
Challenges and Prospects of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education in a Dwindling Economy: A Survey of South Eastern, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study is titled; Challenges and Prospects of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education in a Dwindling Economy: A Survey of South Eastern, Nigeria. The study answered three research questions and three hypotheses. Descriptive survey research was adopted by the study. The population of the study comprised of 26032 lecturers in the faculty of management/social sciences across the five federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The total sample size for this study was 2600 lecturers representing 10% of the population was selected through stratified and multi-stage random sampling techniques across the faculties of management/social sciences in the federal universities in South East, Nigeria. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by two experts in the department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistic was used to obtain the reliability index of .99 which was considered adequate for the study. Data

analysis was by SPSS version 16 using frequency distributions, mean scores, pooled mean and standard deviation (SD) while the hypotheses were tested using Z-Test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that Nigerian education is faced with rising commercialization of education. The study identified reasons for commercialization in education to include decreasing availability of education, insufficient financing, bureaucracy, corruption in the educational process, and problems relating to the quality and qualifications of personnel. In more specific term, the result indicates that effective human resource management in education is of great relevance in a dwindling economy, that several challenges attendant to commercialization of human resources in education with references to Nigeria and that there is some prospect of commercialization of human resources management in education. The study concluded on the imperative of ensuring effective control measures giving that commercialization has come to stay. It is therefore incumbent on the government through its relevant agencies to set minimum standards for effective service delivery and quality assurance.

Keywords: Challenges and Prospects, Commercialization, Human Resource Management, Education, Dwindling Economy, South Eastern Nigeria.

The term ‘human resource management’ (HRM) has been subjected to considerable debate. The concept is shrouded in managerial hype and its underlying philosophy and character is highly controversial because it lacks precise formulation and agreement as to its significance. Nonetheless, definition of the subject revolves around the management process that specializes in the management of people in work organizations. HRM emphasizes that employees are critical to achieving sustainable competitive advantage, that human resources practices need to be integrated with the corporate strategy, and that human resource specialists help organizational controllers to meet both efficiency and equity objectives.”

Naturally, the definition of human resource management would be incomplete without further explaining what the terms ‘human resources’ and ‘management’ are. First and foremost, people in work organizations, endowed with a range of abilities, talents and attitudes, influence productivity, quality and profitability. People set overall strategies and goals, design work systems, produce goods and services, monitor quality, allocate financial resources, and market the products and services. Individuals, therefore, become ‘human resources’ by virtue of the roles they assume in the work organization. Employment roles are defined and described in a manner designed to maximize particular employees’ contributions to achieving organizational objectives.

In theory, the management of people is not different from the management of other resources of organizations. In practice, what makes it different is the nature of the resource, people. One set of perspective views the human being as potentially a creative and complex resource whose behaviour is influenced by many diverse factors originating from either the individual or the surrounding environment. Organizational

behaviour theorists, for example, suggest that the behavior and performance of the 'human resource' is a function of at least four variables: ability, motivation role perception and situational contingencies. Another set of perspectives emphasizes the problematic nature of employment relations: (Watson, 2006). The human resources differ from other resources the employer uses, partly because individuals are endowed with varying levels of ability (including aptitudes, skills and knowledge), with personality traits, gender, role perception and differences in experience, and partly as a result of differences in motivation because of their ability to evaluate and to question management's actions and their commitment and co-operation always has to be won. In addition, employees have the capacity to form groups and trade unions to defend or further their economic interest. Human resource is often referred to as personnel, staff or workers.

The term 'management' may be applied to either a social group or a process. The term 'management', when applied to a process, conjures up in the mind a variety of images of managerial work. Management may be seen as a science or as an art. The image of management as a science is based on the view that experts have accumulated a distinct body of knowledge about management which, if studied and applied, can enhance organizational effectiveness. This view assumed that people can be trained to be effective managers. Classical management theorists set out to develop a 'science of management', in which management is defined in terms of planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling'. In this classical conception, management is regarded as primarily concerned with internal affairs. Another set of perspectives on the role of management emphasizes that an organization is a purposive miniature society and, as such, power and politics are pervasive in all work organizations. By power it means the capacity of an individual to influence others who are in a state of dependence. Organizational politics refers to those activities that are not required as part of a manager's formal role, but which influence, or attempts to influence, the distribution of resources for the purpose of promoting personal objectives.

