

THE DEPLETION OF HUMAN RESOURCE IN NIGERIA AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Oluwatoyin Gbenga, BAWALLA

Department of Sociology, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria.

Email-toyinbawalla@yahoo.com

Waliu Mulero ADEGBITE

Natioanal Centre for Technology Management,

Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) Ile Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.

Email-adegbitewaliu@gmail.com

Abstract

The human resource of any country plays an important role in industrial development and sustainability of the economy. This paper focuses on the depletion of human resource in Nigeria as an impediment to industrial development and sustainability in the less developed countries. The paper is anchored on dual labour market economy by Aristotle. Nigeria as a nation has lost lots of professionals and technocrats who are to develop their home country and as a matter of fact these skilled human resources migrate to developed countries to seek for greener pastures arising from the country woes of bad leadership, political instability, high rate of unemployment, poor salary structure, corruption among others were the main causes of these migration. In resolution to this, it was advised that the government needs to provide job opportunities to its citizens, promotion of human resource should be based on merits and more importantly is adequate provision of rewards and compensation to maintain good standard of living.

Keywords: Human resource, Brain drain, Industrial development and sustainability.

Introduction

The antecedent of brain drain could be traced back to USA in the 1960s, when scientists were encouraged to go and challenge the launching of Sputnik in 1957 by the former Soviet Union. Thus, the Americans provided increased expenditure for highly skilled personnel that were foreigners. As at this epoch, both the developed and less developed countries were launching efforts to industrialise and wanted to catch up with technical and scientific standards of the United States. The loss of manpower and personnel was believed to affect developing countries' effort to develop and industrialise.

In Nigeria, the operating environment of human resources is crucial to industrial development and sustainability (Adefolake, 2016). The depletion of brain drain is associated with the phenomenon in the 20th century. The concept of brain drain can be defined as the migration of highly skilled individuals who are trained in one country and take up residence and work in another country (African Recovery, 2010). In this scenario, professionals, in whom a nation has invested a considerable amount of educational resources, leave their country home and seek employment opportunities elsewhere. The brain drain as a concept can also be looked into as the migration of human capital across international borders in form of migrants. The migrants move to countries in which they are not nationals but for the purpose of employments. The human capital movement is an emigration of trained and talented individuals (human resource) to other nations could be attributed to conflicts, lack of opportunity and health hazards in that country. It is no doubt that the investment in higher education is lost when a trained individual leaves and does not return back to their origin.

The migration of human resource does occur mostly among engineers, academics and physicians most especially the human resource in the health sectors (doctors and nurses). This invariably have a negative effect on the nation's industrial development and sustainability. The depletion of human resource in Nigeria usually occurs either to when individuals who study abroad and complete their education do not return to their home country or perhaps when individuals who were educated in their home country emigrate for higher wages or better opportunities. The latter is arguably worse, because it drains more resources from the country and this is said to be problematic for Nigeria where it is widespread as this has a drastic effect for the nation's industrial development and sustainability. For instance, Isiugo-Abanihe and IOM Nigeria (2016) identified that the number of Nigerian emigrants was more than doubled between 1990 and 2013, from 465,932 to 1,030,322 mainly for economic purposes. The influx of this personnel migrating to other countries to seek for greener pastures suggest that some individuals or personnel ordinarily should belong to the Nigeria labour market so as to have a strong base for the country's industrial development and sustainability.

However, the poor state of the country's industrial development and sustainability has been a major concern to the stakeholders in Nigeria due to the fact that the nation has always been at the receiving end on the industrial development related issues which could be adduced to the low level infrastructural facilities (Daru, 2012). The Nigeria infrastructural facilities have

suffered lots of setback; these facilities are fundamental and necessary services that government needs to provide for economy to function. These facilities are composed of both public and private physical improvements such as roads, bridges, tunnels, water supply, electrical grids, good internet facilities and broadband speeds etc. The inability or perhaps the inadequacy of all these facilities paved way for migrations of professionals to other countries to seek for greener pastures in foreign land. Gedamu (2002) opined that this has simply left helplessness to the concerned institutions and less developed countries who have been losing millions of educated highly skilled workers for the benefits of the wealthy countries and individuals. In Nigeria, the higher education and professional certificate are often viewed as the surest path to escape from a disordered and shambled economy or difficult political situation.

