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The Place of Digital-Quality Education in Developing Nations' Human Capital

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Abstract

What informed the discourse in this paper is the worrisome discovery that, over the years, regimes and administrations in Nigeria, a developing nation, seem preoccupied more with matters other than those that would earn the nation a commanding position in the web visibility metrics, a rank the access to which can only be attained by availability of multi-pronged human capital base, a concomitant of quality education. The lid in the hollow in this regard was let open following the 'learning poverty' syndrome that became manifest sequel to the extant COVID-19 pandemic and the trending depletion of the nation's pool of human capital repository to the favour of nations across the borders. Guided by questions and conceptual analysis of key variables of the study, the insights arising there from as well as the World Bank Group advisory on the ideal pedagogy in post COVID-19 new normal, the researchers have summed up with recommendations considered of worth in any determined effort to bring redress to the matters at hand.

Introduction

Man is a rational being. This fact is at the base of his character of auto-transcendence, a character exclusive to him in the faunal genus. This exclusivity is manifest when, one recalls, it is he alone and he only of all in that class, that has been able to bring about marked improvement not just upon his person but also upon his environment. This twin factor of rationality and auto transcendence has extensively imbued him with the virtue of dynamism. He can set goals, get going, and can, reasonably upon self critique, counter and reverse himself. In essence, he can change his future, which is merely built on his decisions and the consequential actions based on them following his reflections on possibilities and probabilities.

The dynamism in man shines out the more when confronted by startling realities. Such was the situation with the outburst of the phenomenal and extant 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19). At the height of the first wave, with borders (land, sea and air routes) closed and with more than 180 countries shutting down schools [leaving more than 1.6bn children and youths forced to stay home] noted the World Bank Group [WBG, 2021], it dawned on all that school

pedagogy under the new normal cannot be 'business as usual'. Indeed, many nations came to the realization that they had neither the human capital nor the base for its institutionalization [which is quality education]. With the easing of the pangs of grip, no nation would wait to be told that something drastic must be done and rapidly too if the education system must move with the times.

At this point, one must reasonably halt; and not proceed on the assumption that the leading variables of this discourse are well at home to every reader because they do not command any stereotype construction. As an adage has it, the beginning of any discussion should start with definition of terms. This, at least, is to ensure intelligibility and flow of thought. Accordingly, we shall throw some light on the following constructs: quality education, human capital, developing nations and digital education.

Quality Education: What?

Starting with this concept is considered appropriate as it is the precursor and font of human capital and its development. It is a datum that at the heart of nation's education system is the notion of quality education. It is one notable by its knowledge relevance, depth, inculcation of requisite skills, marked efficiency and appropriate social attitudes noted Bernard (1999). It looks beyond mere certificate acquisition, focusing rather on the transformation of the learner who in turn will transform his own society. In some respect, one could say it is culture and, by extension, country specific. Yet it does not altogether lose sight of or ignore cross-border trends, at least for the fact that the www [the internet] has flattened the world to a global village, ignoring the barriers of boundaries, language and culture. The products of such education system, having been thus exposed, acquiring thereby the requisite skills, become the determiners of their own destiny and future; no longer in the class of people to be just mobilized to burn out their hearts for a pittance in the effort to assuage the rapacious yearnings of explorers and exploiters. Bringing these qualities to bear on the larger society, such a society noted Enemuo and Mbaji (2017), can no longer again be seen, overtly or covertly, vulnerable to the manipulative tendencies of any devious external interests be it in the economic, social or political spheres; not even in bilateral relationships. Such educational system has all it takes to place any nation squarely and comfortably in the comity of nations.

Yet, quality education comes at some price. It presents some charter of demands as a bill. Noted the UNICEF [2000], it calls for a quality learner, quality family support and quality school environment. Who is a quality learner? What is quality family support and What is quality school environment- one may ask.? The world body did not delay in addressing these issues. By a quality learner is meant one who is healthy; healthy in all its ramifications: mentally, [psychologically], emotionally and who is not malnourished. A child characterized by all of these, not just one, is a quality learner. Such a child will be seen concentrating and not be distracted by base concerns, for he is curious to learn. This is on the one part. On the other part, as the first port of call after the miracle of birth is the home, [wheresoever located is immaterial], the home, being the foremost source of the first promptings of education, owes its member that duty of care regarding necessities including his education. For the quality child to benefit optimally from any quality education system, there must be quality family support. There is quality family support when his necessities are supplied and timeously too.

