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CHANGING WORLD FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE NIGERIA CASE
AYO-AYINDE Adeola Iyabosola & AKINWUMI Femi Sunday Ph.D

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¹AYO-AYINDE Adeola Iyabosola & ²AKINWUMI Femi Sunday Ph.D

School Of Education
Federal College of Education,
Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria
E-mail: ¹Adeolakommandui@gmail.com
Tel: ¹08033425826

Abstract

The article focused on examining how the higher education could be used to enhance the quality of human resources development to better the human capital of nations particularly in a fast changing world for the attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria. The article deploys a systematic review method, and materials and information resources used for this study are journal publications, books, online materials, among others, which covers between the periods between 2010 and 2023. Also, a thematic analysis was used to analyse the content of relevant information obtained to drive relevant argument towards achieving the objective of the study. The human resource development indicators focused in this article are those of Naro and covers economical and financial; structural; planning and recruitment; compensation; training and development; performance appraisal; climate indicators; professional risk indicators hence, ensuring sustainable development from these focus on achieving welfare growth by non-decrease of wealth per capita. The results revealed that higher education system plays vital role in achieving sustainable development through ensuring the quality human resources development and that achieving sustainable development cannot be obtained with either partial or total neglect of the Higher education system of the nation. In conclusion, higher education system plays vital role in achieving sustainable development through ensuring the quality human resources development and that achieving sustainable development cannot be obtained with either partial or total neglect of the Higher education system of the nation. Thus, it was recommended that federal governments and private owners of Higher education should endeavour to provide relevant resources and also increase the budget that are accruing to Higher education so that it could be able to provide quality human resources that could foster the attainment of sustainable development in the nation.

Keywords: Higher Education, Quality Human Resources Development, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Introduction

Sustainable development is a common phenomenon in the contemporary development discourse that has attracted several attentions at the global, regional and local levels. It is also a common point of attention among international aid agencies,

development planners, major theme for conferences and academic papers, slogan for development and environmental activists (Ukaga, Maser, & Reichenbach, 2011; Mensah, 2019; Žal nien & Pereira, 2021). According to Omiunu (2012), sustainable development is a development that does not roll back or recede, even in the face of threatening reversal waves and can guarantee the protection of the environment and resources in the present and the future.

Also, Omiunu (2012) revealed that there are three major challenges that could hinder the achievement of sustainable development in a society and include the global development, local structure and the negative attitudes of the people. The global development is moved by the several transformations that occur at the global level which could include technology transformation, globalization, among others (Omiunu, 2012; Nestorowicz & Park. n.d.; Žal nien & Pereira, 2021). However, if the local environment does not have a structure and infrastructure that could accommodate such development, it may fail at the local level. Also, the negative attitude of local indigenes could hamper the adoption of certain development efforts in the local environment. Education could be deployed and used to change the attitude of the indigenes, particularly, the human resources and also to enhance the structure and infrastructure of the local environment towards achieving sustainable development hence, the importance of education in achieving sustainable development.

The higher education sector has tremendous influence on the habits of students and also on the contribution to prosperous and peaceful society (Žal nien & Pereira, 2021). This is because the higher institutions are major change agent that possess in their strategy which include in the curricula, modus operandi to teach individuals, particularly in the training of human resources towards obtaining a successful and peaceful society. This could also pose significant influence on the society such as reducing or eliminating gender inequality, waste hence, reducing climate problems and also increasing energy consumption through the use of these educational strategies and the deployment of different communication methods to bring the necessary information to students, which could eventually be the human resources and capital for future development despite the various challenges, such as unfavourable sustainability principles, unfavourable political environment and poor stakeholders' interest (Žal nien & Pereira, 2021). Therefore, human resources are development by the higher education and these human resources are provided as the working force for national development hence, for sustainable development.

In addition, the human resources are the most important assets and valuable resources that could propel the link between the higher education and the attainment of sustainable development hence, it plays a middle man between the higher education and the attainment of sustainable development. According to Dumitrana, Dumitru, Jianu, Jinga and Radu (2009) and the Human Journey (2023), the human resource of any nation play vital role in the achievement of sustainable development in that nation. Also, Žal nien and Pereira (2021) revealed that the higher education institutions play an essential role in achieving sustainable development as they are

key agents in the provision of education for the future leaders that could contribute to the success of the implementation and achievement of sustainable development.

