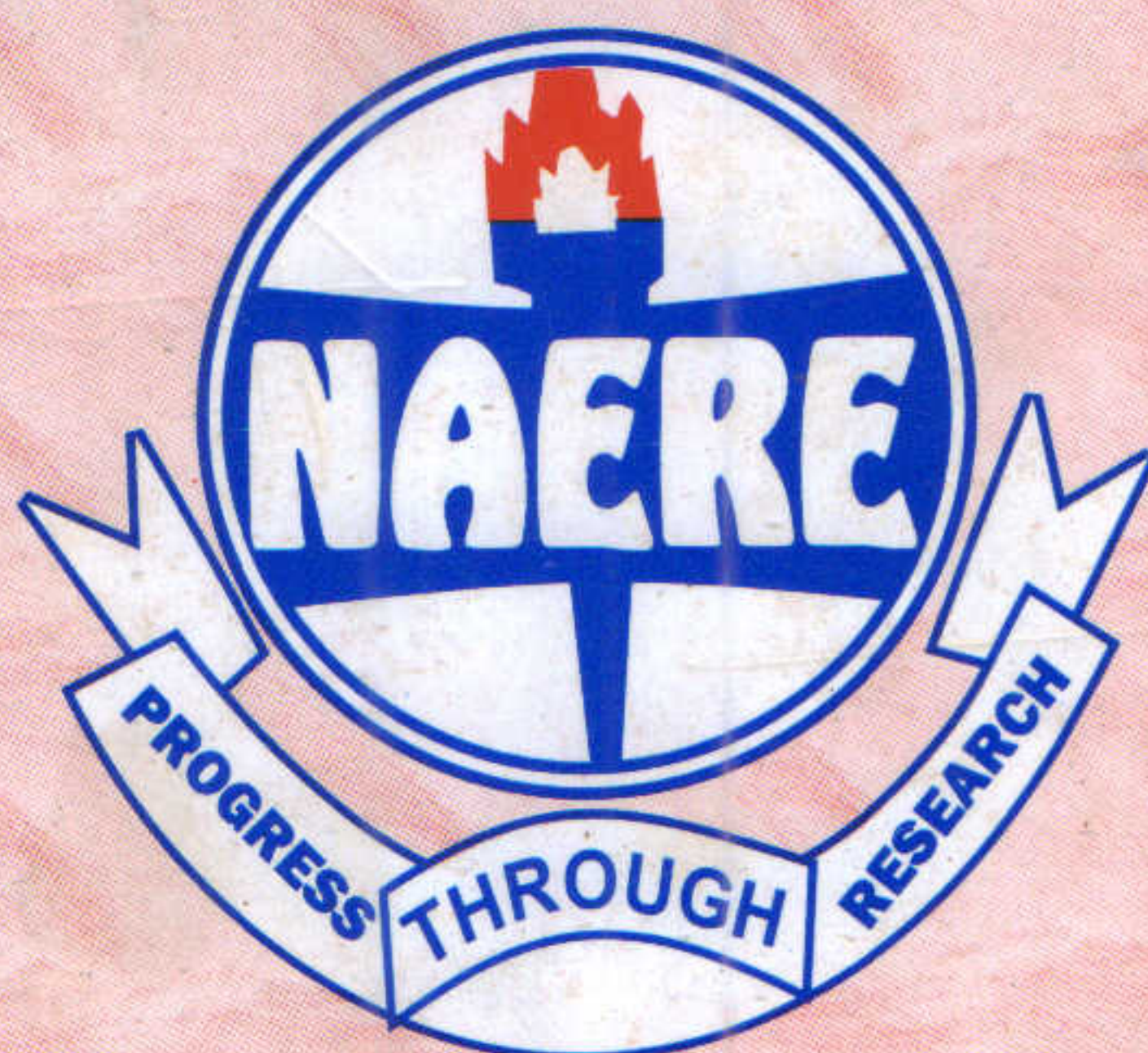


NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Volume 10, No.2, 2011



**A PUBLICATION OF THE NIGERIAN ASSOCIATION
OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHERS AND EVALUATORS**

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 2, 2011 ISSN 0795-3607

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EDITORIAL STATEMENT

There is no doubting the fact that research and evaluation are prominent in the universities, other tertiary institutions academic agencies and parastatals of government. The important issues, however, are the quality, utilization and funding of these core academic endeavours. These, in part tend to depend on the perception by government, students, lecturers, researchers and other stakeholders, of the importance and contributions of research and evaluation to national development.