With such a timely support in the home the child sees the school as an extension of the family. The child develops enthusiasm for schooling and readily invites the parents over to his school works. He is able to cope because of the family setting, provisions and interactions; he thereby sees the goings on in the family setting as a form of advanced organizers, pre-sensitizing and predisposing him to what will follow and unfold in the school environment. Where the school proves itself as one with quality learning environment, presenting the best of conducive climate in classroom setting and arrangement, provisions, interactions and management, learning will, *ceteris paribus*, prosper, noted UNICEF (2000). As no one can give what he does not have, the performance output of a quality child from a home with quality support and quality school environment can never be the same as for a child lacking in all these. We next turn our focus to human capital, supposedly an outflow of quality education.

What is Human Capital?

This term is not one that is amenable to any monolithic definition. As a matter of fact, the different individuals who have made attempt to contribute or describe and delineate it have something tending to distinguish one from the other, and it is generally in connection with one forming part of an organization's productive force. But still despite the subtle differences, some commonalities are noted to be evident. To start with, for Longsley (2019), human capital is the ensemble of the intangible qualities the labourer/worker brings to any organization [whether in the formal or informal sector is immaterial] which might help to ensure its success. These intangible qualities include such things as education, skill, experience, creativity, good health and character. This notion of intangibility of qualities is also noticeable in the definition put forward by Kento (2020) when he noted that a reference to human capital is a reference to the intangible but perceptible asset [economic in nature] inherent in a worker. These include his education, training, intelligence, skills, health, loyalty and punctuality. It is intangible because not summed up simply by the certificate displaying paper qualification but inherent in the worker and made manifest in and through his work output. For Amadeo (2020), the total aggregate of the economic value of the individual labourer or worker such as his abilities [skills] qualities which he brings to bear in his employment, setting the level of his optimum performance in the workplace and with the potential to contribute maximally to the economy of the organization and its productivity is a reference to the human capital of that company and or society. As noted earlier, that quality of intangibility of human capital, evident in the attempts to define is perceptible because it is made manifest through performance output. This definition and line of thought provided by Amadeo (2020) seem substantially to fit into the mould of this discourse. It is adjudged so especially because it points to the ramifications of the workforce in any setting which usually are in some form of strata, a sure index by which to view, measure and gauge the human capital base of labour. The underpinning value in human capital registers more strongly when one takes a peep into the rationale that informed its theory of anchor: the human capital theory.

The thrust and projection of the human capital theory is that adequate investment in the citizenry leading to the inculcation and acquisition of these virtues will result in a growing economy. How- one may ask? If out of a burning patriotic desire, noted Longley (2019) and Kenton (2020), not just to catch up with the developed economies but, and more importantly, to assume one's rightful place in the comity of nations, free tuition is offered to the citizenry,

leading to the production of corps of highly skilled educated citizenry who by virtue of their exposure and skills, now constitute the driving engine in the development effort of the economy and society, they will be seen to earn more and by extension spend more. In this way they stimulate the economy variously from their different levels: as directors, unit or departmental heads and employees. It is the components of these levels in the given organization or company whose varieties of human capital development that constitute the organization's base. These noted Kenton (2020) are critical to the success of the organization.

Yet much as there could be that shared perception of the value inherent in human capital repository, prompting enormous, huge investments towards its development by governments and, of course, organizations, in recognition of the relationships between human capital and economic growth, where appropriate measures are not put in place to conserve, retain and leverage on, harnessing to the optimum level the benefits of such investments, chances are that the nation that has expended so much on human capital development might lose it to countries that can readily provide what it takes to retain it to guarantee functionality and attainment of that sense of satisfaction and self-fulfillment. Focusing on this and independent of each other Longley (2019) and Kenton (2020) noted that in such a situation a nation's return on investment in human capital development could be taken over by a country that had no hand in their training and education. This, of recent, has become a marked trend typifying migration even from nations categorized as developing nations. This is a signal to brain drain.