The mass emigration of health care professionals in Nigeria, most especially among the doctors, pharmacists and nurses is almost on the verge of crippling the nation's health sector (Olaoluwa, 2017). Although, the mass exodus of these skilled health workers in foreign land has been unabated in the last three decades, which has now reached an advanced and alarming rate; public with more than one thousand five hundred (1,500) doctors abandoned the country in the last two years with fewer practicing physicians and specialist to over 180 million Nigerians (Olaoluwa, 2017). The depletion of human resource cut across various sectors of the economy in terms of oil and gas, information technology, education, agriculture, economist but it is more pronounced in the Nigerian health sector because this has vastly affected the development and sustainability of facilities in the health sector of Nigeria. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) report (2014) on medical doctors of any country, a nation is expected to have enough doctors for its population and it should be one doctor for every six hundred persons. To buttressed this, the Nigeria Medical Association (2017) revealed there are about thirty-five thousand (35,000) doctors working in Nigeria, this means Nigeria needs more than two hundred and thirty seven thousand (237,000) medical doctors to meet the World Health Organisation standard doctor-patient ratio.

Despite the shortage of medical personnel in Nigeria, the Nigeria universities produce less than three thousand (3,000) doctors each year, while the vast majority of these graduated doctors seek greener pastures abroad. Arising from these foregoing, this study is designed to focus on the depletion of human resource in Nigeria which is seen as an impediment to industrial development and sustainability.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to look into the depletion of human resource in Nigeria as impediments to industrial development and sustainability. This will bring about better understanding and knowledge on the effect of brain drain in the nation's human resource and hitherto the possible solutions to the phenomenon.

Theoretical Framework (Dual Labour Market Theory)

The dual labour market theory holds that demand for low-level workers in more developed economies is the critical factor shaping international migration. In order to avoid the structural inflation that would lead to raising entry wages of native workers as well as to maintain labour as a changeable factor for production of goods and services, the employers of labour seek low wage migrant workers. In this dual labour market, the international migration is demand-based and initiated by recruitment policies of employers or government of the various destination areas. Although, the World System Theory focuses not on labour markets in the national economies, but rather on the structure of the world market, most especially on the penetration of the capitalist economic relations which can be categorized into peripheral, non-capitalist societies which takes place through the concerted activities and actions of neo-colonial government, multinational companies and national elites. It is of belief that the international migrations are generated as land, raw materials and labour in the areas of origin which are drawn into the world market economy and traditional systems are disrupted.

Human Resource and Brain Drain

Human resource is used mainly to describe the people who work for an organization, be it private or public and also the department responsible for managing resources that is related to employees (Armstrong, 2010). The human resource as a concept therefore focuses on a number of major areas which include recruiting and staffing, compensation and benefit, training and learning, labour and employee relations and organization development. Due to the many areas of human resource, it is expected that professionals in this field possess specific expertise in one or more areas. The migration of human resource within the workforce of the country of origin could be attributed to the poor state of the economy of that country. This invariably brings about brain drain.

Many stakeholders have debated over the depletion of Nigeria personnel for greener pastures in developed countries; however, this phenomenon also has both positive and negative effects. One of the discouragements of the brain drain for developing countries includes the inadequate laborers in the important sectors and some hindering development in the countries. On the other hand, the brain drain helps to reduce the rates of unemployment in the developing countries as well as contributes immensely to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of these countries through remittances and investments made by the workers who migrate to the developed countries (Ogunmike, 2011). These are the reasons why some stakeholders in the economy class argue for brain drain stating that in the long run the developing countries benefit from this.

It is expected that migration always flow from the poorest countries with a low probability of employment towards less poor and more dynamic countries where there is an opportunity to find kinds of various job. In the last few years, the international migration has intensified, with the media referring to the regionalisation and globalisation of migration. The major attractions where less developed countries seek to source for variable economy are United

States, European countries and other industrialised countries in Asia. The Middle East region also attracts migrants due to oil-rich nations. The effect of all these migrants could be attributed to funds the migrants sent back home to their families which often play a considerable part in the development of the local economy. However, in a situation where highly qualified people leave their home country, the investment made by the developing countries in their higher education is lost. In finding solutions to this, series of developmental industrial programmes towards sustainability of the economy have to be set up to encourage immigrants to return, so that they can contribute to the economic development of their home country.

However, the political environment in some developing countries in Africa must be conflict free for Africa professionals overseas to return home. Africa in general is certainly experiencing a debilitating flight of professionals, technocrats and skilled people escaping their countries' economic woes and crisis (Adebanjo, 2010). The level and trend of depletion of human resource (brain drain) has reached unsustainable heights. The last three decades, the brain drain has escalated in magnitude to levels that have serious implications on economic growth, industrial development and sustainability in country like Nigeria.