In some developing countries such as Uganda, Nigeria, among others, poor higher education system has been identified (Omiunu, 2014; Wabuna, 2015; Government of Canada, 2017; The Human Journey, 2023), which could affect the human resource output consequently, could in the long run affect the attainment of sustainable development in these countries. For this reason, one could affirm that, the effect of higher education system on human resource development could pose negative effects on the attainment of sustainable resources. The human resource development indicators focused in this article are those of Naro (2005) cited by Dumitrana et al. (2009), and covers the economical and financial; structural; planning and recruitment; compensation; training and development; performance appraisal; climate indicators; professional risk indicators hence, ensuring sustainable development from these focus on achieving welfare growth by non-decrease of wealth per capita. To this end, this article focuses on examining how the higher education could be used to enhance the quality of human resources development to better the human capital of nations particularly in a fast changing world for the attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

The concept of sustainability development is and would continue to be a major point of attraction at the global, regional and local level. This is because the sustainability of any development is very paramount and focuses on the best choices that meet the needs of society and are environmentally and economically viable, economically and socially equitable as well as socially and environmentally bearable (Porter & van der Linde, 1995). So, Mensah (2019) revealed that the concept of achieving sustainable development is premised on three interconnected spheres or domain describing the relationships among the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainable development, this is provided in Figure 1.

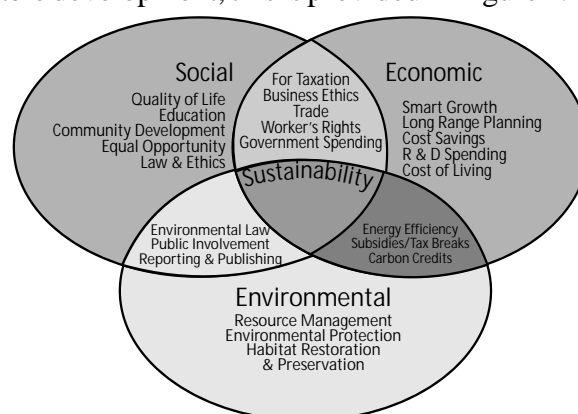


Figure 1: The Relationships among the Social, Environmental and Economic Sustainability Development

Source: Mensah (2019)

The information in Figure 1 reveals that all human activities could be connected and linked to development and its sustainability with respect to the environment, economy or society. Therefore, Mensah (2019) revealed that sustainable development has three major pillars which are:

Economic sustainability relates to the system of production that focuses on satisfying the present and future consumption levels (Lobo, Pietriga, & Appert, 2015).

Social sustainability encompasses notions of equity, empowerment, accessibility, participation, cultural identity and institutional stability (Daly, 1992). The concept reveals that people are very important in achieving development, in fact, a development that could be sustainable.

Environmental sustainability refers to the natural environment and how it could maintain its productive and resilient towards supporting human life continuously. Hence, it demands that even with the ecosystem integrity and carrying capacity of natural environment (Brodhag & Taliere, 2006), the natural capital of the environment need to be sustainable while using it as major economic inputs (Goodland & Daly, 1996; Mensah, 2019). Also, it could be observed that attaining sustainable development is also connected to education as depicted on the social aspect of the effect of human activities on sustainable development (Mensah, 2019).

Talan and Talan (2020) examined education and human resource development for sustainability, and revealed that human resource development (HRD) is equally important as education to achieving sustainability hence, both education and HRD could assist governments and stakeholders in the effective implementation of better policies and new projects that would be geared towards achieving sustainable development. Piwovar-Sulej (2021), examined human resources development as an element of sustainable HRM, with focus on the production engineers, revealed that the practice of human resources for sustainable development is said to be combined with the concept of Industry 4.0 hence, it's a very recent means of development that could sustain economy for a long time. Also, the development of human resources, which in this context is said to be a function of tertiary institutions of the nation, should be carried out having a long-term perspective in mind hence, focusing on the competencies of the future in deploying Industry 4.0 in the tertiary education system.

