

**THE CENTRALITY OF HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT TO THE ATTAINMENT OF NIGERIA'S
VISION 202020 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Harry Deinibiteim Monimah

ABSTRACT

This article examined the centrality of human capital development as a way of achieving Nigeria's vision 202020 development program. The paper argued that human beings are the greatest wealth and resources of a nation, which will coordinate all other resources to achieve development, therefore any country, which fails to lay the foundation of its development on its human resources, will also fail to achieve development. The author described human capital development as the totality of efforts aimed at developing and grooming of human beings so as to present them fit and qualified to be productive to themselves, in particular, and the society, in general. The study also looked at the concept of vision 202020, which is aimed at making Nigeria one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020. It established that Nigeria state has not demonstrated serious commitment to human capital development since its independence in 1960. Indeed, the state has consistently under-funded education, research, and health care. Globally, Nigeria is ranked 158 out of 182 countries assessed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2007 in the area of human development index. The paper argued that it was serious commitment to human capital development that brought the East Asian countries (popularly called the "Asian Tigers"), to the limelight in world development profiling. Consequently, the researcher recommended, among other things, that the Nigerian state should embark on proper manpower planning, drastically increase budgetary allocations to education and health care, and ensure that funds that are allocated and released must produce intended results.

Keywords: Human capital development, vision 202020, national development, socio-economic development, commitment, lip-services, centrality.

INTRODUCTION

Successive administrations in Nigeria, since independence, have designed and conceptualized various development programs to make the country one of the developed countries of the world. The development programs in the country include First National Development plan (1962-1968), Second National Development plan (1970-1974), Third National Development plan (1975-1980), and other policy statements, such as education for all, health for all, and housing for all by the year 2000, vision 2010, National Economic Empowerment, and Development strategy (NEEDS), and the seven point agenda of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. However, all of these efforts have not yielded the desired development for the country. Hence the shifting of the period within which the country is expected to achieve substantial development from 2010 to 2020, with the proposal of a new development program tagged "Vision 202020". The Vision 202020 program is intended to achieve a level of development that would make Nigeria one the twenty most developed nations

of the world. This paper will argue that to be one of the twenty largest economies in the world, Nigeria must make human capital development its priority.

Development scholars have asserted that to achieve economic growth and development in any nation, human capital development must be made the focal point of the development program (Essien, 2000; Ovenseri-Ogbomo, 2006; Becker, 1993; Thirlwall, 1986). Some even stated, categorically, that any development program or effort that does not create the enabling environment for human capital development will not see the light of the day. This is because it is the human capital that would coordinate other resources to achieve development in the long-run. As the RIVSEEDS (2004) draft document puts it, “the most important factor in social and economic development is the human resources (otherwise called human capital) for people constitute the ultimate ends of development, as well as the primary agents of development”.

The point being emphasized here is that there is a strong relationship between human capital development and real socio-economic development anywhere in the world. Consequently, this article seeks to examine the centrality of human capital development to the achievement of Nigeria’s Vision 2020. The paper is, therefore, structured as follows: first, it makes a conceptual clarification on the term human capital development and that of Vision 2020, then it presents a theoretical perspective on human capital development, followed by an examination of the state and human capital development in Nigeria; the state of Nigeria’s human capital, and finally, it presents what should be done in area of human capital development to achieve Vision 2020 and makes concluding remarks.

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

To understand the concept of human capital development, we must first examine the term human capital and move on to its development. The human being is the most important asset anywhere in the world. Natural scientists opined that the human being is very unique among living things. This is because of the high level of reasoning human beings demonstrate in their relationships within their environments. This reasonableness has made men to rapidly change their living conditions and their societies; hence, many scholars view human beings as capital to organizations and nations, though this view is not without criticism. In this sense, human capital refers to the stock of productive skills and technical knowledge embodied in labor. Lev and Schwartz (1971) fall short of proffering a formal definition to the concept of human capital, but stated that it is, “... a source of income embodied in a person, in the form of his brute force and his natural and acquired skills ...”. This notion of human capital treats a person’s values as though it were totally an intrinsic phenomenon, that is, as though it were determined entirely by the individual’s inherent qualities, traits, and skills.

In recent decades, economists have devoted a great deal of effort to developing and to quantitative the concept, human capital, and have studied it through the concept of investment in its formation, in such activities as education, (academic study or on-the-job training), migration and medical care (Becker, 1993). The whole idea of human capital emanate from the fact that the acquisition of utilitarian skills, talents, knowledge ,and the maintenance of the acquirer during his/her education, study, or apprenticeship, always costs a real expense, which is a is an investment in the person, hence such investment is conceived to be a capital. The point being stressed here is that the improved skills of a workman may be considered in the same light as a machine or instrument of trade, which facilities and abridges labor and which, though it costs a certain expense, repays that expense with a profit over time.