The articles in this issue of the journal address these concerns. Because of the number of the papers that had been successfully peer-reviewed, two volumes of the same issue are being published in order to provide more avenues for contributors to share their concerns and findings and to enable readers have access to the different research perspectives. Unlike in previous editions, the themes are not unitary but nonetheless constitute a potpourri of research tunes and reflections.

It is heartwarming that this issue is timely and largely meets the expectations and aspirations of our esteemed members and associates. We assure that the implementation of a fresh, robust and pragmatic editorial policy with fastidious assessment details will not only facilitate early review process but also improve quality as well as reduce cost. We thank all the reviewers and editors, and hope that this issue will engender more academic analysis and discourse on the issues raised.

E.R.I. Afolabi

Editor-in-Chief

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

INFORMATION TO CONTRIBUTORS

- i. Each article should not exceed 12 (double-space) typewritten quarto-size pages, accompanied by an abstract of not more than 200 words.
- ii. References or citations in the article should follow the recent APA format.
- iii. Two copies of the manuscript should be submitted for assessment.
- iv. Manuscripts which have been submitted for publication elsewhere or which have previously been published are not welcome.
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- viii. The journal is published once a year, mostly from papers presented at the annual national conference of NAERE.
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EMERGING HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND MODIFICATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES BY NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

BY

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ABSTRACT

It is commonly believed that while the early graduates of tertiary institutions in Nigeria tend to demonstrate competence at work and life skills while many of the present day graduates show opposite tendencies. The pace of development around the world places a demand on education to optimally contribute to human development by instilling competence and creativity in school products. The demand is heavier on tertiary institutions. This study therefore investigated how tertiary institutions in Nigeria cope with the emerging human capital development needs. Specifically, empirical evidences of the steps taken by academic departments of tertiary institutions to obtain information about current needs of employers of labour, whether they embark on periodic review of academic programmes to cope with demands of the work place and their level of satisfaction with the employment prospects of graduates produced by them were sought. Interview of selected departmental heads in tertiary institutions in Lagos and Kwara States was carried out. With the use of frequency count and percentages, it was found that majority of the academic departments review their academic programmes following guidelines provided by regulatory bodies like NCCE and NUC. Most of the departments also have forum through which they interact with employers of their products but a fairly large proportion of the academic departments expressed dissatisfaction with the employment prospects of their products. In view of these findings, it was recommended that institutions of higher learning in Nigeria should keep

developments at work in view and reform curriculum to cater for needs represented. Also, it is recommended that research based policy initiatives should be instituted to achieve improvement in the contributions to human capital development.

Introduction

Education is an economic good that most societies recognize to be at the root of human progress. It is economic because it is not easily obtainable and thus needs correct allocation of resources to achieve desired level of development. Economists refer to education as both a consumer and a capital good because it offers utility to the consumer and also serve as an input into the production of other goods and services (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008). The consumer aspect has to do with the satisfaction enjoyed by the educated and all individuals and institutions connected to them. The capital aspect has to do with the human element and the skills supplied by education to ensure production activities.