Having understood what human resource and management is all about what then is the connection with respect to commercialization. Commercialization is the creation, marketing, and sale of education goods and services to schools by external providers. It happens *in schools* as opposed to happening *to schools*. Marginson (2011) argues that commercialization "assumes some or all of the forms of market (exchange-based) production: sale of goods or services, scarcity and competition, profit making, etc." While privatization is about the logics of who conducts education, commercialization is about how actors profit from the "commodification" of education. Commercialization can occur without privatization; for example, a public school can purchase assessment support services from commercial providers. What defines commercialization is the relationship between centralized, public bureaucracies, and the work that these organizations traditionally undertook, and its outsourcing for the commercial gain of individuals or corporations. We are careful to note, however, that historically there has been an ongoing relationship between public and private interests

in education; for example, the commercially produced textbook was central to the conduct of schooling in the United States in the early 20th century (Callaghan, 2014). However, as Kenway Bigum & Fitzclarence (2003) observe, it is the scale of commercial production and the impact that the formation of quasi-markets have on the value of public education that is important. Our argument, then, is about intensification rather than novelty. The creation of quasi-markets provides fertile ground for new educational goods and services. This is particularly evident in relation to educational technology. Schools and governments now purchase products and services from the private sector that are tied to test development and preparation, data analysis and management, and remedial services that enable further commercial opportunities. Thus, in many circumstances, commercialization and privatization work most profitably together.

Following from the above, while public education has historically been conceived as a “common good” and as necessary in securing a nation’s future civic order and economic prosperity, it is now increasingly seen as a source of private economic gain by a range of corporations and entrepreneurial individuals. This explains why private sector organizations are beginning to diversify, restructure, and rebrand their businesses to take advantage of the rapidly growing and increasingly lucrative education market. Indeed, the most recent sales figures from the likes of Pearson, the world’s largest edu-business, indicate that the company made over \$5 billion in sales during 2015 and had an adjusted operating profit of over \$1 billion (Pearson, 2016). The present scenario holds serious consequences for educational development in Nigeria and therefore justifies the execution of the present study.

Statement of the Problem

The top problem facing Nigerian education is commercialisation in the form of growing paid-for educational services that are filling the gap where public funding fails to meet increasing demand for education. The other most serious problems, in descending order, are identified as decreasing availability of education, insufficient financing, bureaucracy, corruption in the educational process, and problems relating to the quality and qualifications of personnel. One of the actual problems to be noted is the dissatisfaction of the staff with the salary level, which also affects the efficiency of teaching. The concern about salary levels will raise eyebrows, however, given that substantial rises in pay have been awarded over the past couple of years. To the best of the researchers knowledge there is non-availability of current research studies related to the present study. It is in view of the above scenario that this work is seen as a welcome development as it intends to unravel the commercialization of human resource management in education in a dwindling economy.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges and prospects of commercialization of human resource management in a dwindling economy with particular reference to Nigeria. The study shall pursue the following specific goals;

1. To determine the relevance of human resource management in education;
2. To ascertain the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education;
3. To identify the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in a dwindling economy.

Research Questions

The following three research questions shall serve as guide to the study;

1. What is the relevance of human resource management in education?
2. What are the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria?
3. What are the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in education in a dwindling economy?

Hypotheses

These statements of hypotheses are formulated to direct the study accordingly;

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on relevance of human resource management in education.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in education in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The five states of the South East formed the area of study. They are namely Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. The population of the study comprised of 26032 lecturers in the faculty of management/social science across the five federal universities in South-East, Nigeria. The total sample size for this study was 2600 lecturers representing 10% of the population was selected through stratified and multi-stage random sampling techniques across the faculty of management/social sciences in the federal universities in South-East, Nigeria.

The major instrument employed by the researcher in collecting data for the study was 2600 questionnaire of which 2413 was properly filled and returned very satisfactory.. This instrument was specifically constructed for the purpose of the study. The instrument was structured to elicit relevant answers to the research questions earlier

posed in the study. The instrument was subjected to face validation; a process which was carried out with the help of two other lecturers in the department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. In this process the items were scrutinized with intent to ascertaining the adequacy of coverage of the scope of the study with respect to the purpose/objectives, the research questions as well as the hypotheses formulated in the study, and by so doing to confirm the instrument was able to measure what the study set out to measure.

In order to ascertain the reliability of the instruments for the study, a test re-test method of two weeks interval was conducted on thirty (30) respondents selected from parent population across five states in South-Eastern Nigerian who are not part of the study sample. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistic was used to obtain the reliability. A reliability index of .99 was obtained which was considered adequate for the study. The fifteen (15) items structured questionnaire were of the 4 point Likert-type scale which requested respondents to indicate their preference among the following options; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD) weighted as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

Data analysis was by SPSS version 16 using frequency distributions, mean scores, pooled mean and standard deviation (SD) while the hypotheses were tested using Z-Test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for interpreting the mean scores was stated thus, any item with mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as agreed while mean scores below 2.50 was interpreted as disagreed. For the hypotheses, the decision rule is that when the z- calculated is equal or greater than the z-critical, the null hypothesis will be rejected. Otherwise, it will be accepted.