Following the above line of argument, Schultz (1995) posits that much of what we call consumption constitutes investment in human capital. He also asserted that direct expenditures on education, health care, and internal migration to take advantage of better job opportunities are clear examples. According to him, people use their leisure time to improve their skills and knowledge, which in turn enhances the quality of the human efforts and its productivity. These efforts are capital because they are substantially products of deliberate investment. In the words of Becker (1993), they are called human capital because people cannot be separated from their knowledge, skills, and health or values in the way they can be separated from their financial and physical assets. Schultz, therefore, asserted that investment in human capital is probably the major explanation for the differences observed in the productive (output) levels in the various economies of the world. The argument is that well-developed human capital plays an important role in the development process of nations.

In view of the preceding description of human capital, one conceives human capital development as the totality of efforts or activities geared toward making the human person useful to him/herself, family, and the society at large. Harbinson and Mongers (1964) succinctly define human capital development as the process of increasing the knowledge, skills, and the capacities of all people in a society. Similarly, Essien (2000) sees it as a well thought-out plan and action aimed at the developing and grooming of human beings so as to present them fit and qualified to be productive to themselves, in particular, and to the entire society, in general. Human capital development involves the provision of formal and non-formal education that would broaden the minds of the individuals and acquaint them with various utilitarian skills to enhance their expertise in different fields of human endeavor. In addition, it has to do with the provision of quality health care delivery systems that would keep the people fit for productive functions in the economy. According to Ovenseri-Ogbomo (2006) for any meaningful development to take place anywhere, it must start with the development of the human beings. He considered human capital to be the engine of growth, agent of economic transformation, a catalyst for social re-engineering, and a base for economic take-off. It was on this basis Schultz (1995) argued that investment in human capital can overcome many of the characteristics of the labor force that act as impediments to greater productivity, such as poor health, illiteracy, un-receptiveness to new knowledge/ideas, fear of change, a lack of incentive, and immobility.

THE CONCEPT OF VISION 2020

The Nigerian government is known for rolling out good development plans and programs over the years. Apart from the first, second, and third national development plans, there was also the vision 2010 development program, all of which were not implemented to the latter so as to achieve the desired result. With the relative political stability in the country following the sustainable democratic order and the acceptance of the country by the international committee, the nation envisions a great future ahead.

Furthermore, Goldman Sachs' classification of countries identified Nigeria to be one of the N-11 countries, which are countries that have the potential for attaining global competitiveness based on their economic and demographic settings and the foundation for reforms already laid. Following these assurances for growth, the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria conceptualized the vision 2020 program. This is a development program of the Federal Government to join or become one of the 20 largest economies of the world by the year 2020. This, it is believed, would

enable it to consolidate its leadership role in Africa and establish itself as a significant player in the global economic and political arena.

To achieve this lofty objective, the country will need to enhance her social and economic development performance, as indicated in the table below.

Table 1: key Parameters for Achieving Vision 202020

Polity	By 2020, the country will be peaceful, harmonious, and a stable democracy.
Macro-Economy	A sound, stable, and globally competitive economy with a GDP of not less than USD \$900 billion and a per capita income of not less than USD \$4000 per annum.
Infrastructure	Adequate infrastructure services that support the full mobilization of all economic sectors.
Education	Modern and vibrant education system which provides for every Nigerian the opportunity and facility to achieve his maximum potential and provides the country with adequate and competent manpower.
Health	A health sector that supports and sustains a life expectancy of not less than 70 years and reduces to the barest minimum of the burden of infectious diseases, such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, and other debilitating diseases
Agriculture	A modern technologically enabled agricultural sector that fully exploits the vast agricultural resources of the country ensures national food security and contributes significantly to foreign exchange earnings.
Manufacturing	A vibrant and globally competitive manufacturing sector that contributes significantly to GDP, with a manufacturing value added of not less than 40%.

Source: Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2008). The Vision 202020 Draft Document.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In the traditional neo-classical growth model, developed by Robert Solow and Trevor Swan in the 1950s, the output of an economy grows in response to larger inputs of capital and labor (all physical inputs). To the neo-classical growth models, non-economic variables, such as human health, skills, knowledge, etc., have no function in the growth process of an economy. This line of thought was described as the Exogenous growth theory and it does not explain why countries with little capital and labor grow more than countries with abundance of these resources.