We shall pause at this point and take a cursory look at what one may simply describe as the socio-economic and political compass of Nigeria in production and retention of healthcare workforce. Focusing on this sector is simply for purposes of illustration

The Socio-Economic and Political Compass of Nigeria in Material and Human Capital Development and Retention-Using the Health Sector as a Focus Group

Statistics emanating from the records of the Nigerian Medical and Dental Council show that of the 80,000 registered medical doctors, only about 35,000 are practicing. Others are abroad practicing; though again some might have changed profession. With the number practicing, noted Olusola (2021), this leaves the doctor-patient ratio in a population of about 206m at 1:6000 against World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendation of 1:600. As if this yawning gap was not enough to give concern and jolt, he went further to note that medical tourism abroad by Nigerians gulps, annually, as much as US\$1bn dollars. And there, the tourists may be treated by Nigerian-trained health personnel. Without mincing words, Olayinka (2019) had earlier noted that by year 2004, Nigeria was the only African country listed among twenty top exporters of doctors with the figure hitting 5,499, up from 1519 in 1991. The favorite destinations are Europe, Asia and North America. This, obviously, if nothing else, is indicative of irreversible brain drain, depleting further the insufficient workforce and widening the doctor-patient ratio. This is but one limb of the brain drains in the health sector. The nurses are not left out.

The same values that drive the behaviour and exodus of the doctors are also at the base driving the nurses. They seek greener pastures in countries where their services are not just valued but also appreciated. There they are paid and treated better. Their payday take-home and living standard are incomparable. The Nigerian trained United Kingdom nurse, on the payday goes

home with over one million naira at the end of the month when her Nigerian counterpart earns, at the peak of her career, barely 20 percent of that as her monthly. Statistically in this regard, by March 2016, indication was that only twenty Nigerian trained nurses and midwives (NTN&M) were registered under the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) of the United Kingdom. By March 2020, the number had risen to 444. And by September 2021, the figure is set at 3767 (Ojewale, 2021). This, it should be noted, is a reference to the United Kingdom alone. It is not too certain what the number of Nigerian trained nurses and midwives abroad worldwide is. But Sahara Reporters (2021) gives what it terms a conservative figure of 7,000; prompting Lagos state government that seemed the most hit to cry out that the 'state exit policy' in place has gone to little or no extent to bring redress to the high level of attrition among their healthcare personnel especially among the nurses and midwives.

The foregoing thus marks Nigeria's repudiation and disdainful treatment of her scarce human resources. This disdainful treatment is not limited to human resource alone. Material resource experiences no less. This is by way of exports and imports.

In the frenzy to join the Brentwood crafted doctrinaire economic policy of globalization even when it was clear to her that she was not the one to determine the price of the lone commodity [oil] she could well put into the world market Nigeria took the decision to do so. One direct fallout of the hasty decision is that Nigeria now, noted Enemuo and Enemuo (2014), exports more than 90% of her crude petroleum and imports refined petroleum products to keep the socio-economic and political machinery of the country lubricated and running. This it does brimming with smile whenever news filters in announcing a rise in crude price in the international arena unmindful and little knowing that such exportation of raw materials and subsequent importation of the finished products implies on the one hand sustaining labour and employment in the country of destination and on the other hand denying local compatriots opportunity of employment, thereby increasing the number in the job market. As was and as has been the case with the exportation of the crude petroleum and the consequential loss of employment opportunity, so it was when the regional governments in the northern part of Nigeria decided, keeping faith with the principle of 'throw the borders open' and allow the free flow of goods and services' [the enthralling singsong of globalization] and sent some 500,000 textile workers of their jointly owned industries into the labour market in preference for the importation of cheaper Indian, Chinese and Bangladesh finished products, (Radio Nigeria, 2013). The forerunning is a brief bird's eye view and imagery of the most populous black nation, rated, correctly so, a developing one. What is a developing nation one may inquisitively ask?

