora is a product of migration in the form of geographical dispersion. Diaspora as a concept was first used to describe the dispersion of the Jews in biblical times. Having suffered the same fate later, the Africans that dispersed outside Africa have appropriated the term (Adetugbo, 2001). The term therefore refers to the emigrants from one country who have settled in other lands whether or not they hold citizenships there, make up that part of population that we call the Diaspora (Onwudiwe, 2006).

A rather radical or developmentalist conceptualization of Diaspora is a working definition from the African Union and it considers the Diaspora to refer to people who consider themselves of African descent, are resident outside Mother Africa, and ready to contribute to African development (Matlou, 2009). When the school curriculum is reviewed to accommodate Diaspora participation to help supply their skills and potentials in building the nation, the readiness of the people to make themselves constructively available is also a significant factor. It is one thing for a resource to be available; it is another thing for people to utilize it through the requisite knowledge and skills. Skills are diverse including transferable skills, soft skills, core skills, key skills, generic skills, basic skills, cross-curricula skills, behavioural competencies, employability skills or, more recently twenty-century skills have been variously used to refer to skills needed by university graduates to be work ready (Bridges, 1993; Hager & Holland, 2006). Of importance to this paper is employability skill within the school curriculum provides students with a variety of inter and extra curricula opportunities together with work experience that makes them employable. Lee (2010) sees such skills as lubricant of increasingly complex and interconnected work place.

Fatade, Nneji, Awofala & Awofala (2012) and Okebukola (2010) explicated that graduates from Nigerian Universities across most disciplines lacked the required competencies needed to be work ready. Among skills lacking in Nigerian graduates include analytical competencies, ICT compete skills, professionalism and professional ethics skills, creativity and technical skills. These skills deficiency affect both the teachers and the students. However, Nigerian Diaspora possesses some human resource development skills that can enhance employment generation in Nigeria. They have been found, globally, to be prominent in teaching, education and research professions, finance investment and economics, public health, engineering, agriculture, information technology, legal sciences, administration and natural sciences. For instance, Peter Nwangwu, a reknown professor of clinical pharmacology who lives in United States has helped in the invention two new techniques in

pharmacology as well as in the invention of seven new drugs patented in United States served as Executive Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor of University of Nigeria, Nsukka (Babawale, 2008). This set of people can help in the development of skills and knowledge for growing the economy and spawning new industries. According to Okebukola (2014), the curriculum of schools through which formal education is provided is delivered to tool learners with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. Knowledge and skills to be a good farmer or engineer; attitudes and values such as honesty, objectivity and perseverance and being a good team player which are necessary for the work place are taught in schools. On the existing school at the basic or higher education level, the learner is better prepared to contribute meaningfully to the economy. What makes people to acquire knowledge and skills is their commitment to reading because no reading no learning. A society with low reading culture may not be able to tap the potentials of the Diasporas. Knowledge is infectious and the propitious condition for this is reading. Reading which is the first out of the 3R's of education foundation (i.e reading, writing and arithmetic) involves the act of getting information from the printed pages of a write up or that of an electronic media such as television, video, computer system, etc. This process involves one's ability to be able to understand and draw meaningful inference from the material being read.

Reading has been described as the skill or activity of getting information from book or non-book material. It is the skill that gives access to a high proportion of accumulated thought, ideas and feelings of the culture. It adds quality to life and provides access to culture and cultural heritage. It is a means of tapping knowledge from superior minds (Oyeyemi, 2005; Kennedy, 2007; Ogwu, 2010 and Oyeleke, 2012). Holt (1998) remarks that a situation in which a large number of people rarely read, either because they lack the skill or simply because they do not care enough to take time to concentrate will pose serious problems in the future. Reading is essential to full participation in modern society. It adds quality to life, provides access to culture and cultural heritage, empowers and emancipates citizen as well as brings people together. Adeyemo (2013a) emphasises the significance of regularity of reading. According to her, "reading books regularly stimulates children's imagination, accelerates their emotional development and fosters natural curiosity". He went further to say that "developing the habit of reading regularly from early age helps the child to cope better with rigours of academic education later on". Reading regularly therefore is reading culture. Hence reading can be seen as a way of life while reading culture is habit formation. The purpose of reading a given material (either pleasure or academic) goes a long way in touching the readers' mental ability as it provides, through its contents, vital information about 'diverse civilization' and ability to 'access the thought process of many developmental stages of man's existence' (Mukaiba, 2014:10). Reading culture can be defined as how a group of people (parents, teachers and society at large) perceive the importance of reading and as such work towards inculcating the values of reading. Accordingly, a reading culture can best be explained as a learned practice of seeking knowledge, information or entertainment through the written word. Reading culture is the process of building up positive reading attitude among students and children over a period of time. When an individual habitually and regularly read books and other information