A new theory described as the endogenous growth theory emerged in the 1980s, particularly due to the works of Paul Romer and his associates in response to the postulations of the exogenous theorists. They argued that economic growth and development in most fast developing economies, particularly, those of the East Asian developing countries, where the economies have continued to grow for well over three decades, demonstrated quite the contrary. The argument is that, it is not only technology, which is the main driving force accountable for maintaining such high growth performance in the economies, but that there were other factors which are outside the realm of the neoclassical growth model.

Romer (1986) in his work titled “Increasing Returns and Long Run Growth”, broadened the concept of capital to include human capital. He argues that the law of diminishing returns to scale phenomenon may not be true as is the case for the East Asian economies. The theory holds that if a firm or an economy which invests in capital (physical) also employs educated and skilled workers who are also healthy, then not only will the labor be productive, but it will also be able to use capital and technology more effectively. This will lead to a “neutral” shift in the production function and, therefore, there can be increasing rather than decreasing returns to investments. This means that technology and human capital are both endogenous to the system. Other scholars of this school of thought are Lucas (1988), Aharonovitz (2007), Marchand, M., Michel, P., Paddison, O., and Pestieau, P. (2003) and Eicher, T. and Penalosa, C.G. (1999). The basic assumption of the endogenous growth theory is that policy measures can have an impact on the long-run growth rate of an economy. It argues that investment (subsidies) on education or research and development increase the growth rate by increasing the incentive to innovate. For instance, Lucas (1988) identified two sources of economic growth to include human capital accumulation due to education investments and technological progress due to learning-by-doing externalities. In other words, education and learning-by-doing improve the knowledge and skills of labor in the production sector. The endogenous theorists also assume that research and development (R&D) is the key to the growth and development of an economy or a firm. Research and development generate new ideas or new technologies that are not common in the society. Whenever there is technological change in a given productive process, those with education or greater skills are faster in adopting the new technology (Eicher & Penalosa, 1999). In addition, the theorists assert that training of the human resources of the society is central to growth and development. Aharonovitz (2007) noted that as managers (or employees) are trained, they will become heads of production units and train more managers who will, in turn, head other production units or set up new firms and further train more managers. This process will be a continuous one that will lead to growth and development. This will produce development in the long run because as new firms spring up, they create employment, which will reduce poverty and improve standard of living in the society.

THE STATE AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Development of human capital in most developing countries of the world is a state policy matter pursued vigorously in many countries. Indeed, in most modern nation-state’s constitutions, including that of Nigeria, education, healthcare, and other ingredients of human capital development are rights of the citizens which the state is obliged to provide for them. However, some states show greater commitment to this noble task than others. The most important aspects of investment in human capital development are education/training and healthcare delivery. According to Oveneri-Ogbomo (2006), education and training have become the most important investments towards national growth and development. Nonetheless, Nigeria, since her independence in 1960, has not shown sincere commitment towards the education and training of her citizens.

According to Ojo (1986), up until the 1960s, little attention was paid to nationally planned manpower development in Nigeria, despite its importance in the overall national development. As a result, the nation has been suffering from an acute shortage of well-trained manpower. The Third National Development Plan clearly expressed this concern in the following way:

“Quite often the development of most developing countries is held back by a trinity of constraints: savings, foreign exchange, and executive capacity. In the case of Nigeria,... there will be no savings and foreign exchange constraint during the third Development plan period and constraints beyond... manpower or executive capacity remains a bottleneck to the development of the nation (Federal Ministry of Economic Development. 1975).

Hence, the plan expressly emphasized the urgent need to train an increasing number of skilled personnel to ensure smooth development of the country. However, this plan was never executed to the later. To Ojo, the pattern of manpower development in Nigeria has failed to achieve desirable levels of manpower mixes, not only in terms of categories, but also in terms of quality. Similar views were expressed by Gbosi (2003) when he posited that Nigeria’s educational structure depicts the dominance of formal education and places less emphasis on vocational and other training that would impact skills in Nigeria. As a result, the nation’s institutions of higher learning turnout thousands of liberal arts graduates annually, who are not in high demand in the nation’s labor market and beyond. The situation is worsening by low budgetary provision for education. Indeed, since independence to date, no government has budgeted 15 percent of its annual budget to education, let alone meeting the UNESCO minimum of 26 percent. Gbosi (2003) disclosed that ASUU embarked on a five month strike in 1995 because of the government’s refusal to allocate a substantial part of the national budget to education. The major issue in the strike, embarked on ASUU between July and October, 2009, was still the refusal of government to adequately fund education in the country.