Human capital development is described as an end or objective of development. Akingbade (2008) asserted that human capital development signifies building a critical mass of human resource base and providing an enabling environment for everyone to participate fully in national development efforts. It is a way of fulfilling the potential of people by enlarging their capabilities. Developing the human capital involves providing opportunities for all citizens to develop to their fullest potentials through education, training and motivation. Creating the enabling environment for everyone to participate fully in national development is a product of the development of human capital. This implies empowerment of people and enabling them to participate actively in both personal and societal development (Ogujiuba & Adeniyi, 2005). Nakamura (1981) defined human capital as labour and managerial skills, entrepreneurial and innovative abilities plus physical attributes such as physical strength and skills. Thus, the human capital of a nation indicates the extent to which a nation has knowledgeable, skilled and resourceful individuals contributing to its growth and development.

Newland and Segundo (1996) saw human capital as the ability of individual members of society on the one hand and their education on the other and the assessment of this quality as the costs of raising a healthy child. From the organizational point of view, Dees and Picken (2000) described human capital as the individual's capabilities, knowledge, skills and experiences relevant to the tasks to be undertaken as well as the capacity to add to the reservoir of knowledge, skills, and experiences through individual learning. They argued that the measure of the price of human capital is the relative wage of skilled labour compared to the unskilled. Measures of human capital therefore include factors such as on the job training and experience.

Appleton and Teal (1998) confirm that human capital is a broad concept which identifies human characteristics which can be acquired and whatever else leads to increased income. It is commonly taken to include people's knowledge and skills

acquired partly through education. Education is therefore an umbrella under which all other recognized factors in human capital fit together.

Aigbokhan, Imahe, and Ailemen (2007) identified five activities that contribute to the development of the human capital. They are:

- Health facilities and services, broadly conceived to include all expenditures that affect the life expectancy, stamina, strength, vigour and vitality of people.
- On-the-job-training including old type apprentice organized by firms.
- Formally organized education at the elementary, secondary and higher levels.
- Study programs for adults that are not organized by firms, including extension programs notably in agriculture.
- Migration of individuals and families to adjust to changing job opportunities.

These activities all seek to make the individual more productive, hence, investment in education leads to the development of human capital.

Individuals within the society constitute the assets that are deployed for development to be achieved and sustained. Except the human component in the factors making for development is equipped to give what will ensure progress in real terms to society, the likelihood is that advancement would either be approached haltingly or even almost totally abandoned.

The peculiar complex nature of the 21st century demands that the education system must be relevant and functional otherwise the country remains under developed. Sawyer (2004) asserts that for our education to satisfy the present demands, it must not just produce human capital for the labour market, but it should produce *knowledge workers with flexible and adaptable skills*. Education must produce those who can apply their critical and creative faculties to generate ideas for the continuous regeneration of society and the survival of humanity. The direct link between formal education and productivity has to be established. The Nigerian Federal Government recognized the need for a comprehensive development and engineered a reform agenda which it called National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS). The policy recognizes the centrality of human capital development in achieving economic growth. It therefore aims at empowering the citizenry to acquire skills and knowledge that would prepare them for the world of work.

The traditional function of tertiary education is to produce high level manpower.

Tertiary education in Nigeria is expected to build human capital for development of social, political and economic life in the country. Though employers of labour have in recent times expressed disappointment that a good percentage of graduates of tertiary institutions are deficient in some practical and professional skills, there are good reasons to indicate that a large proportion of the workforce in Nigeria have relevant skills to make them function and optimally contribute to development. The reasons adduced for this range from the apparent theoretical orientation of the curriculum, lack of teaching and learning facilities, inadequate funding, overcrowded classrooms due to upsurge in admission and flight of a good number of the academic which depleted the quality and quality of faculty members. There is also the tendency to accept the dictum more education makes people more productive and this may be evidenced in higher earnings.

Smith and Kniger (2005) identified reward and benefit expectations which and classified remunerative benefits into financial security (e.g pensions, life assurance, etc), financial assistance (e.g. subsidized mortgages, company loans, etc) and personal benefits (e.g. compassionate leave, long service awards, etc). Ogujiuba & Adeniyi, (2005) investigated graduate employment problems in Lagos State and found mismatches between skills and labour market needs of graduates of tertiary institutions seeking employment, shortage of graduates in key fields, bias in terms of institutions attended, and significant differences in time-to-employment across economic sectors.

