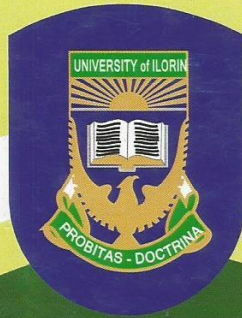


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CONTENTS

Information Communication Technology and Employees' Job Security: Evidence from Selected Manufacturing Companies in Nigeria <i>Prof. Adewoye, Jonathan Oyerinde and Dr. Abioro, Matthew Adekunle</i>	1-13
The Legal Framework of the Right to Strike in Nigeria <i>Francis C. Anyim, Ph.D; Dumebi A. Ideh, Ph.D. & Rosemary A. Danesi, Ph.D.</i>	14-31
Short Working Time and Organizational Productivity in Selected Companies in Lagos State, Nigeria <i>OBISI Chris, PhD</i>	32-41
Collective Bargaining Challenges in Nigeria Public Universities <i>Adeyemi A. Dawodu, Olusoji J. George, Ph.D.; Godbless O. AKAIGHE and Bashiru, T. Afolabi</i>	42-60
The Need for Engagement: Management's Perspective at Kwara State Office of the Head of Service <i>Abdullah, Adewumi Sulaiman and Aremu, Nuha Salihu</i>	61-73
Problems and Prospects of Global Human Resource Practices among Multinational Companies in Nigeria <i>Aliyu, Mustapha Olanrewaju; Abogunrin, Abiodun Peter & Prof. Olujide Jackson Olusegun</i>	74-89
Effect of Minimum Wage on Employee Welfare: A Case Study of Lagos State Civil Service <i>Kadiri, Ismaila Bolarinwa, Ph.D. and Jimoh, Adams Lukman</i>	90-100
Assessment of the Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in the North-West Region of Nigeria: A study of Kano and Sokoto States <i>Salihu Abubakar, PhD</i>	101-113
Earnings Management and Firm's Features: Evidence from the Nigerian Listed Firms <i>Mu'azu Saidu Badara and Maryam Abdu</i>	114-127
Change of Professionals' Workplace In Nigerian Estate Surveying Practice. <i>ESV Bello, Nurudeen Akinsola' ESV Agbato, Samson Efuwape and Agava, Yusuf Halim</i>	128-141
Local Government Administration and National Development in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects <i>Oyedele, Samuel Olanrewaju; Osezua, Ehiyamen, Mediayanose, Ph.D.; Abdulkareem, Abdulrazaq Kayode & ISHOLA, Abdulrasaq Ajadi</i>	142-154

Managing Workers Welfare in a Recessed Economy "Issues and Realities <i>Hajia Zahra Omar</i>	155-158
Human Resource Development and Preservation: Implications for National Economic Growth <i>Obisi, Chris (Ph.D) & Gbajumo-Sheriff, Mariam</i>	159-166
Impact of Time Management on Employees Output <i>Suleiman, Abubakar Sadiq Ph.D</i>	167-176
Impact of Outsourcing on Employee Attitude and Work Performance in Kwara State <i>Aremu, Nuha Salihu and Abdullah, Adewumi Sulaiman</i>	177-192
Impact of Reward System on Employees' Performance in Pardee Foods Nigeria Limited <i>Opusunju Michael Isaac; Abubakar Mohammed Babakatun & Aliyu Hassan Usman</i>	193-209
Economic Recession, Demands for Wage Rise and Industrial Relations in Nigeria <i>Alabi, S. I. & Dr. Adamade, S. S.</i>	210-217
Strategic Planning and Business Performance of Micro-small and Medium Enterprises in Kaduna Metropolis <i>Haruna Ismaila Maikujeri & Abdulwahab O. Anafi</i>	218-236
Research and Training as Panacea for Unlocking Human Potential for Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria <i>Abogunrin, Abiodun Peter; Aliyu, Mustapha Olanrewaju; & Abogunrin, Omolade Oyindamola</i>	237-248
Effect of Communication on Organizational Performance: A Case Study of Selected Oil Servicing Firms in Warri, Delta State <i>Osezua, Ehiyamen Mediayanose & Nkogbu, Godfrey Oshilim</i>	249-260