materials that are not necessarily required for him to advance in his profession or career, he is said to have a reading culture (Gbadamosi, 2007). Reading culture in essence therefore is the kind of culture that imbibes reading and studying as the basis of growth and development. It is the type that sees continuous and dedicated reading of information resources by pupils, children, students and adults for knowledge acquisition, which will be applied practically for development. Reading sharpens the mind, makes one reason rationally and objectively as well as projects one for greatness in life. That is why Scholastic Inc describes readers as leaders. Reading Culture in Nigeria has not been encouraging in recent time bringing about low skills acquisition resulting ultimately in low socio-economic development in Nigeria (Nigerian Tribune of July 18, 2013; Adeyemo, 2013b; Okeomah, 2013 and Onwumeru, 2014). In this direction therefore, the Nigerian President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan on December 20th, 2010 organized for the mobilization of people to better reading culture in Nigeria through “Bring Back the Book Initiative” at Eko Hotel with many eminent Scholars like Wole Soyinka, Jerry Agada, Ocha-Ofeimum and others (including political functionaries) in attendance (NTA Network, December 20, 2010). In spite of the governmental efforts towards this direction, the citizens must be willing to participate in the trend of rejuvenating reading culture for national development. No wonder President Lyndon Johnson remarks that “it is not enough to open the gates of opportunity: all citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates (Kukah, 2007). To this extent, human capital development cannot be isolated from reading culture.

Development generally means the improvement of people’s lifestyle through improved, qualitative and functional education; incomes, skills development and fulfilled employment. Development also means that people should be able to read and write. In Africa, this is a problem as most people are still illiterates, Nigeria inclusive. Investment in education is a productive venture. This is because an educated labour force is a source of productivity for national development. Nigeria needs this kind of development in order to meet the needs of its present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their needs. This is an embodiment of sustainable development. Economists and other development analysts the world over are of the view that human capital plays a key role in the development of any nation. Socio-economic development across nations is mostly linked with quality and quantity of human resources and not so much with the natural resource endowment and the stock of physical capital available in a nation. Human resource development tends to improve the quality and productivity of labour which in turns leads to economic growth (Uwatt, 2003). Recognizing the role of human capital development for economic growth, Harbison (1973:3) submits that:

Human resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations. Capital and natural resources are passive factors of production, human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social economic and political organizations, and carry forward national development. Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilize them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else.

This is however long been realised even by the classical economists like Adam Smith, Alfred Marshall and others. Adam Smith in his book titled “The wealth of the Nation” specifically emphasized the acquired and useful ability of all members of the society in his concept of fixed capital while Alfred Marshall emphasised the importance of education as a national investment stressing human being as the centre of gravity. Therefore the skills of the Diaspora through their education abroad as members of society cannot be neglected in national development. Human resources therefore need to be developed for it to be useful for national goals. In economic terms, human resource development could be described as the accumulation of human capital and its effective investment in the development of an economy. In political terms, human resource development prepares people for adult participation in political processes, particularly as citizens in a democracy. From the social and cultural point of view, the development of human resources helps people to lead fuller and richer lives, less bound by tradition (Busari, 2003:451).