They found further that the rate of graduate unemployment at graduation range from 3% to 25% while 75%-90% of graduates of the tertiary institutions enter the labour market via temporary jobs. Most graduates consider that their preparation in school adequately cater for their current jobs.

Many variables relating to field of study, labour market conditions, personal characteristics and expectation of society affect graduates' labour market experiences. Sawyer (2004) presented the view that the better educated tend to earn more.

Hence, sought empirical evidence of the steps taken by academic institutions to identify relevant job requirements that academic and professional training provided by them should cater for and whether programmes are reviewed to cater for these needs. Specifically, attempts were made to answer the questions as to whether academic departments of tertiary institutions in Nigeria:

1. Introduce new courses.
2. Have forums for interacting with employers of labour.
3. Obtain feedback from their graduates on employment situation.
4. Satisfied with the employment prospects of graduates produced by them?

Method

Universities, colleges of Education and Polytechnics in Nigeria constituted the population for the study. Only these institutions in Lagos and Kwara States were the target population. Thirteen academic departments in tertiary institutions were sampled across Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Universities in these two states were interviewed. An interview schedule was developed by the researchers and administered on sampled heads. Frequency counts and percentages were used in presenting the results.

Results and Discussion

Do academic departments of tertiary institutions introduce new courses?

In order to answer this question, heads of academic departments of tertiary institutions in Lagos and Kwara States were asked whether they introduced new courses within the previous two academic sessions. Table 1 presents the summary of the respondents

Table 1: Responses of subjects on Curriculum Changes

Were New Courses Introduced?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	8	61.5%
No	5	38.5%
Total	13	100%

Table 1 shows that only 61.5% of the Departments have new courses introduced within two previous academic years. More than one-third of the academic departments had newly introduced courses. This might be evidence of poor response to societal development needs. For the departments that introduced new courses, the courses introduced by them suggest new demands by employers and society at large. These included entrepreneurship education, development, office technology and management, computer maintenance and repair, information communication technology, digital electronics, family live and HIV/AIDS education (FLHE), marketing and management, leisure and tourism management, health information management programme, computer aided design/manufacturing, electromechanically control engineering, digital techniques, CNC programming and robotics etc.

The departments gave reasons for the introduction new courses these included the fact that they were responding to national development needs which emphasize the production of graduates that are creative and producers of labour rather than job seekers.

Do academic departments of tertiary institutions interact with employers?

Heads of academic department were asked whether they interact with those who offer employment to their products. Their responses were summarized in Table 2 below

Table 2: Interaction of Academic Departments with Employers

Departments interacting with employers of their products	Frequency	Percentage
Interacting	9	69.2%
Not Interacting	4	30.8%
Total	13	100%

Table 2 shows that 69.2% of the academic departments interact with their products' employers. The number of academic departments constituting 30.8% that does not interact with employers of labour is somehow high because it suggests that such institutions bother less about what the job situation is for their products.

Do academic departments obtain feedback from their graduates on employment situation?

To answer this question, the heads of academic departments were asked to indicate whether they link up with graduates trained by them to obtain information about the situation in the job market. Summary is as given below in table 3

Table 3: Feedback by Graduates

Feedback	Frequency	Percentage
Obtain Feedback	10	79.9%
Did not obtain feedback	3	23.1%
Total	13	100%

As shown on Table 3, only about 23% of the academic departments don't follow up their graduates on their employment situation. When asked about the experiences shared by these graduates with their departments, it was found that there are discriminations between Higher Diploma products of Polytechnics and Bachelors Degree holders from Universities. In addition graduates face the anxiety of labour market suspense, paucity of employment opportunities, under employment, coping with performance proficiency and efficiency on the job, ability to work under pressure, ability to adapt to challenges, punctuality, appearance, showing initiatives

and human relations in the work place among others.