Also, Li and Liu (2021) examined the use of Vector Autoregressive (VAR) model to examine the relationship among higher education, technological innovation, and economic growth, and then uses the Coupling Coordination (CC) model to evaluate the developing coordination among higher education, technological innovation, and economic growth with the subsystems they exist. The findings of their study revealed that there exists a dynamic interaction among higher education, technological innovation, and regional economy. The effect of this dynamic interaction is higher in developed areas than in undeveloped areas. This implies that education has a very significant effect on innovation that could enhance

the human resource capital skills and competence that could further influence the economy of any nation in the long run.

Theoretical Underpinning

The framework of interest in this article is the Eco Health approach institutional task on well-being by Adedipe (2009) in figure 2.

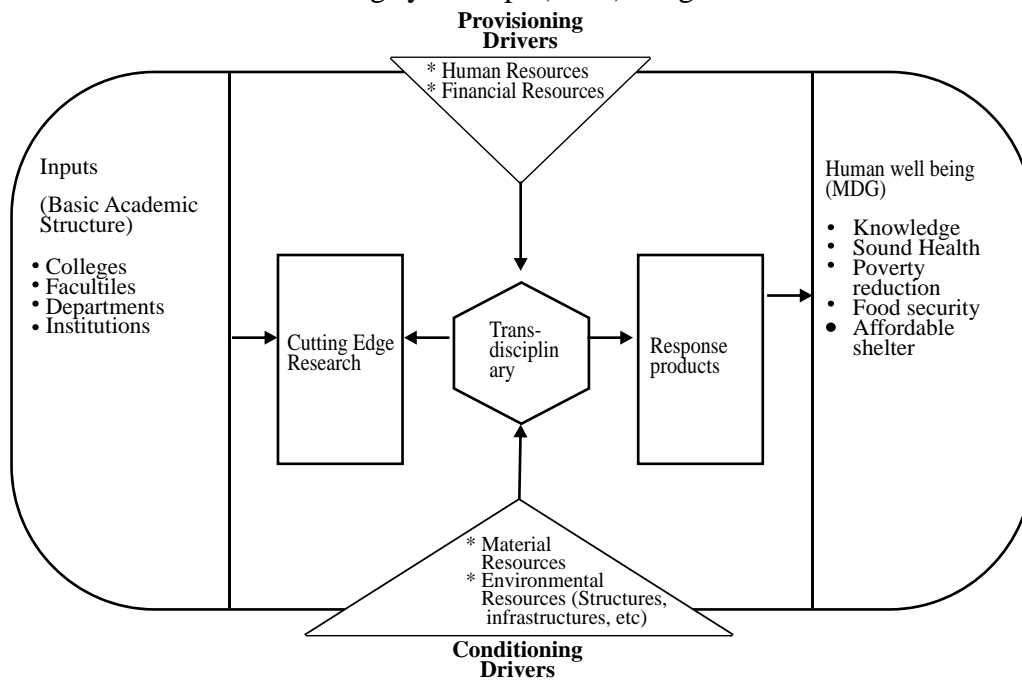


Figure 2.1: The Eco-health approach of task of institutions in well-being
Source: Adedipe (2009)

The well being in the Eco Health approach institutional task by Adedipe (2009) connotes achieving sustainable development through the efforts provided by the education system on producing quality human resource. According to Adedipe (2009), well-being is a function of the institutional inputs thus, it could be affirmed that such input are said to pose significant influence on the effective production of the human resource towards the attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria

Methodology

This article adopted the systematic review method to review several and past works that focused on its theme, hence, the information resources used includes traditional and internet resources. These information and materials were subjected to synthetic analysis towards providing answers to the major objective. Also, the materials and information resources sourced for and used in this article covered between 2010 and 2023, ensuring that they are recent and are also important to meet

the objective of this article. The reason for the wide range of between 2010 and 2023 for selection of materials in this article, is to ensure that the article use recent information that could enhance the quality and precise of the outcome of this article. Also, the content of relevant information retrieved, obtained and selected for this article were subjected to thematic analysis by arranging them with respect to the necessary themes of the article, and a systematic review of such relevant articles and information was done to drive relevant argument to achieve the objective of this article.