Human capital is the stock of expertise accumulated by a worker. It is valued for its income-earning potentials in future (Adeagbo, 2010:2). According to Anyaele (2003), unemployment is a situation in which people who are willing, able and capable to work cannot find paid job. Salako, Adeagbo and Ajiteru (2012) also defined unemployment as a situation where people who fall within the age of working population, capable and willing to work are unable to obtain any befitting job. Summarily therefore, unemployment can be said to be a situation in which people who are willing, able and capable to work and legally qualified cannot find paid job. Therefore, to be employed means getting a paid job for sustenance. Why then should a culture of reading be our concern? Here then comes the role of functional literacy. Functional literacy empowers a people with the knowledge and skills required for tackling the causes and effects of poverty such as unemployment, environmental degradation, hunger and diseases among other concerns and connected here are the skills of men of Diaspora earlier alluded to.

Therefore, any thought of greater Nigeria tomorrow must start today and this begins with building our human resources as an active agent of development. Based upon this little is presently known empirically with regard to the role of reading culture in the acquisition of skills of men of Diaspora by the home based to enhance their resourcefulness for employment generation towards the economic development of our country. The intent of this paper is to find ways of harnessing skills of men of Diaspora for human capital development towards the development of the nation through the medium of good reading culture among Nigerians.

Framework of Analysis

The approach of this work is the human capital development index (HDI) as developed by Lord Meghnad Desai and Amartya Sen (Jhingan, 2012) and the Mbuyamba’s (2011) thought on the necessity of outside experience. The approach of Lord Meghnad Desai and Amartya Sen takes into consideration values of HDI of a country as: (i) the longevity, as measured by life expectancy at birth, (ii) educational attainment, as measured by the combination of adult literacy (two-thirds weight) and combined primary, secondary and

tertiary enrolment ratio (one-third weight), and (iii) decent standard of living, as measured by real GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity in terms of dollar (PPP\$). This approach, placed against Nigeria, supposes that with soaring population of about 170 million, there has been improvement in life expectancy at birth. Two, a large number of Nigerians are educated going by the number of youths that scramble for jobs currently. The Nigerian finance Minister and coordinating Minister for the economy once said that about 1.8 million graduates join the labour market every year (Olanrewaju, 2014). The problem however is the inability to fulfil the third element of HDI as espoused by Lord Meghnad Desai and Amartya Sen (Olanrewaju, 2014). Poverty level has continued to escalate in Nigeria. According to Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, shortly after independence in 1960 about 15 % was poor. This rose to 28% in 1980, which by 1985 increased to 46 % but dropped by 3% in 1992. By 1996, it upped to 66% before climbing further to 92 %, the level which still persists till date. This situation is borne no less by high unemployment rate in the country, even though the economy is said to be growing at 7%, an indication of the wealth of the country not being equally distributed. The vogue in Nigeria is getting white collar jobs, particularly government employment. This has been infeasible over years in Nigeria. The educational attainment in Nigeria has not resulted in poverty reduction which shows that Nigerian human capital development is low. Our educational system has not led much to skills acquisition, rather schooling. According to Kenny (2014:34),

“One interpretation from this is that schooling signals persons with intelligence and ambition, rather than actually imparting or indicating skills that make them better at their job over the long time”.

What students get out of school is very important and that “it is not enough to have a skill, the skill must meet market requirement, otherwise it would be a shackle” (Olanrewaju, 2014). There is therefore need for Nigeria to enhance her human capital development programmes through opening up of our school system which will allow for support from external terrain with view to acquiring skills that will promote job opportunities. This is gaining from the experience of other nations in order to improve upon what we already have. According to Mbuyamba (2011),

“The real development is that, to cultivate your personality and enrich it constantly, you should remain open, welcome and select constructive elements from other people’s experience and integrate them, revisit and recreate your own projects with this new blood and make it yours”.

It is on this pedestal that Diaspora skills become necessary for Nigeria’s development as has been experienced in the South-east Asian countries like India, China, Singapore and Korea to mention just a few. The aim of this study is to find the relative and joint contribution of the skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture of Nigerians with emphasis on human resource development for employment generation in Nigeria. The view is to know whether there is a relationship between reading culture, skills of men of Diaspora and economic development in Nigeria. Specifically, the study wants to find out:

1. The relative contribution of skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture on human resource development.

2. The joint contribution of skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture on human resource development for employment generation in Nigeria.

A comprehensive research hypothesis was formulated in null form for the study. Thus, skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture are not significant predictors of human resource development for employment generation in Nigeria.