Do departments have set time for reviewing academic programmes?

The departments indicated whether they have a period set apart for the review of their academic programmes and their responses are as presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Programme Review by Departments

Review of Programmes	Number	Percentage
Review	12	92.3%
Not Reviewed	1	7.7%
Total	13	100%

Table 4 shows that 92.3% of the departments review their academic and professional programmes. They further indicated that they do this either at the end of every session, 3 years, 4 years, 5 years, or as stipulated by NCCE, NBTE and NUC. They also indicated that the factors considered for review of their academic programme include employers' needs, immediate societal and global requirements, invention, standards set by such regulatory bodies as NCCE, NBTE and NUC, students' performance and ability to cope, reports from industrial and field experiences and capabilities of staff.

There is evidence that mechanisms are in place to align academic/ professional programmes with the employers' needs. Such mechanisms are workshops/seminars by employers on their needs, constant feedback by the employers on yearly basis, department bureaucrats on the field, attachment/teaching practice, needs and requests, industrial training scheme (SIWES), visitation to industries through staff and students excursions.

Do academic departments recognize deficiencies in graduates' training

Responses by departments on the deficiencies noted by their graduates on the job are summarized in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Deficiency of graduates

Deficiency on the Job	Number	Percentage
Presence of Deficiency	2	15.4%
No deficiency	11	84.6%
Total	13	100%

Table 5 shows that 84.6% of the departments indicated that they had no indication of deficiency in the education of graduates trained by them. This finding does not agree

with the general feeling that graduates lack skills required by employers. While the departments tend to disagree that there is a training deficiency among graduates of their institutions, some of them indicated that the likely reasons for any noted deficiency are poor facilities including library and laboratory system, constant strike by lecturers, high student-teacher ratio, poor funding etc are the major issues that cause deficiencies concerning graduates needs on their job.

Are academic institutions satisfied with the employment prospects of graduates produced by them?

The responses by academic departments to the question as to whether they are satisfied with the employment prospects of graduates trained by them are summarized on Table 6 below:

Table 6: Satisfaction with the employment prospects

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	7	53.8%
No	6	46.2%
sTotal	13	100%

Results on Table 6 shows that 53.8% of the departments expressed satisfaction with the employment prospects of graduates trained by them. This does not seem to agree with the earlier finding suggesting that graduates. Although some departments indicated that most of their graduates are sufficiently prepared for the job, they can diversify and adapt easily even in sectors different from their fields while they suggested that poor economic situations of the country, use of yardsticks other than merit and sectionalism and nepotism as reasons for employment problems.

Recommendations and Conclusion

In view of the findings presented above, it is necessary that deliberate steps be taken to ensure that employers of labour are in touch with academic and professional departments producing graduates in the relevant to their operations. The extent to which interactions are followed up in terms of design of programmes and courses that could promote efficiency, effectiveness and optimal productivity by graduates could not be ascertained in this study. Unemployment itself could be addressed by ensuring that job requirements are identified and training in tertiary institutions tailored to such needs. Curriculum development has not been targeted towards human capital development but on traditional certification principles. To the extent that the old programmes still retain most of their contents for more than two, three or more decades call for attention. Also, the omnibus arrangement for course offerings and rigid prescriptions of course combinations in areas labeled as compulsory or required may need to give way for tertiary education to contribute optimally to human capital development.

Design of curriculum for short in-service, workshops and on the job trainings have not been the preoccupation of tertiary institutions. The issue of relevance of degrees and diplomas awarded by them which must be streamlined by the job trainings should be urgently addressed.

In conclusion, industry has to shed to toga of being deep in practical exposure while the tertiary institutions should stop majoring in theoretical exposure. Coordination of these two components of productivity should be initiated by deliberate government policies to move the nation forward. The days of exclusive ivory tower mentality far removed from happenings within society and responding to the needs presented regularly should be done away with. When cooperation of production centres and training institutions is achieved, then we could talk about real contribution of both to human development.

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