Recently, experts on education in a seminar divulged that Nigeria is presently having the highest number of illiterates in the world. The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Director and country representative at the seminar disclosed that, “there are about 60 million adults in Nigeria, 85 percent of them under the age of 35 years, who can neither read nor write” (The Guardian, 2007).

A publication of ASUU in 2002 entitled, *The State of the Nation*, asserted that the gross neglect of the education sector by successive regimes in the country has led to a sharp decline on what was achieved during the period of the universal primary education (UPE), between 1975 and 1980.

The state neglect, witnessed in the educational sector, is also clearly seen in the health sector, which is the other component in human capital development. In Nigeria, there is an obvious policy failure in the area of healthcare delivery resulting from long years of under-funding. ASUU (2002) noted, with dismay, the common sight of people writhing in pain at the Accident and Emergency units of Public Health Institutions and unattended to because they cannot pay the required medical fees. Sadly, it added, “most of our people are now forced to depend on magic, superstition and herbal

preparations of dubious efficacy” (ASUU, 2002). Similarly, Yaqub (1998) argued that, one of the reasons, advanced by the military officers who toppled the Alhaji Shehu Shagari administration, was the deplorable state of our public health facilities. In his announcement of the coup on December 31, 1983, the then Brigadier Sani Abacha, said “our hospitals have become mere consulting centers” (Yaqub, 1998). According to Yaqub (1998), his same Abacha grew to become a General and Head of state between 1993 and 1998 and, at the time of his death on June 8, 1998, our public hospitals have degenerated from mere consulting centers to mortuaries.

The United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) released a shocking report which revealed that Nigeria was one of the countries with worst maternal mortality rate in the world. According to the report, one out of 18 mothers in Nigeria has a lifetime chance of dying from pregnancy complications, compared to one in 2,400 in Europe. It asserted that a total of about 45,000 women die in childbirth every year in Nigeria, with a ratio of 1,500 deaths per 100,000 live births. This calamitous situation is largely a reflection of being worse than Stone Age conditions of the available medical services. The fact of the matter is that the available healthcare facilities are grossly inadequate and underfunded, ill-equipped with a highly under-motivated workforce. All these clearly demonstrate the outrageous level of degradation in our human capital development system in the country. Hence, Ovenseri-Ogbomo (2006) concluded:

“Nigeria’s efforts in parting with poverty, income inequality, and low level of technological breakthrough, over the years, cannot be unconnected with the lip services paid to human capital/resources development”.

The State of Nigeria’s Human Capital: A Global Overview

Annually, particularly since 1990, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) publishes the world human development report to assess the living conditions and wellbeing of citizens in the different countries of the world. This report, generally tagged the human development index (HDI), which is a way of asserting the state of human capital in the different countries of the world, has three dimensions of human development: (1) living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy); (2) level of education or state of being educated (measured by adult literacy and gross enrollment in education); and, (3) having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity (ppp) income).

Although these three aspects of human development measurement, embedded in the HDI, excluded important indicators, such as gender or income inequality, human rights, and political freedom, they provide a broadened prism for viewing human progress and the complex relationship between income and well-being. We shall now examine the state of Nigeria’s human capital, in comparison with other countries of the world, using the world development report statistics.

Table 2 The Human Development Index of Selected Countries For 2007.

Countries	HDI Value	Global Ranking	Position in the selected countries
Nigeria	0.511	158	10
Gabon	0.755	103	5
South Africa	0.683	129	7
Angola	0.564	143	8
Seychelles	0.846	57	3
Ghana	0.526	152	9
Barbados	0.903	37	2
Egypt	0.703	123	6
Malaysia	0.829	66	4
South Korea	0.937	26	1

Source: United Nations Development Program, 2009

What is most revealing in the report is the fact that, in terms of the human development index, most developing countries of Africa and Asia are ahead of Nigeria. As shown in table 2, Nigeria is in the 10th position out of 10 developing countries selected, and in 158th position out of 182 countries assessed worldwide. This, certainly, is not a good report for a country that wants to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world in the next 10 years (2020). It is, indeed, quite amazing that a country like Angola, which is just recovering from over 25 years of destructive civil war, is ahead of Nigeria in the human development index.

An examination of the 10 selected countries, in terms of GDP per capita income, is intended to critically measure the standard of living in these countries. This is also a test for assessing the state of human capital.

Table 3: GDP per capita income of the selected countries for 2007 (PPP US Dollar).