Industrial Development and Sustainability

Industrialisation is very critical to any economic development. This is often aided by industrial policy plans in order to have a structure and perhaps to bring about the required development. As Iwuagwu (2011) noted that industrialisation usually comes with clear enthusiasm, dedication and commitment of the administrative and political classes of the society. The experience of Nigeria indicates the nation has never lacked in industrial policies but perhaps the nation lack the political will, continuity and enthusiasm class to direct the affairs of the country. When a country is faced with these challenges, it is expected that migration are bound to occur.

It has being noted that, sustained industrial development has been a major contribution to the economic growth and poverty reduction over the past five decades in Nigeria (Olatoye, 2011). Industrialised countries have benefited from liberalization of markets for industrial goods, improvements in telecommunication and reduced transportation cost. It is not all countries that shared these benefits, but however, limited supplies of human capital, poor infrastructural, weak government institutions and unfavorable investments climate have been major constraints, which paved for the depletion of human resource in Nigeria.

However, there are some indicators for industrial development and sustainability which bring about vibrant economic development and thus discouraged the human resources in less developed countries not to migrate to developed countries to seek for greener pastures, these indicators include the environmental, social and economic factors.

The environmental factors often lead to environment impacts and this involves resource use, global warming, ozone depletion, acidification, photochemical smog, human toxicity, solid

waste. The environment efficiency leads to materials and energy intensity, material recycling, product durability. The service intensity includes voluntary action, environmental management systems, and environmental improvements above the compliance levels-assessment of suppliers. The economic as another indicator involves financial like value added, contribution to GDP, expenditure environmental protection, environmental liabilities, and ethical investments. Others are human capital indicators like employment contribution, staff turnover, expenditure on health and safety and investment in staff development. The social which is the third indicator in determining industrial development and sustainable economy so as to discourage the migration of skilled and educated human resource involves ethics like preservation of cultural values, stakeholders inclusion, involvement in community projects, international standards of conduct, business dealings and also welfare like income distribution, work satisfaction and satisfaction of social amenities.

Environmental Sustainability and Human Resource Management

The term environmental sustainability basically refers to making decisions and taking necessary actions in the interests of protecting the business world with particular reference and emphasis on how to preserve the environment towards having a sane society and support of human life (Failte, 2016). The impact of environmental sustainability became prominent and of need as a result of the fact that there has to be an enabling and favourable environment for businesses and individuals to thrive. The environmental sustainability is also all about making germane decisions that enhance business on positive impact on the environment. It is about reducing products wastes or using energy, less energy and producing quality services, but rather concerned with having a good sustainable for future use and this is done along the line of having good human resource management put in place by the management.

It is to be noted that there is a strong nexus between human resource management and environmental sustainability, the reasons for this could be attributed to the fact that the term environmental sustainability has become a topical issue that receives much attention from the media which cut across Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs), this is so because of the amount of input in researching and assessment of impact of human capital development in the environment and society at large. Most organizations are now aware of having good human resource management team and human resource practitioners in directing organisational affairs as well as the inclusion of management team towards actualizing the goals and mission of organizations. The environmental sustainability has become very vital for most organisations in terms of climate change, regulatory pressures and societal demands for having increased environmental and social responsibility. The implication of this is the need for organization to focus on different ways in doing business in terms of given considerations to economic, growth and profit, thus ensuring the human resource department of organizations should be held accountable for their roles or implications on the society and the environment. In addition, it is expected that the human resource management of any organisation should have access to social and environmental risks and opportunity when making important decisions that are germane.

Human resource management is central and very critical to achieving the success of environmental sustainability that is driven by the organisation. The practice of this sustainability infiltrates every aspects of doing business and it is embedded in organizations which cut across all levels and it is seen as an ongoing change process (SHRM Foundation, 2012). The prime focus and skills expected from the human resource management and human resource professionals or practitioners include the organisational process, change management and organizational culture stewardship which are seen as taking the lead role in both developing and implementing sustainability strategy on human resource management. With this development, it aids the human resource management (HRM) practitioners in understanding sustainability in an organizational context. It helps as a guide for the human resource (HR) function to support sustainable business and perform the activities of human resource management. Sustainable human resource management is the utilisation of human resource tools which help to maintain sustainability strategy in the organization and create a human resource management system that contributes to the sustainable performance of an organization. It is to be noted that sustainable human resource management paves way for skills, motivation, value and trust to achieve the desirable goals and long-term health and sustainability of both the organization internal and external stakeholders with policies reflecting equity, development and well-being and more importantly is the support of environmentally friendly practices.