Results:

Research Question One: What is the relevance of human resource management in education?

Challenges and Prospects of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education in a Dwindling Economy: A Survey of South Eastern, Nigeria

Table 1: Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and Pooled Mean of Respondents on the Relevance of Human Resource Management in Education

S/ N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	DA (2)	SD (1)	$\sum X$	\bar{X}	SD	Pooled mean & SD
1	Human resource management is essential in the attainment of organizational goals.	600	800	900	108	6708	2.79	0.89	
2	Human resource management in education guarantees quality assurance.	604	803	700	301	6526	2.71	0.93	2.69 0.81
3	Without effective human resource management in education there will be low performance.	580	606	900	322	6260	2.60	0.99	
4	Effective human resource management enhances profitability.	601	703	800	299	6412	2.67	0.99	
5	Human resource management promotes effective teaching and learning.	509	800	600	418	6378	2.65	0.89	

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 above presents the results of the questionnaire items 1 to 5 which answered research question one. It shows the mean ratings of respondents on the relevance of human resource management in education. The summary of the result indicates a grand mean of 2.69 and standard deviation at 0.81. Therefore, going by our interpretation which states thus, “any item with mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as accepted while mean scores below 2.50 were interpreted as rejected”; the result hereby shows that there is human resource management in education is of great relevance in a dwindling economy.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and Pooled Mean of Respondents on the Challenges of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education with Reference to Nigeria

S/ N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	$\sum x$	\bar{x}	SD	Pooled mean & SD
6	Commercialization of human resource management in education is a threat to effective teaching and learning.	601	800	799	208	6610	2.75	0.93	2.69 0.90
7	Commercialization of human resource management in education fosters a culture of mediocrity.	581	759	900	168	6569	2.73	0.91	
8	Commercialization of human resource management in education lowers the quality of education.	514	801	900	193	5359	2.23	1.35	
9	Commercialization of human resource management in education hampers the realization of organizational goals.	573	796	800	239	6519	2.71	0.94	
10	Commercialization of human resource management in education promotes corruption in the system.	600	800	700	308	6508	2.70	0.98	

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 presents the results of data from questionnaire items 6 to 10 which answered research question two. It presents the mean ratings of respondents on the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria. The summary of the result indicates a grand mean of 2.69 and standard deviation at 0.90. Going by our interpretation as established for the study; “any item with mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as accepted while mean scores below 2.50 were interpreted as rejected”; the results therefore show that there are several challenges attendant to commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria.

Research Question Three: What are the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in education in Nigeria?

Table 3 Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and Pooled Mean of Respondents on the Prospects of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education in Nigeria

S/ N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	$\sum x$	\bar{X}	SD	Pooled mean & SD
11	Commercialization of human resource management in education as the potency of making education easily accessible,	578	759	932	139	6592	2.74	0.86	2.75 0.92
12	Commercialization of human resource management in education will enhance availability of funding.	600	718	1016	74	6660	2.77	0.89	
13	Commercialization of human resource management in education will reduce over-dependence of government control.	600	800	900	108	6708	2.79	0.87	
14	Commercialization of human resource management in education will enhance innovation and creativity in the sector.	516	799	1018	075	6572	2.73	0.90	
15	Commercialization of human resource management in education will create room for competition.	596	719	937	156	6571	2.73	0.85	

Source: Field Survey. 2018.

Table 3 presents the result of data collected on questionnaire items 11 to 15 which answered research question three. It presents the mean score of respondents on the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in education in Nigeria. The summary of the result indicates a pooled mean of 2.75 and standard deviation at 0.92. Relying on our interpretation as established for the study; “any item with mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as accepted while mean scores below 2.50 were interpreted as rejected”; the result therefore indicates that government policy on street begging has not impacted meaningfully in ameliorating the prevalence of street begging in South East Nigeria.

Test of Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were formulated. In this section, we present the result of test of hypotheses to ascertain their level of significance for the study. Z-test statistic was used.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on relevance of human resource management in education.