Countries	GDP per capita (Us Dollar)	Global ranking	Position in the selected countries
Nigeria	1,969	141	9
Gabon	15,167	54	4
South Africa	9,757	78	6
Angola	5,385	107	7
Seychelles	16,394	50	3
Ghana	1,334	153	10
Barbados	17,956	48	2
Egypt	5,349	103	8
Malaysia	13,518	61	5
South Korea	24,801	35	1

Source: United Nations Development Program, 2009

Using GDP per capita to assess the state of the human beings in the selected countries shows that Nigeria is in the 9th position and 141 in the global ranking, just little above Ghana. Her GDP per capital in 2007 was 1,969 dollars, which was far below that of Egypt, which stood at 5,349 dollars and occupied the 8th position in the selected countries and 103rd position in the world. Countries like Angola, Gabon, and Seychelles, all African nations, not in the race of becoming one of the 20 largest economics in the next 10 years, are far ahead of Nigeria. Apart from Angola and Egypt, the other countries, are at least 10 times higher than Nigeria in this respect. What this indicates is that the standard of living in the country is very low. Since these countries are also developing, this has a low standard of living as a characteristic. It is important to note that Nigeria’s target of achieving 4,000 US dollar GDP per capita income by 2020 is still very low, even among the selected developing economies.

Another instrument for measuring the state of human capital is life expectancy, which indicates the longevity and healthy life of the people. The table below will give us graphic details of the health conditions of Nigerians, as expressed in their life expectancy at birth.

Table 4: Life Expectancy at Birth of Selected Countries for 2007 (Years)

Countries	Expectancy (years)	Global ranking	Position in the selected countries
Nigeria	47.7	167	8
Gabon	60.4	138	5
South Africa	51.5	158	7
Angola	46.5	172	9
Seychelles	-	-	-
Ghana	56.5	146	6
Barbados	77.0	37	2
Egypt	69.9	102	4
Malaysia	74.1	55	3
South Korea	79.2	25	1

Source: United Nations Development Program, 2009

Analyzing the health conditions measured in term of life expectancy at birth, among the selected countries, revealed that Nigerians at birth are expected to live for an average of 47 years and Angolans, 46 years. This means Nigeria is slightly above Angola in this regarded. The table reveals that South Africa, Ghana, and Gabon are in the range of 50-60 years, while Barbados, Malaysia, and South Korea are in the range of 70-80 years. The significance of this analysis is that it has shown, very clearly, that the healthcare delivery system in Nigeria is about the worst in the world. Indeed, Nigeria is ranked 167 out of 182 countries of the world, assessed by the UNDP. Obviously, there has not been much change in the healthcare delivery system in the country in the last three years.

Yet another important variable for assessing the state of human capital is education, which is the most vital tool for examining the state of human capital development in a country. This is measured by the level of adult literacy and gross enrollment in education in the country.

Table 5: Combined Gross Enrollment Ratio and Adult Literacy Rate of the Selected Countries for 2007 (Percentage)

Countries	Gross Enrollment/Adult literacy rate (percentage)		Global ranking		Position in the selected countries	
	Enrollment	Literacy	Enrollment	Literacy	Enrollment	Literacy
Nigeria	53.0	72.0	150	112	10	5
Gabon	80.7	86.2	53	86	4	4
South Africa	76.8	88.0	77	80	5	3
Angola	65.3	67.4	122	117	8	6
Seychelles	82.2	91.8	50	63	3	2
Ghana	56.5	65.9	144	121	9	8
Barbados	92.9	-	19	-	2	-
Egypt	76.4	66.4	79	119	6	7
Malaysia	71.5	91.9	102	62	7	1
South Korea	98.5	-	9	-	1	-

Source: United Nations Development Program, 2009

Table 5 indicates that Nigeria is in the 150th position, at 53percent, in combined gross enrollment ratio and 122nd position, at 72 percent, in adult literacy level, out of the 182 countries assessed by the UNDP across the world. Among the 10 developing countries selected for this study, Nigeria is ranked 10 and 5 for enrollment ratio and adult literacy rate, respectively. On enrollment ratio, all the countries selected for the studies are doing better than Nigeria. It only shows the importance these nations attach to the education of their citizenry. For instance, South Korea is placed number 9 at 98.5 percent, while Barbados is ranked number 19 at 92.9 percent in the global ranking in combined gross enrollment ratio. For Nigeria to bridge this gap, it must demonstrate a very serious commitment to the education of its citizenry through budgetary allocation and policy implementation.