RESEARCH AND TRAINING AS PANACEA FOR UNLOCKING HUMAN POTENTIAL FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Research and training has occupied a position of priority in corporate world for achieving set goals but what has not been common in the quest for developing nations like Nigeria to create sustainable economic development is optimal use of potential hugely deposited in human resources. Yet, people of a nation are the ones responsible for the development of their lots through continuous improvement on themselves. In this paper, research and training is conceptualized linking economic development to research and training of human resources in all facet of economic life. The paper suggested that human potential available in every person in the nation be exposed to continuous research and training for creating sustainable economic development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Training and research, human potential, Human Resource, Economic Development

1.0 Introduction

Economic development is crucial to the wellbeing of the entire citizen in a nation because that is where all the indices of human welfare and comfortable living lies. Without any doubt one can categorically say that the third world which Nigeria belongs to is a haven of struggle where people struggle to get the basic physiological needs met (Jhingan 1997). Working from the beginning of the year to the end of the year has not been able to sustain the few people that are engaged in one work or the other not to talk of vast majority of people that have nothing to do though they are neither sick nor lazy. And this explains the reason why the concept of holiday is so strange to people in this part of the world.

Opportunities for growth and expansion exist in the midst of the myriad of problems that are facing the nation economically. Apart from the huge human resource that is abundantly available in the nation, there abounds national resources that can be converted to literal cash for everyone to share (Tracy 2010). Agriculture remains a major and primary source of economic turnaround anywhere in the world for a nation that can conveniently feed her people is on her way to economic freedom. If a nation continues to import basic food items, the tendency of remaining a perpetual

*Research and Training as Panacea for Unlocking Human Potential for Sustainable
Economic Development in Nigeria*

slave to the big and powerful countries of the world will remain very high (Jhingan, 1997).

Given the several millions of people (human resource) available in the nation, there should not be any reason why anyone in the nation will be wallowing in economic squalor and poverty, but the paradox is that many good meaning Nigerians are living far below their potential i.e. below poverty line (UNDP). Poverty, unemployment, unbearable hardship, poor health infrastructures, inadequate educational facilities, low life expectancy, high mortality rate and high maternal mortality rate etc. are some of the indices of economic underdevelopment. Where a society is not having adequate facilities that make for comfortable living, there is said to be no economic development. The activities of individuals toward making a decent living summed up together is what translates to economic development (Schumpeter 1955).

But in a situation where these activities are not understood and pursued by citizens of such society, what we see is a gap between what can be (potential) and what has been (reality) (Munroe 1993). Potential is far different from real result that people create in their daily lives. We all have the potential or innate ability to rise above whatever economic challenge that we may face (Robbins 1991).

What will open – up the potential for economic development trapped is found in training and researching. Learning is crucial to the economic transformation of the country because people/citizens can only demonstrate what they know or do not know. It is what a person knows that powers him into the realm of economic empowerment. A status that afford, you the privilege of owning whatever you desire to own is found in real economic development (Canfield 2005). Without economic power, there is no true freedom for any man or woman. Training releases all the deposited potential in a man or woman thereby liberating such individual to become all he can become. If we truly become who we have the potential to become, there will not be a single person living in poverty anywhere in Nigeria.

Another concept that guarantees economic development is research. Researching can be taught to people so as to enhance the quality of life that people live (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995). Since researching has the capacity of creating sustainable economic development, there is need for citizens to understand the concept of researching and practices it is the point that it begins to generate result. Therefore, sustainable economic development whereby a society is growing in an increasing manner in her capacity to make basic human needs her priority can be attained and that is why the work is timely. Human resource potentials of a society is fully realized when miracles of economic transformation that will impact on every aspect of the people in such situation can be expected on daily basis, and as this happens the growth around individuals begins to develop the economy of the nation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The nation has not been spared of her own share of the challenges flying across the nations of the world. Being a third world nation, there is wide spread poverty, unemployment among youths, militancy and insurgency, high mortality rate,

inadequate infrastructural base in terms of health, roads, portable water and life expectancy.