METHOD

The study employed the use of descriptive survey research design and correlation analysis with Secondary School teachers of Oyo State as the population out of which 300 were randomly sampled involving both genders (male & female) taken from the three geo-political divisions of Oyo State which include Oyo South Senatorial district, Oyo Central Senatorial district and Oyo North Senatorial District. A-12 item interview guide (self designed questionnaire) titled "Role of skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture on human resource development for employment generation" (ROSDIRCHEG) was used as the major instrument of the study. The ROSDIRCHEG was based on 4 –point Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree, and Disagree.

The draft instrument was given to experienced academic staff of Test and Measurement Unit of School of Education to validate it before it was administered. The administration of the questionnaire was based on the population density of the areas with 65% in the urban areas and 35% in the rural areas of the various senatorial districts. These questionnaires were distributed with the assistance of colleagues from various districts and were closely monitored to ensure 100% return of the distributed questionnaires. For easy assessment and analysis, SA and A were taken as agreed while SD and D were taken as disagree. For easy understanding of the interpretation of data, the results are designed in table and followed by the interpretation thereafter. The data collected were analyzed using statistical software package for Social Sciences 20 (SPSS). This involves the use of regression analysis with assumption of Best Linear Unbiased Estimator (BLUE) on the analysis of Skills of Men of Diaspora and Reading Culture as Correlates of Human Resource Development for Employment Generation in Nigeria. Primary data were used for this study which covers 300 respondents in Oyo State a case study of Nigeria as earlier stated. The data collected were based on the response of people using questionnaire as instrument of data collection on skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture as correlates of human resources development for employment generation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The numbers in parenthesis under the parameter estimate of the corresponding standard error establishes that the degree of error terms is considerably minimized and hence the estimates are reliable. The parameter estimates comply with a priori expectations which explain that both skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture are significant factors that determine human resources development for employment generation. Considering the

magnitude, 1% increase in the level of human resources development for employment generation is brought about by 19% increase in the level of skills of men in Diaspora revealed to Nigerians, 73% increase in the level of reading culture as the response of the respondents dictated. The estimated value of R^2 (goodness of fit) of 0.96 or 96% shows that 96% systematic variation in the level of human resources development for employment generation is caused by variation in the skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture. This equally ascertains that apart from the parameters outside the scope of this analysis which accounts for about 4% variation in the level of human resources development for employment generation, this is covered by the error terms (u).

The partial correlation of table 2 above shows there is positive high degree of relationship that exists between human resources development for employment generation and skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture according to the response of the respondents, holding other factor constant as posits by column 2.

The R in the model summary explains the correlation between the explanatory variable which is 0.98, implying that there is high level of correlation between the independent variable i.e. skills of men in Diaspora and reading culture has high degree of positive correlation and the negative constant of the regression equation shows that if all the independent variable are held constant the human resources development will be deteriorating and that will lead to an astronomical fall in employment generation and rendered many Nigerians to be unemployed as a result of dead reading culture and ignorance of skills of men of the Diaspora. This is autonomous of 928.6 % negative to the explanatory variables. More so, it posits that before any other suggested solution to employment generation, human resources development must be given priority and can be effectively and efficiently developed by increasing the level of reading culture of the Nigerians and their awareness of the strength, history, works and skills of men of Diaspora.

The adjusted R^2 when the degree of freedom is considered with the number of explanatory variables also explains that the 92% variation in human resources development for employment generation is determined by variation in the explanatory variables. However, the analysis is statistically significant.

The overall significance of the entire model or the goodness of fit of the model as measured by the F-statistic shows that the F-statistic calculate (F^*) is greater than the F-statistic tabulated (F) at 5% level of significance, with the probability value of $p=0.40$ which shows that the model is significant at 5% significant level, hence we accept the alternative hypothesis that skills of men of Diaspora and reading culture are significant predictors of human resources development for employment generation in Nigeria which ultimately affects the sustainable development of Nigeria since full employment level can be attained through full development of all cycle of education and improvement in reading culture will lead us to knowledge economy and become one of the world's industrialized nations like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). However, the analysis applies with econometrical criteria and shows that the model has overall significance and the coefficients are stable.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is serious economic problem in the country manifesting itself direly in high rate of unemployment in the land in spite of official claim that the country's economy is growing at annual rate of 7 %. Many people are educated but no jobs to do. Government, being major provider of jobs no longer have adequate jobs for the teeming youths. This therefore borders on the type of education that people receive which makes them search for jobs instead of being self employed. This paper therefore reasoned that our men of Diaspora can help build our skills through the knowledge they have acquired in Europe and America for human capital development for employment generation in Nigeria. A typical area is the ICT world. The main problem that is however seen as stumbling block to this is poor reading culture among Nigerians. It is on these that hypothesis was formulated and tested and produced the above results. Based on the findings, recommendations are proffered.