What Should Be Done to Achieve Vision 202020?

At present, Nigeria is ranked in the category of medium human development countries in the four category classification in the UN Human Development Report, namely: (1) Very high human development (ranked 1-38); (2) High human development (ranked 39-83); (3) Medium human development (ranked 84-158); and (4) Low human development (ranked 159-182). Indeed, even among the countries classified as medium human development countries, Nigeria is at the bottom, that is 158th position. From all the statistics presented above, it is obvious that Nigeria lacks the right quality and quantity of human capital/resources for the prosecution of its development agenda and, without concerned efforts at developing the human resources of the country, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to attain the set targets in the vision 202020 programme proposal, for they will remain only a vision (Jim-Nwoko, 2009).

It is important to note that the greatest and most valuable asset of a nation is her people. Obviously, there is no oil-well richer than the human brain. Upon the realization of this fact, some Asian countries, like China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, and India, among others, laid the foundation for their growth and national development, not on natural resources, but on the human resources. Below is a table showing the per capita expenditures on education and health sectors and the impact on some selected Asian countries between 1970 and 2000.

Table 5 Per Capita Expenditures On Education And Health (In US \$) And Its Impact On Selected Asian Countries Between 1970 And 2000.

Countries	Education				Health			
	Expenditure In 1970 or earlier	Literacy Rate 1970 (%)	Expenditure in 2000	Literacy rate in 2000	Expenditure In 1970 or earlier	Life expectancy In 1970	Expenditure in 2000	Life expectancy
Bangladesh	1.2	22	6.8	43	0.5	42	3.2	59
Cambodia	1.4	38	3.9	68	2.3	43	2.6	56
Nepal	0.4	09	5.8	43	0.3	38	2.0	58
India	1.58	30	13.77	60	0.3	42	2.43	62
Pakistan	0.42	15	14.24	45	0.12	43	4.27	64
Malaysia	16.4	55	223.4	90	5.5	53	61.2	73
Republic of Korea	9.1	71	371.4	98	0.7	54	17.8	74
Thailand	11.0	68	88.1	96	2.0	51	25.8	69

Source: Constructed based on World Bank, World Development Report, 1982; World Development Indicators, 2001.

The tables shows that the per capita expenditures on education and health sectors, for most of the selected Asian countries in the year 1970 or earlier, were not impressive, and as a result, their literacy rates and life expectancy were also low. For instance, India spent 1.58 US dollars per capita on education and attained 30 percent literacy rate in 1970, while Malaysia spent 16.4 US dollars per capita on education and achieved 55 percent literacy rate, and the Republic of Korea spent 9.1 US dollars per capita on education and recorded 71 percent per literacy rate. Similarly, India spent 0.35 US dollars per capita on healthcare and achieved life expectancy rate of 42 years, Malaysia spent 5.5 US dollar per capita on healthcare and attained life expectancy rate of 53 years, while Korea spent 0.7 US dollars on healthcare and achieved life expectancy of 54 years.

By 2000, they all improved their expenditures in these sectors to witness tremendous growth in the sectors, in particular, and the economy, in general. For instance, India increased its per capita spending on education to 13.7 US dollars and that of health to 2.43 US dollars and achieved a literacy rate of 60 percent and life expectancy of 62 years. Also, Malaysia increased its per capita expenditure on education to 226.4 US dollars and that of health to 61.2 US dollars and achieved literacy rate of 90 percent and life expectancy of 73 years. While Korea Republic increased its per capita expenditure on education to 371.4 US dollars and that of health to 17.8 US dollars and recorded literacy rate of 98 percent and life expectancy of 74 years. Today, these nations are rated high in the development index of the world. This is largely due to the availability of well-developed human capital in these countries and the role they play in the national development efforts of their nations. Certainly, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, and India are countries that have made significant breakthrough in global development ranking and this was achieved through concerted efforts at human capital development in these countries.

As indicated earlier, studies show that the Nigerian state/government is not committed to human capital development and, therefore, lack both in quality and quantity the needed human resources that will mobilize other resources to achieve national development, especially within the frame work of vision 2020. For instance, a global ranking of universities in 2008 showed that no Nigerian University was ranked among the first 6000 in the world. This fact re-enforced an earlier World Bank report in 2002, which noted that Nigeria is not committed to achieving real development because of its attitude towards human resources development. The World Bank report stated thus:

“Many developing countries have neither articulated a development strategy linking knowledge to economic growth nor built up their capacity to do so. Nigeria is one of these. Although it is African’s largest countries with 20 percent of the region’s population, Nigeria has only 15 scientists and engineers engaged in research and development per million persons. This compares with 168 in Brazil, 459 in China, 158 in India, and 4,103 in the United States... In 1995, Nigeria’s scientific publication was only 711, that of South Africa was 3,413, India’s was 14,883, and Brazil’s was 5,440” (Saint, W., Hartnett, T.A., and Strassner, E., 2004).