The research problem of this paper centers around the aforementioned challenges, therefore, the need to fill the gap between the actual performance of the economy in terms of development and the potential performance that is possible cannot be overemphasised. Hence, if there is proper training and research programmes on human potential this will eventually pave way for sustainable economic development of the nation.

1.2 Objectives

Examine the ways human resources in the nation can come up with enhanced performance in their various endeavours through research and training thereby creating sustainable economic development.

1. Explore how locked/trapped potentials for economic development can be unleashed inside of people for better economic performance.
2. Expose the limitless possibilities for sustainable economic development that is available to citizens in natural resources.
3. Promote healthy, active and consistent culture of learning, training and researching as ways of creating and stimulating sustainable economic growth and development in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Tracy (2010) stated succinctly in his work that people can only better their lot when they learn to take personal responsibility for the outcome(s) of their lives. The blame game is so prevalent in our society today that there is no aspect of our daily life that is not infected by it. People complain of government, road network, power, prices of things, lack of infrastructures etc. There is no place that is void of these complaining as one move around in the society. But instead of complaining and blaming everybody, citizens can actually turn their lives around by considering the training option.

Learning, as often said by people all over the world, is connected to earning. Every time you hear people say if you want to earn more go and learn more? No statement can be truer than this in the sense that all that is required to live a successful life has been built inside of us.

Munroe (2005) wrote that all that man requires to become who he desires to become is wired inside of the man.

This statement is one of the most profound that everyone in the third world should treasure so as to ginger them up for sustainable economic development.

Going by the statement, the economic development of Nigeria lies in the "belly" of every Nigerian. The businesses that will transform the economic landscape of the nation are imprinted in the heart of the citizens and only training and researching can bring it out. If the statement were true, all that is required to be done is creating

Research and Training as Panacea for Unlocking Human Potential for Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria

an awareness on training across the nation thereby waking up the economic giants that are lying dormant in citizens minds.

Canfield (2005) a human potential advocate opined that people will take responsibility for the result they create, there will be an explosion in the economic development programme that nations clamour for.

Canfield (2005) developed a model that stipulates that outcome in life of people or nation is a combination of events and responses from the people or the nation.

$$E + R = O$$

Where E = Event

R = Response and

O = Outcome

2.1.1 Sustainable Economic

Sustainable economic development can only happen when the people of a nation realize that all resources required for transforming their nation are available in abundance but in their mental faculty and will only become a reality when they are trained on how to release the dynamics of the mind.

Another human potential guru is Tony Robbins. Robbins (1991) through research and training has helped countless number of people achieve unbelievable economic breakthrough in their careers/ professions all across the globe. His works centres around the inexhaustible potential that human beings, carry but are not used due partly to ignorance and lack of appropriate training and education of the mind.

Tony (1991) says, uneducated minds end up in poverty and mediocrity. When a people refuse to learn the necessary skills, that are required for economic development, they remain in a state of helplessness that becomes vicious as the population of the people grows. Research is what he uses his life work on, and this is evident in his breakthrough work detailed in "Awaken the Giant Within". When research is truly given its place, there is no difficulty that can survive it!. This statement is supported with the fact the there is no problem that is new all problems are recycled. So, if a problem is not new, it means some people are faced the problems and have solved it and if I am interested in knowing how they solved the problem probably recurring to me now- I must get to the documents from this people and search out the solution. It can be this simple to get results but human nature is one that has to be put in a constant state of training and conscious effort.

2.1.2 Proof of Abundant Potential

Science has it that only about 5% of human brain capacity is used up in a man's life time (Olatunji 2012). At the peak of human development lies unimaginable comfort and splendor and at the lowest of it is abject poverty and squalor. Some people live in

affluence, being able to afford whatever their mind can desire and at the same time, countless majority of people live in abject poverty that is better imagined than experienced.