What is a Developing nation?

It is not in doubt that the use of the phrasal term 'developing nation' does not bear nor portray any marked difference from the term 'developing country', as the two will be seen used interchangeably in this paper. The term 'developing country' is more often used in the economic sense as a measure in reference to the economic output of a given nation. This might be the reason why Robinson and Davidson (1999) in the attempt to define a developing country, set it forth as one characterized by low income per capita of the nation's population. It is the hallmark of a country striving hard through industrialization to catch up with developed

countries. In relative terms and when placed *pari passu* with other economies, it is seen to be low in human capital development. However, because of the confusion often encountered in the effort to categorically distinguish between developed and developing countries, the World Bank [WB] noted Kuepper (2021) following the “World Economic Situation Reports: country classification” criteria set by the United Nations {UN} prefers the use of such more concrete terms as ‘low income’ and ‘lower income’ economies. And this is usually based on gross national income per person which has been estimated to be in the neighbourhood of US\$1,035 as at 2019 by the World Bank. Rightly therefore did Kuepper outline the following as the indices of a developing nation, namely: low in industrialization and, therefore, quite low in technology development, low in infrastructure and manufacturing, predominantly agricultural based and lastly lower per capita income. For illustration purposes, the average annual per capita income of people’s in the sub-Saharan Africa is placed at US\$490, obviously quite below the US\$720 monthly average spent by any internet user in the developed economies, [Perkinson, 2005]. This is a pointer to the glaring disparity in the digital divide cutting across the economic, social and intellectual spheres at both the national and international levels between peoples with internet access and skills and people without, [Panse, 2011]. What is more, noted Panse, it is quite unthinkable expecting any abridgement of the gap so soon when nearly 80% of the world population remains unaware of the internet revolution. This picture becomes more worrisome when a recent United Nations human development report he cited noted that nations in South Asia and Africa are far below the total percentage of internet users in Tokyo or Manhattan. Nigeria, being one of such countries well imaged in this report, is one of the developing countries. We shall say more on this when focusing fully on the World Bank Group [WBG] advisory cautioning that pedagogy in post COVID-19 era, cannot be ‘business as usual’.

A leading question in this regard is this: what is the World Bank Group advisory? What is the thrust? This brings us headlong to the next major segment and leading issue of this discourse.

World Bank Group Constrained Advisory and Call for Digital Education System

The phase of civilization that marked the beginning of the 20th century was the industrial phase. Then the driving force was the advent of industrial technology which greatly reduced the drudgery and boredom of labour. Its successor phase is the information age [otherwise called the information society] having as its anchor and driving force the extant historic information and communication technology [ICT], (Enemuo and Onwuka, 2006). At the outset of the ICT about the last quarter of the 20th century, much of the global world thought itself least concerned, and therefore neither to be affected nor affectable. Expectedly, no serious attention was drawn to it. But for the percentage that showed interest, its advent facilitated the use of information, knowledge and related techs for the grand purpose of boosting man’s productivity through development of individuals, groups and the society at large. At the time, Nigeria’s ranking in the ICT readiness index noted the World Bank (2006) was 0.4 in a ranking scale of 0 – 1. It was not surprising therefore then that fixed-line telephone penetration in Nigeria, the same World Bank report went, was 8:1000 and mobile phone penetration was 66:1000; internet usage stood at 7:1000 and computer title holding ratio was 6:1000, with television penetration recording a paltry 26%; all in an estimated population of 140 million people.

One had expected that over the years, regimes and administrations in the country would have done much to move up the ladder and better its lot in the index ranking scale. On the contrary, the events that suddenly unfolded in the years marking the second decade of the 21st century provided both a measure and an insight.