This is a very pathetic report for a country that wants to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020. As observers have noted, the twin pre-occupation of teaching and research is central to the existence of any university. If Nigeria has failed in research, there is no indication that it is doing well in teaching as well. It is, therefore, not amazing that after 50 years of oil exploration and production; Nigerians cannot carry out turn-around maintenance of our refineries, let alone build a new one. This drought of well-trained personnel is witnessed in almost every sector of the economy. Essentially, it is due to poor funding of the education sector and Research and Development (R&D) in the country.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and other stakeholder have, for a long time, decried the underfunding of education in Nigeria. Indeed, since independence in 1960, no government has budgeted the 26 percent UNESCO minimum to education in the country. Below are two tables showing federal government budget for education and GNP spending on education among selected African countries.

Table 7: Federal Government Budgetary Allocation to Education in Nigeria, 1994 to 2008

Year	Total Government Budget (Trillion ₦)	Allocation To Education (Billion ₦)	Allocation To Education As % Of Total Budget
1994	0.110.5	8.655	7.83
1995	0.98.2	12.729	12.96
1996	0.124.2	15.3	12.32
1997	0.188.0	21.8	11.59
1998	0.260.0	26.7	10.27
1999	0.249.0	27.7	11.12
2000	0.677.51	50.66	8.36
2001	0.894.2	62.6	7
2002	1.064	82.950	8.82
2003	1.446	78.952	11.40
2004	1.189	93.767	11.14
2008	2.870	33.6	9.64

Source: Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) (2001); Nigerian Muse (2008)

Table 8: Selected African Countries GNP Spending On Education In 2000 Or Earlier (%)

Countries	Percentage GNP Spending Education
Nigeria	0.7
South Africa	7.9
Kenya	6.5
Ghana	4.2
Corte D' Ivoire	5.0
Angola	4.9
Tanzania	3.4
Malawi	5.4
Uganda	2.6
Mozambique	4.1

Source: The African Debt Report 2000, Quoted in ASUU (2001)

From the statistics presented above, it is clear that no government in Nigeria has budgeted half (i.e. 13%) the UNESCO minimum of 26 percent to education in the period reviewed. It is obviously a very serious matter of concern that a country running the race of development with South Africa, Korea Republic, Malaysia, and the rest of the world has been spending less than 13 percent of its total budget on education. Such low spending on education has made the learning environment for students and teachers very, very uncondusive, hence the poor quality of the products from the Nigerian institutions. Similarly, the regional analysis involving ten African countries shows that Nigeria spent the least, in terms of

GNP, on education. Nigeria spend 0.7 percent of her GNP on education and the next lowest is Uganda, who spent 2.6 percent.

Furthermore, according to the World Bank, the public spending per capital for health is less than USD 5 and can be as low as USD 2 in some parts of Nigeria. This is a far cry from the USD 34 recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) for low-income countries within the Macroeconomics Commission Report. A study published by Advocate Health, reveals that, the federal government recurrent expenditure for health is quite low. For instance, the federal government recurrent expenditure for health, as a share of total federal government recurrent expenditure, stood at 2.55 percent in 1996, 2.96 percent in 1997, 2.99 percent in 1998, 1.95 percent in 1999, and 2.5 in 2000. Observers noted that, beyond budgetary allocations, a concern in funding the health sector in Nigeria is the gap between budgeted figures and the actual funds released from treasury for health activities. Indeed there is no sincerity in the funding of the health sector, and, therefore, the healthcare delivery system in the country is very poor. It is, therefore, not surprising that most public office holders in the country travel aboard for medical checkups, sometimes even to South Africa.

A nation where the majority of its citizenry cannot access good and quality education and healthcare cannot lay claims to have qualitative human capital base for achieving development (Jim-Nwoko, 2009). Thus, for Nigeria to achieve vision 202020, it must make human capital development its priority. As demonstrated earlier, this was what the “Asian Tigers” did to achieve the rapid growth and development they witnessed in their societies. Now, the question is: what must Nigeria do to achieve development within the framework of vision 202020?