The United Nations statistics has it that over 70% of people in the third world live below the poverty line i.e spending less than two (2) U.S dollar pay day. This report of several years back, as baffling and worrying as it may be, is still relevant in the quest for nations seeking sustainable development.

It is no news that billionaires are more in the USA than in any other country of the world. The fact that some people have billions of Dollar to themselves through hard work and diligence is a proof that other people can equally access this level of wealth. If it were not possible for humans to command abundance, no one human being will be able to do so.

Munroe (2005) described his experience with a group of Asians at one event and in that experience, he was shocked by the kind of question the Asians posed to him. He was asked why the people of his "pigmentation", despite their qualification, still wallow in poverty. He narrated further that the Asians gave answer to their own question by saying "an average black man goes into a town or city looking for job while an Asian will only keep a job for a while before he can figure out starting his own business".

Looking around us, we may not need to look too far before we realize the abundance that is available in every facet of our daily lives. Communication, according to economic report recently contributed significantly to the performance/ growth in the nation. This is just a tiny aspect of the economy! Anywhere we look; there is something huge that can happen economically in this nation. Arable lands, growing population of young people that are full of energy (human resource), abundant natural resources and mineral deposit e.t.c are all pointers to the proof of abundance that the nation can cash in on for unlocking sustainable economic development.

It will only require researching and training for the potential abundantly bestowed on this nation to be realized. With proper orientation, everyone can contribute his/ her own quota to the economic development of this country irrespective of where we are called to engage in. As much as the multiplier effect is in place, there will be unstoppable sustained economic development when we fully realize that potentials are locked up inside of us.

All the man can be but is yet to be is what we call potential (Munroe, 2005). The vast resources that are wired into human brain capable of giving him whatever he can conceive through his mind.

We saw a group of people in the Holy Bible with enormous potential to the point that the creator of all of us confirmed that nothing imagined by men can remain undone. The innate capability that is deposited into human mind is second to nothing in terms of size, cannot be exhausted within the life time of an individual. That is where masterpieces in architecture, engineering, aviation, biotechnology and any other field of human engagement proceed from.

*Research and Training as Panacea for Unlocking Human Potential for Sustainable
Economic Development in Nigeria*

2.1.3 Connecting Through Training and Research

Abundance, according to scholars, is a function of the mind as much as scarcity resides in the mind also. We have seen how abundance is demonstrated everywhere around as and the only way we can tap into this “mental abundance” is through training and researching. Cole (2011) defined training using the ground works of people like Pavlov, Skinner, Thorndike and Wolfgang are scientists that developed various ways in which people learn using animals in their experiments.

Cole (2011) opined that through learning a behavior can be cultivated and when this behavior becomes ingrained, particularly empowering one's, there can be landmark breakthrough in any human Endeavour. Thus, training provides the platform for learning behaviors that can be of benefit to humans. Through learning, human beings can move from pain to gain if they are shown how to do it. Nothing can be more painful in life than a life that has all the potential but fails to come up to capacity (Tracy 2010).

The same capacity of brain that a billionaire has is the same with that of a pauper. The difference in result created economically is the use in which the brain is subjected to. The C.E.O of a reputable Automobile firm- Daewoo once said something that is worth telling anyone that wants to grow economically i.e “make your brain work, at first it may sweat, but it will later produce sweet”.

This is a graphic representation of connecting to economic development potentials locked up in human brain through training. When people are taught on how to use their brain, and they actually begin to use it, economic development miracles begin to happen. Businesses, in their various sizes and colour, are locked up in people's brain and as they train and research and search for how to “birth” them, ways begin to show on how to take delivery of these enterprises that can turn the economic situation of the nation around.

The story of Sam Walton, the creator of Disney world in the United States is a fascinating one. It was said of little “Sam” that he would go to an open field, lay on his back, and let loose his imagination as he stares into the sky, looking at the splendor and glory of the stars. Little wonder he was able to create such wonderful enterprise that is waxing stronger even after his demise.

Research is key in the achievement of any sustainable economic development plan any nation may want to embark up on (Jhingan 1955). Searching for how things are done and getting it so as to copy it is what research is all about.