The onset of the historic corona virus [COVID-19] in 2019 with its global reach in 2020 and beyond exposed what is known as 'learning poverty' which had pervaded and enveloped the world, especially nations in the developing world. This, as noted earlier, became glaringly so when at the peak of the first phase, with nations' borders [land, sea and air routes] closed and more than 180 countries having to shut the door to their educational institutions leading to , noted the World Bank Group (2021), 1.6 billion children and youths being out of school, it dawned on all that the school pedagogy under the new normal [whenever it would come] cannot be 'business as usual'. Something drastic must be done and rapidly so to constructively reposition, retool and rejig the economic, social and intellectual basics of nations. As if to strengthen the needfulness and urgency of this advisory, the World Bank, rated the largest financier of education in developing world, even with the COVID-19 global phenomenon not yet over, set to work as usual, and has provided the digital education rating and status in African countries. It remarked that radio penetration in poor families with primary aged children is 30% but for the rich families it is 79%; television penetration among poor families with primary-aged children is 4% but 82% among rich families with primary-aged children; computer penetration in rich households with primary –aged children is 25% but less than 1 % for the poor families. This woeful disparity applies also when it comes to internet usage. It is 0.3% for poor families with primary-aged children and 20% for rich households. This stretches even to the mobile phone penetration which showed 46% in poor households and 97% in rich households. This is a pointer to the yawning gap in digital divide which must be addressed in the pedagogy of the new normal. This is a call to digital education system which forms our focal point in the next segment of this paper. A leading question here is this: What is digital education system [DES]?

What is Digital Education System [DES]?

Just like these phrasal terms 'human capital' and 'developing nation', 'digital education' as a concept is not one amenable to a commonly accepted definition. For instance, with an author such as Longsfeld (2020), preferring the use of the phrase 'digital education' it stands for an educative process anchored on the use of the World Wide Web [www] using the information and communication technology. For Singh (2020), reference to digital education system is a reference to the ingenious use of the digital technologies for the orchestration of teaching and learning in the modern age, often dubbed the age of information and communication technology. Being all-tech facilitated, it is also known as technology enhanced learning [TEL] or information technology enabled learning [e-learning].

Whatever the differences in the fore-running attempts, the fact remains that the digital education system is education system where teaching and learning are approached with resort to the extant information and communication technology and its associated tools/media such as the radio-television broadcasts, audio and video tapes, the CD ROMs, the pocket pc/mobile learning systems, the computer networks. With the exception of none, these techs and the

associated tools are there to be leveraged upon noted the World Bank Group (2021) to ensure that all intended beneficiaries of the teaching/learning encounter are engaged, with none left behind. This is all because of the enormous advantages inherent in the new approach. What are the benefits inherent in digital education system, one may ask?

The Digital Education System: Any Merits and or Demerits?

The advent of the digital technology has no doubt brought about enormous changes, impacting on and connecting people across the globe, ignoring the barriers of language and culture, reducing the world to a small town village. Though relatively new in the developing world, e-learning presents students with opportunities of personalized learning experiences as they are enabled to move at their own pace. It provides the students with the multi-pronged interdisciplinary transactional opportunities open to all irrespective of sex, race and location, linking and serving all users well connected to do any [if not all] of such things as accessing, collating, processing/analyzing, saving, retrieving, transmitting data in diverse forms, (Okwor, 2002). In terms of cost, it is cost-efficient and effective when compared with the old method which requires both the teacher and the learner to procure for themselves textbooks and related materials. The current trend dispenses with these needs, an advantage shared by both the learner and the teacher. What is needed is for one to master and keep dependable tabs on the sites noted Dua, Wadhawan and Gupta (2016). At home with their resources at their beck and call, they get involved in research and learning, reasoning things out and so become not just efficient and productive, but creative; gaining thereby a feeling of fulfillment in systematic reasoning. This noted Singh (2020), offers them the opportunity of expanded learning and facility of knowledge transfer. With the discovery and mastery of shortcuts, they are able to do so much within so short a time.

Indeed, now armed with the ability of self evaluating and self accounting, digital learning makes the learner have a sense of self motivation. This is all because getting more and more involved, the learner noted Singh (2020) gets acquainted with the methods of assessing his own performance rate and range, and so becomes his own self evaluator, thereby lightening the teacher's job in this respect. Indeed, digital technology has all that is required for charting both the course of the new normal in the education sector and bringing redress to the 'learning poverty' syndrome, a character of countries especially in the developing world.