First, the nation must embark on a project of proper manpower planning. This is because, at present, it is obvious that the government does not know the specific manpower needs of the different sectors of the economy to attain sustainable development. For this kind of planning to achieve the desired result, Jim-Nwoko opined that national budget preparations should be made to be more participatory. According to him, manpower development groups, in all the sectors of the economy, should be invited as well as the Nigeria Labor Congress and organized private sector to submit budget memoranda on the human capital needs of the country on sectoral basis. This, no doubt, will help the nation’s policy makers to know the manpower requirements of the different sectors in its drive towards the attainment of the vision. Closely related to the above is that the state/government should be interested in knowing how the nation’s professionals are deployed in the society. This will make it easier to know when there is manpower deficiency in a particular sector and where to source for same in event of shortfall to fill the gap. Simply put, the Nigerian state should establish a comprehensive data bank of its professionals in the nation. In addition, the working environment should be made conducive for the professionals in terms of the general condition of service, both in the public and private sectors, to discourage the brain-drain syndrome in the country.

Furthermore, the government must drastically increase the budgetary allocation for education and health sectors. On education, the government must show commitment by budgeting the UNESCO minimum of 26 percent. According to senator Joy Emordi, Chairman, Senate Committee on Education, Nigeria require 30 percent of its annual budget to rescue the entire education sector from the imminent collapse (Nigeria Tribune, 2009). A disorganized and poorly funded educational system can only produce half-baked graduates that would enter into the competitive world ill-equipped for the politico-socio-economic challenges. It is only such concerted effort at revamping the education sector that will

enhance the quality of products of our educational system and equally enhance their productivity and national development. Without such determined national effort at improving knowledge, how would Nigeria become an industrialized nation in the year 2020, when at present, many of the graduates/youths lack the technologies, skills, and expertise to drive the economy? Similarly, it is imperative that the government improve public spending per capita for health to USD 50, little above the WHO recommended minimum so as to significantly improve the health status of the people. This is because a healthy worker is a productive worker. Indeed, a well-developed human capital is critical for a nation's social, political, and economic development.

Also, the state/government is enjoined to conscientiously fund research and development, for this will introduce new ideas in the economy, which are needed for development. R and D will help acquaint the people with path-breaking modern technologies in the productive sectors of the economy. This will improve the quality of goods and services produced in the country and make them competitive in the global market, as well as increasing the nation's foreign exchange earnings.

Similarly, the state/government is advised to seriously embark on policies that encourage technical education and training in the country. At present, the country's educational system produces more of liberal arts biased graduates than science and technology biased graduates. An increase in science and technology (engineering) biased graduates will enhance the technical knowhow of the workforce in the country. For instance, this is essential for the building of the nation's decayed and dilapidated infrastructures, which is very vital to the attainment of the vision 2020 agenda of the nation.

Lastly, budgetary allocations/provisions for human capital development (and other development activities) must be seriously monitored to avoid leakages, which have become a very serious problem in the system. The enactment of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (2007) has not been able to check and stop these leakages in public sector spending. As Jim-Nwoko suggested, the Fiscal Responsibility Commission should make an effort to recruit people of integrity and build the capacity of civil society organizations that will form a fresh crop of "Fiscal Police" to champion the cause of fiscal sanity in Nigeria's public expenditure management. By so doing, there will be value for every kobo spent in the public sector, especially in the area of human capital development. Essentially, significant increases in investment human capital that produce value for money invested would improve the educational and healthcare systems of the nation, and consequently, improve the nation's status from its present global classification, as medium human development country, to that of high human development country. Eventually, such improvement, if consistent, overtime will make the nation one of the 20 largest economies in the world.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it has become very clear that Nigeria's effort at development is hampered by the non-availability of human capital/resources, both in quantity and quality. These factors, obviously, would serve as a constraint to effective prosecution of the nation's development program within the framework of the vision 2020 program proposal. The poor state of the countries human capital was a result of poor funding of the education and health sectors by successive administrations since independence in 1960. Upon realization of the fact that the human brain (human resources) is more than any natural resource, most countries of the world (especially in Europe, America, and Asia), laid the foundation of their national development on their human resources. Today, these countries have achieved sustainable

growth and development. The conclusion, therefore, is that, if Nigeria must be one of the 20 largest economies of the world, it must, of necessity, give priority attention to the development of the human beings and stop paying lip-services to human capital development. Without such concerted effort at human capital development by the state, represented by the government, the nation can never achieve the provisions of the vision 2020 development program.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Harry Deinibiteim Monimah, Department Of Public Administration. Rivers State College Of Arts and Science, Rumuola, Port Harcourt