There is nothing new under the heavens says the Holy Books and this is evident in multitudes of facts about how empires are built around the world either in the time of old or in our modern days. Facebook, for example, is a business empire that grew out of searching how to do things right just as the ancient Babylonian empire. Larry page, out of passion, searching of ways of improving the quality of life of modern day people stumbled on the internet phenomenon called Google today.

Paul (2012) argued that things can be searched out irrespective of what those things are. In his work, he challenged youths the world over, particularly in Africa, to wake-up to the responsibility of searching out paths that will beautify and give colour to the lives of people in their continent. Hunger, deprivation, poverty etc can all be dealt with if people will engage in a spirited search for how to live in abundance and economic freedom. Since some sects of people are flourishing and prospering in what

they do, he believes that whoever is interested in getting the same result should go after the principles that those people are trading with and copy them in order to generate the same effect.

Nothing can be more factual than the thoughts of this author in the sense that nothing being done by anyone now is incapable of being copied! Simply put, research means searching for something and peradventure you do not see it the first time you go back and search again. Research is a sustained effort of practically looking for ways to accomplish a thing as demonstrated in the life of Thomas Edison. Edison searched for over a thousand ways of coming up with how to create an incandescent light and instead being angry and frustrated by lack of quick result, he remained focused and determined to forge ahead and labeled all his attempts "ways that it cannot be done".

Economic development is a possibility that can be translated to reality in Nigeria if Nigerians will be trained on how to engage their minds in creating their own life. No expatriate will build Nigeria for Nigerians, Nigerians have to wake up and face the harsh truth about economic development which they are capable of actualizing if they are interested.

All it will take is to look inward and being to unlock the potentials lock up in the citizenry by training their minds on creating breakthrough businesses and researching in their chosen field of endeavours for improved results.

Economic development indices as described by many authors are seen in different lights and they all come with their strength and limitations (Jhingan 2007). Some authors described economic development in the light of some measurements viz:

1. GNP (Gross National product)
2. GNP Per Capital
3. Welfare of people (citizens)
4. Social Indicators (health, education, food, water supply, sanitation & housing).

Morris (1979) described economic development in his invention as physical quality of life index (PQLI). According to him when people enjoy the fruits of economic progress, there will be increase in life expectancy (LE), fall in infant mortality rate (IMR) and rise in basic literacy rate (BLR).

When the quality of life of people is being improved there is said to be economic development because people will be able to afford what they require to live a comfortable life as opposed to people taking whatever they see.

A Noble Laureate, Amartya Sen invented the human development index which was incorporated into UNDP's first human development report in 1990. The HDI is a composite of three social indicators life expectancy adult literacy and years of schooling. It also takes into account real GDP per capital (Jhingan 2007). The HDI value of a nation is measured by taking three indicators.

1. Longevity, as measured by life expectancy at birth
2. Educational attainment, as measured by a combination of adult literacy and combined primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment ratio.
3. Decent standard of living, as measured by real GDP per capital based on purchasing power parity in terms of dollars.

All of these descriptions point at a singular direction of people of a nation living a comfortable life as far as economic activities are concerned. It doesn't matter the

Research and Training as Panacea for Unlocking Human Potential for Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria

grammar or explanation given to sustainable economic development, the bottom-line is that citizens wake up and they are able to afford the basic necessities of life by their engagement in productive economic activities on a sustained basis.