Yet, even with all these potentials, a true sad fact stares us all on the face. And that sad fact is this: that even with the facilitation which the www and its associated tools have placed before man, it is not absolutely a brave new world for everyone altogether. One has to acknowledge that much as there are facilitators in this regard, there are also inhibitors in the way to orchestrating teaching and learning using the new technology. These range from the factor of limited access due largely to either complete non-existence [or deficit] of infrastructure facilities such as electricity and good mass communication system networks, affordability due to low per capita income and lack of dependable legal framework that could attract investors [local and international] who could help provide needed funds for the necessities (Enemuo & Onwuka, 2006). There is also noted Gulati (2008) the factor of lack of trained personnel [teachers and supportive staff].

Discussion

Nigeria, a West African state, now with an estimated population of 206 million, is rated the most populous of the countries in the continent. In terms of material and human resources endowment and availability, it cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be rated as cheated by nature or in want. This is an indisputable fact. Also, as crystal clear as the foregoing, her population, accounting for more than half of the population of the rest west African nations put together, noted Jones and Edwards (2013) should be seen as an asset, not a liability.

But indications are rife painting a picture of liability on the contrary. Our individual and vicarious behaviour insinuate that we do not know the value of what we have, be it in the form of human or material [that is nature's] endowment. On the contrary, people beyond the borders, like distraught spying eagles, swoop on and grab what we are treating as industrial effluents, a fact that came to light so strongly with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bitter experiences and insights sequel to the extant COVID-19 in late 2019, both prompted the WBG (2021) advisory that pedagogy in post-COVID-19 normal especially in the developing world, cannot be 'business as usual' and so called for massive embracing of the digital technology in the orchestration of teaching and learning. No one needs the angel from heaven to drive home the weight of this message. The enormous advantages inherent can only be resisted by the irrational as no nation on the planet earth should educationally yearn for nothing except moving with the times. If for nothing else, at least for the fact that the e-enabled education system is immanently laden with all it takes to engineer and facilitate quality education and, by extension, all it takes to fast-track and guarantee the development of that human capital base of any given economy, the driving engine behind all aspirations and efforts towards societal development.

But then the question arises: the development of human capital is it for export purposes? Is it for external markets? This is an indirect allusion to what Olusola (2021) painfully noted having for some time watched the trend [ostensibly a policy programme of action] and the number of Nigerian trained professionals relocating abroad in search of greener pastures. Whether they are from the engineering, tertiary academic or the medical fields, the same reasons and factors drive the move. Undeterred by language and cultural barriers, they relocate to countries where their services will not just be valued but also and more importantly are better paid, better treated with an evident assurance of high living standard, (Olayinka, 2021). The factors driving the emigration are doubtlessly clear and known to the nation's think-thanks and dialogues. Turning the tide around simply calls for institutionalizing those incentives and perquisites that nip fear and uncertainties in the bud. And with such personnel on the ground and functioning, they form the prime seeds of the human capital pool and repository, serving as the nation's lunch pad any time the country wakes up to the realization that it should vie for a place among nations competing within that rarefied level of the ICT advent in a globalized world which is now with stress on knowledge economy, which actually anchors on the importance of human capital in the 21st century. This is now the level at which developed economies operate; no longer depending on the manufacturing order but on processes of intellectual capital and skills, patents earned through scientific and intellectual property (Hayes, 2021). While, the ideal

world is headed towards knowledge economy, what has Nigeria been doing over the years, one may ask?