There is need for Nigeria to attract men of Diaspora with skills into the country, providing them with necessary wherewithal for home based Nigerians to tap from their pool of knowledge and ensure the availability of conducive environment for their participation. It is also important for Nigerians to form good reading habit so as to benefit from available knowledge of the men of Diaspora. There is also need for the promotion of library character among Nigerians. This entails taking the issue of library serious by all the stakeholders in the education sector. Government must provide facilities where they are nonexistent and upgrade the available ones in the country that are moribund.

Schools need to provide library period as part of their daily/weekly school lesson periods to reduce students' loitering around when they are free. Parents/guardians must also encourage their children/wards to read regularly and provide them with necessary textbooks and other study materials. The students must be ready to develop reading habits so that the government, school and parents' efforts will not be to no avail. The adult public too need to read regularly in order to update their skills to enhance productivity, employment and employability. Intensive mobilizations campaigns towards reading culture by the government and eschew ad hoc approach to it and programme reading culture as a symbol of national greatness. The efforts must be sustained. This will elicit greater interest toward good reading culture among Nigerians.

There is also the need, as a matter of policy, for the reformulation of Nigerian school curriculum, particularly that of the higher schools like University, Polytechnic, Monotechnic, College of Education as well as Technical College to provide roles for the Nigerian Diaspora of Skills. Particular attention must be paid to science and technology oriented programmes that can make school leavers self employable. Lastly, there is need for regularly conducted orientation programmes on skills acquisition for employment generation. Both parents and the students should be made to realize that it is not going to school that is important, but what one gets out of it for employment, so that the labour and financial cost of going to school will be worthwhile and rewarding.

Key:

HRDEG: Human Resources Development for Employment Generation.

SMD: Skills of Men of Diaspora.

RC: Reading Culture

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
HRDEG	536.60	62.812	5
SMD	444.00	73.140	5
RC	623.60	64.921	5

Table 2: Correlations

		HRDEG	SMD	RC
Pearson Correlation	HRDEG	1.000	.948	.977
	SMD	.948	1.000	.946
	RC	.977	.946	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	HRDEG	.	.007	.002
	SMD	.007	.	.008
	RC	.002	.008	.
N	HRDEG	5	5	5
	SMD	5	5	5
	RC	5	5	5

Table 3

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF	
(Constant)	-9.286	118.541		-.078	.945	-519.325	500.753						
1 SMD	.198	.373	.230	.531	.649	-1.406	1.802	.948	.351	.075	.105	9.482	
RC	.735	.420	.759	1.749	.222	-1.073	2.542	.977	.778	.247	.105	9.482	

a. Dependent Variable: HRDEG

Table 4

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
						R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	
1	.980 ^a	.960	.921		17.710	.960	24.159	2	2	.040	3.370

a. Predictors: (Constant), RC, SMD

b. Dependent Variable: HRDEG

Table 5

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15153.929	2	7576.965	24.159	.040 ^b
	Residual	627.271	2	313.635		
	Total	15781.200	4			

a. Dependent Variable: HRDEG

b. Predictors: (Constant), RC, SMD

The multiple regression equation obtained from the data is presented below:

$$HRDEG = -9.286 + 0.198SMD + 0.735RC$$

$$S E: (118.541) (0.373) (0.420)$$

$$T \text{ test: } [-0.078] [0.531] [1.749]$$

$$R^2 = 0.96, \text{ Durbin - Watson} = 3.37, \text{ Adjusted } R^2 = 0.92$$

$$F = 24.159,$$

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