3.0 Methodology

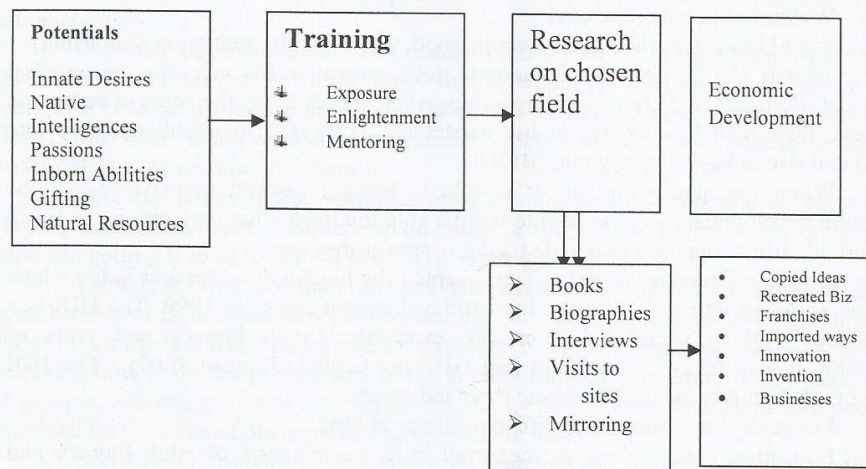
This research work is designed to consider a conceptual framework that can sustain economic development if applied.

Therefore, it did not employ empirical data gathering and analysis in its design. It purely looked at the possibility of creating sustainable economic development by espousing readers, individuals, policy makers, position holders and all stakeholders to a lifestyle of training and researching in order to attain economic liberty.

Robbins (1991) argued that if people will commit to a life of CANI (constant and never ending improvement), which he has demonstrated by creating unmatched result in the last two decades, they will be able to come up with everything they need to live a comfortable life in the now.

This study borrowed from this idea that a sure pathway to unlocking potential in sustainable economic development is through commitment of citizens to training and researching, two vital factors that will liberate any one or any nation from economic struggle.

3.1 A Conceptual Model of Unlocking Potential on Sustainable Economic Development



Source: Researcher Model formulation, 2016

4.0 Discussion of Findings

Learning has been described as a bridge that can link the gulf of abundance and poverty together from time immemorial as people will often say "if you want to earn more, go and learn more". The discussion in the study so far has shown that people can change their state of life, either private, corporate or national, if they take responsibility for the outcome of their life. And the responsibility to take is training and researching on ways that can create economic development nationwide.

It is a known fact that Nigeria is blessed or "over blessed" with any resource that may be required to create sustainable economic development but it is equally a fact that Nigerians are suffering in a way that can be described as abnormal having everything but suffering from lack of basic necessities of life.

Robbins (1993) summed this suffering up in a graphic illustration that makes human behavior the culprit for this suffering. He wrote: "One of the things I love most about what I do is the opportunity to unravel the mystery of human behavior and thereby to offer solutions that truly make a difference in the quality of people's lives."

This opportunity exists for every individual in the nation to train and development capacity for creating abundance in any chosen endeavour. As we can see, arable lands are virtually in every state of the nation. We have mineral resources deposited heavily in the depth of our soil that can be mined to the prosperity of our country plus limitless other opportunities that this study may not be able to contain.

Given the wealth of abundant resources the nation is endowed with, there is no justifiable reason why any Nigerian should be in poverty.

But what we see is people ignoring the huge potential of economic and financial freedom that will generate ripple effect in the nation. An aspect of farming, for example wheat farming, can turn the economic fortune of this nation around. Dangote Group and the rest of flour milling industries in the country spend a colossal amount of foreign exchange in bringing wheat into this country almost on daily basis, all of these monies could have been kept within the confine of the nation if training and researching were taken serious and the effect would have been employment opportunities and economic turnaround for our teeming young people.

Rice importation is another money-spinning goldmine the nation is not benefitting from. The volume of money that goes into rice importation from the Asian continent is unimaginable!

Training and researching in this area can turn the economic fortune of this nation around if all potential in rice farming is fully tapped. According to CNN report in 2014, over 600 companies were affected by flooding in rice producing area of Thailand. If rice producing community alone can produce 600 companies; one begins to wonder how many people will be employed in these companies. The multiplier effect of the wages and salaries of the people's attendant economic development cannot be fathomed.

Considering the foregoing discourse, it is obvious that developing nations like Nigeria may not necessarily need external or international bodies to aid their

*Research and Training as Panacea for Unlocking Human Potential for Sustainable
Economic Development in Nigeria*

economic development, but rather position themselves for responsibility i.e sensitize the citizenry on the need for training and researching in creating sustainable economic development.