Table 4: Z-Test Statistic Analysis on Male and Female Responses Regarding Relevance of Human Resource Management in Education

Source of Variation	N	\bar{X}	Variance	SD	DF	z-cal	z-crit	Level of significance
Male lecturers	1049	2.75	0.5625	0.75				
Female lecturers	1364	2.63	0.6561	0.81	2411	3.76	1.96	S

S= significant

Z=3.76 df=2407, p ≤ 0.05

Result Ho₁= Rejected

Table 5 shows the summary of Z-Test statistic of relevance of human resource management in education. The result shows that the z-cal (3.76) is greater than the z-critical (1.96) with a degree of freedom of 2411 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected and alternative accepted which states that there is a significant difference between male and female respondents' responses regarding relevance of human resource management in education.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria.

Table 5: Z-Test Statistical Analysis on Male and Female Respondents' Responses Regarding the Challenges of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education with Reference to Nigeria

Source of Variation	N	\bar{X}	Variance	SD	DF	z-cal	z-crit	Level of significance
Male	1049	2.62	0.7569	0.87				
Female	1364	2.76	0.8464	0.92	2411	3.78	1.96	S

S= significant

Z=3.78, df=2407, p ≤ 0.05

Result Ho₂= Rejected

Table 5 shows the summary of Z-Test statistic on the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria. The result shows that the z-cal (3.78) is greater than the z-critical (1.96) with a degree of freedom of 2411 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is therefore rejected

Challenges and Prospects of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education in a Dwindling Economy: A Survey of South Eastern, Nigeria

and alternative accept which implies that there is a significance difference between male and female respondents’ responses regarding the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in education in Nigeria.

Table 6: Z-Test Statistic Analysis on Male and Female Respondents on the Prospects of Commercialization of Human Resource Management in Education in Nigeria

Source of Variation	N	\bar{X}	Variance	SD	DF	z-cal	z-crit	Level of significance
Male lecturers	1049	2.78	0.8649	0.93				
Female lecturers	1364	2.72	0.8281	0.91	2411	1.59	1.96	Ns

NS= Not significant

Z=1.59, DF=2407, p > 0.05

Result Ho₃= Accepted

Table 6 shows the summary of Z-Test statistic of the challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria. The result shows that the z-cal (1.59) is less than the z-critical (1.96) with a degree of freedom of 2411 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypotheses is therefore accepted which states that there is no significance difference between male and female respondents s’ responses on the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in education in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

There are three research questions and three hypotheses formulated by the study. The result of research question one is presented on Table 1 above covering questionnaire items 1 to 5. It shows the mean ratings of respondents on the relevance of human resource management in education. The summary of the result indicates a grand mean of 2.69 and standard deviation at 0.81. Therefore, going by our interpretation which states thus, “any item with mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as accepted while mean scores below 2.50 were interpreted as rejected”; the result hereby shows that there is human resource management in education is of great relevance in a dwindling economy.

Table 2 presents the results of data from questionnaire items 6 to 10 which answered research question two. It presents the mean ratings of respondents on the

challenges of commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria. The summary of the result indicates a grand mean of 2.69 and standard deviation at 0.90. Going by our interpretation as established for the study; “any item with mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as accepted while mean scores below 2.50 were interpreted as rejected”; the results therefore show that there are several challenges attendant to commercialization of human resource management in education with reference to Nigeria.

The results for research question three is presented on Table 3 using data collected on questionnaire items 11 to 15. It presents the mean score of respondents on the prospects of commercialization of human resource management in education in Nigeria. The summary of the result indicates a pooled mean of 2.75 and standard deviation at 0.92. Relying on our interpretation as established for the study; “any item with mean of 2.50 and above was interpreted as accepted while mean scores below 2.50 were interpreted as rejected”; the result therefore indicates that commercialization of human resource management in education in Nigeria’s dwindling economy holds some prospects.

Conclusion

Nigerian education is faced with a number of problems among which include among others commercialization. The study identified reasons for commercialization in education to include decreasing availability of education, insufficient financing, bureaucracy, corruption in the educational process, and problems relating to the quality and qualifications of personnel. One of the actual problems to be noted is the dissatisfaction of the staff with their condition of service which, also affects the efficiency of teaching in view of the relevance of human resource management in education vis-à-vis commercialization; the study concludes on the imperative of ensuring effective control measures giving that commercialization has come to stay. It is therefore incumbent on the government through its relevant agencies to set minimum standards for effective service delivery and quality assurance.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are considered essential at this point;

1. There is need for government to put machineries in motion to ensure effective monitoring and supervision of all educational institutions to checkmate abuses as a result of commercialization of education.
2. The government should continue to play its role in ensuring that education properly regulated so as to maintain its place as a social service to some extent.
3. Stakeholders in the education sector should be pro-active in ensuring that private school owners adhere to the relevant curricula.
4. There is need for the government through the Ministry of Education to set minimum standards for the operation of all schools both public and private.

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