Causes of Brain Drain in Nigeria Environment

Brain drain has to do with the migration of skilled and well educated human resources from less developed and developing countries to developed countries with a view to search for better employment opportunities. This migration, no doubt, has resulted in deficit of human resources in essential sectors within developing countries. However, there are many reasons or causes why these personnel move from their country of birth to seek for employment in developed economy. These include:

High Unemployment Rate: Take for instance, a developing country like Nigeria, where the unemployment rate is very high and alarming, report indicated that the number of unemployed youths in the country has reached 52 million (Nigeria Bureau Statistics, 2015). This could be attributed to possibly because of high populations and less resources as well as opportunities for employment in the country due to the poor state of the economy. As a result of all these, this has led to many skilled and educated human resources to move out from their home countries to foreign nations which are more developed and offer better opportunities for employment.

Political Instability and High Levels of Insecurity: The inconsistency in government policies and insecurity in terms of non-protection of lives and property of the citizens are often seen to hinder development in the countries affected and this paves way for human resource to migrate from developing countries to developed countries which tends to have more politically stable economies (Agbolade, 2008).

Unfavorable Working Environment: The developing countries no doubt have poor working conditions. The regulatory frameworks regarding human resources are often very poor (Asokewu, 2014). This invariably results to high exploitation of the workers in these countries. Most organisations in these less developed countries, especially in the public sectors, have poor or no equipment and machines which demotivate the employees. This contributes immensely to the heavily immigration to the developed countries which have strict and healthy labour laws and regulations that protect employees and are technologically advanced to ease the working activities.

Poor Rewards and Compensation for Skilled Human Resource: The poor remuneration and compensation benefits often discouraged many skilled and educated human resources in the developed countries (Taiwo, 2011). Having degrees and high academics accolades, the human resources from these developing countries earn peanuts, very low pay and this makes them to always yearn for greener pastures which will make their life better in terms of good pay. Arising from this, these human resources move to the developed countries where even the unskilled workers can still make a decent living.

Poor Social and Standard of Living Conditions: It is expected that the less developed countries witnessed economic woes. In this scenario, the many skilled and educated personnel who are privileged to move out of their home country because of the poor living and social conditions in the developing countries. The reasons for this, is because the human resource (personnel) wants a better living condition for themselves and their families. Patrick (2016) opined that most of the students from the developing countries, who studied abroad, do not go back home due to the difference in the living conditions.

Bad Leadership: One of the problems of brain drain in the less developed countries could be linked to poor management and maladministration on the part of the leaders that direct affairs of that particular country or perhaps the inability of the leaders to put in experts to manage the economic resources, this often paved way for educated and skilled human resource to migrate to developed countries to seek for better employment deal.

Corruption: Another contributing factor to the mass migration of skilled and educated human resource is corruption in the less developed country. Corruptions are associated with lack of integrity or honesty, misappropriation of funds and perhaps embezzlement of funds which are meant for the purpose industrial development and to improve infrastructural facilities for its citizens. According to the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (2017), most recruitment in less developed country are always influenced, for instance outsourcing consultancy firm in Nigeria usually see the recruitment exercise as an opportunity to make money and hereby resorting to engage in bribery act, this is also witnessed by officials working in either private or public agencies.

Strategies for Sustainable Industrial Development for Less Developed Countries

Marinov (1996) identified some of the following guidelines have been formulated for sustainable industrial development most especially in the less developed countries in Africa so as to discourage the migration of human resource to developed countries:

- To reduce to the minimum on amount of material used to manufacture a product. The quantity of aluminum now used in beverage cans is one-third less than a decade ago, while the quantity of steel in motor vehicles has been significantly reduced over the past two decades.
- Reduce to a minimum energy use in the production process. Use materials which are less energy-intensive, improve production processes and switch to alternative or renewable energy sources.
- To switch from toxic to non-toxic materials, including lead-free gasoline and degradable pesticides.
- To switch from coal and oil use to gas and solar energy use.
- To utilize waste materials from one industry or one stage of manufacturing as raw material in another.
- Use materials which consume less energy, such as bulbs or refrigerators which use less electricity.
- Design products which may be reused or upgraded rather than thrown away as waste, such as modular computers.
- Manufacture products from recyclable materials, such as aluminum beverage cans or recycled plastic cans.
- Design products which will have a minimal impact on the environment during their life cycle and which will be recyclable at the completion of their life cycle.
- Shift from the manufacture of products to the supply of services. For example, the pesticide industry should provide integrated services for biological and chemical control; public transport services should be substituted for private vehicles, etc.
- Prepare and publish the inventory of materials which enter and exit the production process.
- Publish emission data so as to catalyze both the community and the industrial plant to take steps for emission reduction.
- Publicize the "environment-friendliness" of different products so as to enable consumers to choose products with minimal environmental impact.

Sustainable Industrial Development Policy

It is being noted that a good sustainable industrial development policy must strictly adhere to some vital steps in order to implement the policy plan action of the development. However, the following steps to be taken include:

- All economic decisions must be based on sustainable development principles.

- Decision makers should be motivated to base their decisions on criteria of sustainable development and not only on the promise of short term gains for immediate improvement in quality of life.
- The activities which contribute to sustainable development as well as those which counteract it should be defined, including data transfer and goal setting.
- A political "give and take" process should be initiated, especially with regard to present versus future needs.
- A clear policy which sets goals and promotes the necessary measures to achieve these goals at all levels of society should be prepared.

Also, the sustainable development policy should include some components or elements like setting of goals in a government declaration of intent on the need to implement sustainable development for industry; defining implementation strategies for goal achievement in industry; quantifying the measures for the monitoring of progress; establishing quantitative and administrative goals; identifying the bodies which will be responsible for goal achievement and establishing criteria and guidelines for reviewing accumulated data. All these will aid the less developed to be more developed and more importantly reduce the level of migration of human resource (skilled and educated) from less developed countries to developed countries.

The Possible Solutions to Brain Drain

The depletion of human resource is prominent in less developed countries and developing economy countries. However, this is taking place at a very rapid rate in Nigeria. The human resources in Nigeria get disenchanted with low rewards available for their qualification and experience, which compels them to migrate to developed countries in search of greener pastures. In order to arrest the situation of brain drain in Nigeria and other less developed countries, it is of necessity to look at the possible solutions to the menace of brain drain (Adei, 2015). These include:

- Provision of better job opportunities irrespective of caste, race, region and nationality.
- Promotion of human resource based on merit rather than on connection, social ties and Godfatherism in either public or private organisations.
- Provide good attractive salaries to highly qualified people on the basis of their qualifications and experience.
- Improve the quality of Nigeria universities and bring it at par with universities in developed continents like Europe and America.
- The need for the government to provide adequate research facilities for industrial development and sustainability.
- Abolishment of quota system and federal character, because it brings about less intelligent people to run the affairs and thus lead to lack of effectiveness and efficiency in the government agencies.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper has drawn the depletion of human resource in Nigeria as the impediment to industrial development and sustainability. The main contributing factor to this phenomenon is brain drain. It has been adjudged that main causes why there is depletion of human resource in less developed countries, most especially in Nigeria environment are the high rate of unemployment amounting to over 52 million youths unemployed as identified by (NBS report, 2017), the inconsistency in policies and the high level of insecurity, the poor rewards for skilled human resource, bad leadership and corruption that is being witnessed in the nation which almost crippled the country's economy leading to economic recession. Arising from all these, when the human resource or personnel leave the shores of their home country to seek for greener pastures, this affects the home country on industrial development and sustainability of the country. For instance, the migration of medical experts in Nigeria almost crippled the industrial development and sustainability of the country due to inadequate infrastructural facilities that are not available in the government owned hospitals.

This paper dwelled more on the major factors that causes brain drain from the less developed countries like Nigeria to developed economies. The government, however, need to improve the provision of better job opportunities in respect of race, ethnicity and religion, provision of adequate human resource to be based on merit, attractive and good salaries for government workers, improvement of infrastructural facilities in Nigeria universities as well as a good source of adequate research and abolishment of quota system. This paper has been able to give far-reaching solutions and strategies for the depletion of human resource (brain drain) in Nigeria. Hence, Nigeria's industrial development and sustainability can only be realized when the government do the needful by ensuring that there is a strong commitment and dedication from the leaders that direct the affairs of the nation on providing the adequate infrastructural facilities for its citizens.

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