Higher education for quality human resources development in a fast changing world for sustainable development in Nigeria

The study used six studies for this systematic review and include Bingilar and Etale (2014); Odionye (2014); Adepoju and Okotoni (2018); Isife, Ogakwu, Eze and Njoku (2020); Abanyam, Francis and Denis (2020); and Ojo (2022). Bingilar and Etale (2014) examined the impact of human resource development on performance of academic staff in Nigerian universities, focusing on selected universities in Bayelsa State, and revealed that human resource effectiveness and human resource certification posed positive significant relationship with Performance of human resources. This implies that the higher institutions could enhance the performance of human resources for sustainable development through their education activities and certifications provided for obtaining degree in any field of study.

Odionye (2014) examined the role of tertiary education in human resource development, and noted that human resource development has to do with improving and developing the skills and potentials of the individual who in turn could be used to develop the various organization, sectors or the society where need be and where they may found themselves. The tertiary education helps to inculcate knowledge, skills, creative abilities, values, and the spirit of commitment in the human resources which could lead to enhanced sustainable development. However, to achieve this, certain factors such as human, economic and financial related factors are also identified as setback to the higher institution's for effective and quality human resource development.

Adepoju and Okotoni (2018) examined higher education, knowledge economy and sustainable development in Nigeria, and found that higher education is a major prerequisite for achieving economic growth and development. Because the quality of knowledge generated is very critical to economic development. Therefore, higher education institutions must operate effectively and reposition itself towards enhancing sustainable national development. This implies that the Nigeria higher education is a major vehicle that helps in the production of quality human resources development that could foster sustainable development in the long run.

Isife, Ogakwu, Eze and Njoku (2020) examined the Nigerian university education and human resources for sustainable development in Nigeria, and revealed that the production of human resource, which is achieved through education enhances economic growth stability. The educational institutions possess several

abilities, talent and attitudes, influence and productivity, quality and profitability that could be used to achieve the overall strategies and goals, through designed work systems to produce goods and services particularly of human resources that could be used as sources of labour towards achieving sustainable development in Nigeria.

Abanyam, Francis and Denis (2020) examined the role of higher education in sustainable economic development in Nigeria: a functionalist theoretical perspective analysis, the results indicated that higher education is a cardinal tool for sustainable economic growth and development promoting life learning, and the use enhanced technologies and innovations that pose impetus on the creation of quality workforce, towards supporting growth and development in business and industries, hence, on the economy of the nation. Therefore, there is need for government to strengthen the educational systems by equipping it with quality facilities, enhanced teaching learning materials, providing a conducive learning environment, well trained personnel, among others towards the provision of quality human resources that could propel better sustainable development in the nation.

Furthermore, Ojo (2022) examined the challenges and way forward for Nigeria educational system for human resources development in educational technology teachers, and revealed that the importance of human resources development cannot be over-emphasized particularly in the educational sector. Also, human resource development such as the attendance of conferences, organization of seminars and workshops, among others are very germane in the education sector towards ensuring sustainable development.

Juxtaposing the findings from the studies of Bingilar and Etale (2014); Odionye (2014); Adepoju and Okotoni (2018); Isife, Ogakwu, Eze and Njoku (2020); Abanyam, Francis and Denis (2020); and Ojo (2022), it could be observed that the Nigeria higher education system plays a vital role in assisting in the achievement of sustainable development by the provision of quality human resources development. Therefore, the article revealed that higher education system in Nigeria plays a vital role in the process of achieving sustainable development particularly in the provision of quality human resources development.

Conclusion

This article examined higher education for quality human resources development in a fast changing world for sustainable development in Nigeria through a systematic review study. The article revealed that higher education system plays vital role in achieving sustainable development through ensuring the quality human resources development and that achieving sustainable development cannot be obtained with either partial or total neglect of the Higher education system of the nation.

Recommendations

The article recommended that:

- i. The federal government and private owners of higher education should

- endeavour to provide relevant resources and also increase the budget that are accruing to Higher education so that it could be able to provide quality human resources that could foster the attainment of sustainable development in the nation.
- ii. Much attention should be given to the Nigeria higher education because it holds the future of the nation towards attainment of sustainable development in the nation.
 - iii. The staff of the higher education of Nigeria should also be empowered to position them better for developing and providing quality human resources that will able to contribute to the attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria.

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