Concept Analysis

The conceptual model described above is capable of stirring up actions in the direction of sustainable economic development if understood and followed.

The model starts with potentials that are abundantly deposited in the mind of every human here on earth. Everyone is endowed with definite gifts, intelligences and dreams. There are abilities that are lying dormant in the minds of individuals that can be mined to produce outstanding breakthroughs either in medicine, sport, fashion, engineering, information technology or in any facet of human endeavour.

These innate passions must be exposed to training on how to turn these dreams and mental images into realities (Hill 1970). As these potentials are given adequate guidance and coaching, then individuals involved are also tutored on the importance of researching i.e personally taking responsibility for searching for how to improve their trades.

Books are documented words that show how things are done or were done in time past. These "hows" can be copied and learnt from so as to improve performance in any chosen trade. The story is told of a famous university that was started after five (5) world class universities have been understudied. No wonder the newly founded university is blazing the trail in the nation. This can be followed by citizens in the nation and the result will be overwhelmingly positive.

The last loop consist of businesses, copied ideas, completely new ground breaking business, imaginations that lead to sustainable economic development in Nigeria. There is nothing Nigeria desires that is not available in the lives of her citizen, all that is needed to be done is to encourage citizens at all levels to begin to look inward for what they can do for themselves, following the path of training and researching in their area of interest, and deliver potentials locked in them for sustainable economic development.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Sustainable economic development is likened to a seed that carries all the potential that a tree carries. If this seed is nurtured on how to become tree, there is no need for prayers for the seed to deliver it's potential (exposure to the right element of weather will make that happen). Economic breakthroughs happen through people and the people are already carrying the potentials of this most desired status but there is need for training and researching in order for these potentials to become realities. When and the result is ground breaking economic development particularly if priority is given to research and training in agriculture which serves as fulcrum upon which sustainable economic development revolves. The paper therefore recommends that:

- a. Citizen's education should be given priority and by this we do not mean sending people to collect certificates. Educating the minds of people on the

need for taking personal responsibilities for the outcome of their lives. When this becomes a way of life for people, government will not need to bother on employment generation for the growing population but people will naturally seek out opportunities based on the rich deposit of potential inside them.

- b. Government, through its various agencies like, public media houses and national orientation agencies, should encourage and promote programmes that are people oriented and in those programmes what will be given attention is the importance of people getting committed to personal developments. Speakers and coaches in the field of human development should be brought to speak on these media on human resource development at personal, family, corporate and national level.
- c. Training institutions like industrial training found should be empowered to deliver on their mandate both in the urban centres and rural communities. This will require resources for the institution (ITF) to function optimally in the sense that the training centres should be at the grassroot level e.g Local Government or ward level. The training should be made compulsory.
- d. Stakeholders in education ministries at federal, state and local levels should build into the syllabuses of secondary school leavers' curriculum on training and researching for national development. The abundant mineral resources available in the nation should be exposed to these young people and what they can do with them. Limestone, iron-ore, chalk, natural gas, dolomite, Zinc, coal, marble etc. should be explored in these classes and when this is mixed with the imagination and passion of these young men and women, industries of repute can spring up through them in later years.
- e. Research should be encouraged in early life of people by sensitizing school students about the potential it carries. Research laboratories should be incorporated into schools at secondary level where students can go to and consult materials capable of stimulating their appetite for success. When people's mind is fed with inspiring stories of invention and creation of fantastic enterprise or equipment, the result is that same feat or even greater feat is recreated in the lives of these people.

Finally, a culture of continuous learning should be promoted among the people in the nation. Through the public media houses, the populace should be encouraged to learn how to better their lots by engaging their mind on processes that can generate income for them. This will graduate to a problem solving mentality that will come up with products and services that can affect the communities in which these people live. And there is always payment for products and services that meet people needs irrespective of where the product or service is from.

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Research and Training as Panacea for Unlocking Human Potential for Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria

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