The nation is noted rather, as if driven by an inexorable wheel of fate, beating the musical development band backwards. It is a truism that the best investment a family can make in its child is his education. It is no less so that the best investment a nation [the macrocosm family] can make for itself is in the education sector for its human capital development. It is no exaggeration that the level of development in any given economy is a measure of the level of development of its human capital. This worldwide vision is not what guides Nigeria's investment in education. This explains why the education sector gets the least percentage in every year's budgetary allocation. Records show that the highest allocation to education the last decade was in 2014 when noted Adankin (2020) 9.94% amounting to ₦493 billion out of a ₦ 4,962 trillion budget was allocated to education. The 2021 fiscal year witnessed a significant drop to 5.6% amounting to ₦742.5billion out of a ₦13.08trillion budget. This is rated the lowest in a decade noted Olufemi (2020). Rightly did Nwachukwu (2020) remark that the 26% UNESCO benchmark allocation to education is not for Nigeria's attention.

As if this lack of political will to do the needful in the education sector was not enough to give concern about human capital development, even from the small pool available, nations that had no hand in their training and education have continuously "poached", luring them away [in the name of brain drain] beyond the borders and comfortably absorbed them (Ojewale, 2021). Yet, the malfeasance does not seem to be about to abate. This nation is noted for taking deliberate steps to keep the already full-to-brim unemployment market swelling. Feeling nonplussed, it has sustained this through her export of raw material [like the crude petroleum] for processing to offshore refineries, opting rather to import finished products. The regional governments on their own are shutting down the textile industries and throwing the borders open for the importation of textile products from countries abroad. Is this not a classic case of cutting one's nose to spite one's face! Nigeria glories in creating unemployment at home while sustaining it elsewhere (Radio Nigeria, 2013). This is the way, one can reasonably state it: that regimes and administrations in Nigeria in recent years have deemed it fit to run the affairs of the nation by running the ship of the state aground. They have gone to lengths repudiating investment opportunities in human capital development, treating with disdain as if a scorn of the earth, the small pool and repository available.

Summary/Conclusions

From the onset of the development of this paper, steps were taken to *ab initio* throw light on the leading concepts, otherwise the leading variables of the paper. This was to the end that at least if for nothing else to ensure intelligibility and flow of thoughts. Insights ensuing there from, together with the subsequent discussion, have led to the following conclusions:

For any nation to assume its rightful place in the comity of nations, it must accord the education sector its pride of place as the quintessential instrument for driving national development. Nothing short of quality education must be in place. It is only quality education that constitutes the font of that human capital development, the actual engine that drives all forms of development.

Knowing the important linkage between human capital development, economic growth and development, this human capital development threshold when attained, treating same as if industrial effluents and scorn of the earth is not the best option for any country seeking that visible and web metric presence in the comity of nations. Thus, treated can lead to losing such personnel to people in dire need of their services.

Education system must move with the times, cognizant of the trends across the borders especially in this information age, preparing citizens for twenty first work demands.

The extant global COVID-19 phenomenon has thrown up the depth of the 'learning poverty' that had hitherto engulfed the world, especially countries of the developing world indicating that education in the new normal cannot be 'business as usual'. The new normal pedagogy must radically change as it is the only leeway of charting quality education and by extension fast-tracking human capital development.

The challenges incidental to effort to log on to the new pedagogy which must be e-enabled are enormous but not insurmountable where there is the political will.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings, the discussions built on them and the conclusions drawn out, the following recommendations have become imperative:

1. As quality education is the very font of charting human capital development in any nation, Nigeria must drop the trending attitude and practice of allocating less than the 26% UNESCO benchmark. She can take a cue from neighboring Ghana, less endowed on all fours, yet she has maintained that minimum for long now.
2. The reasons why Nigerian-trained professionals [doctors, nurses and the likes] relocate abroad are quite obvious. One way of reversing this trend is by offering and institutionalizing those attractive welfare packages to ensure retention of their presence and services. For a nation that does not have enough, there is no wisdom in deliberately losing from the small repository available.
3. The pedagogy in the 'new moral' is a tall order and we can only fit into it by leveraging on the www and its associated tools. Being e-enabled, it no doubt comes with enormous challenges; these challenges are not insurmountable. With the political will and determination, the 'one-laptop-per-child [OLPC] policy project of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology noted for doing wonders should be copied by Nigeria and other like nations. This is to the end that no child be left behind in his education and training for the twenty first century workforce and citizenship

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