

***Mapping the role of ODL in sustained development
of competitive Human Resources of 21st century***

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- ❖ Introduction/Conceptual
- ❖ The contributions of Human Resources to organisations and economies
- ❖ Prioritising Human Resources development plans through education
- ❖ What characterizes competitive human resources
- ❖ ODL as a viable tool for sustained development of competitive Human resources
- ❖ Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction/Conceptual

This paper draws on the Human Capital theory(Alfred Schultz and others in the 1960s

Theory evolved to current economic thinking about Humans as a resource

This theory puts at its center, the contributions that people make to development

The key premise in the theory is that with **increased levels** of skilled humans comes **increased productivity** and **competitiveness**

Introduction...

This theory is applied here to underscore the centrality of Humans to organizational and national competitiveness.

It is also used as a framework for discussions but bearing in mind the critique that it leans to a labour economic analysis

The contributions of Human Resources to organisations and economies



- ❖ Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (KSA) used to lead to a company, country or region's development success
- ❖ Leadership and management
- ❖ Resources, (material, financial)
- ❖ Innovation/ and innovative ideas;
- ❖ Management of change;
- ❖ Strategies, systems and structures
- ❖ Goods and services.

Prioritising Human Resources development plans for growth



Therefore, on these bases, the world over, Human Resources(interacting with other factors such as context) make competitiveness possible

Key amongst those factors in this milieu is Technology (availability, its efficient application or even its affordability)

Premise: Competitiveness, is achieved through skilled and competitive human resources

What characterizes competitive human resources

- ❖ Qualified and skilled professionals
- ❖ Thought leaders
- ❖ Effective planners and managers
- ❖ Innovative in their thinking and practices
- ❖ Have high business acumen
- ❖ Value good delivery of goods and services.

What characterizes competitive human resources

- ❖ Place above their personal interests, the interests and aspirations of their companies or countries
- ❖ Global in their outlook and adequately networked
- ❖ Are able to effectively leverage technology to maintain a competitive advantage

The role of education in the production of competitive human resources

Education(higher) and training continue to be highlighted as necessary and key factors in the development of the above needed attributes for competitiveness

According to Porter, cited by Gardner (20020 “education and training constitute perhaps the single greatest long-term leverage point available to all levels of government in upgrading industry” , p. 5),.

The role of education in the production of competitive human resources

Ideally, education:

- ❖ Facilitates improvement of institutional capacities through human resources who are responsible professionals
- ❖ Brings to the individual, mental treasure

But Education has challenges in this role such as:

- A complex socio-economic and political environment
- Dynamic economic and political forces and trends which continue to undergird its policy frameworks and its practice(Pityana (2009: 4)

Some of the challenges facing Higher education

- The tendency to emphasise general and traditional subjects ignoring vs vocational and skill-based education (Das & Bordoloi, 2016)
 - ❖ Limited capacity to provide good quality education (due mainly to lack of resources, human material, infrastructure)
 - ❖ Lack of problem focused education
 - ❖ Introduction of digital education
 - ❖ Ethics in teaching and learning against the backdrop of increased use of social media

Some of the challenges facing Higher education

- ❖ Lack of competent and dedicated teachers
- ❖ Lack of robust pedagogy
- ❖ Gap between academia and industry
(ResearchGate
<https://www.researchgate.net.post>

Hence the view that it has failed to meet one of its expected principal roles, that is, to contribute to human capital formation by training an adaptable labor force (SADC, 2012:p.3, (Sampson, 2003; 2004;).

Open and Distance Learning: a viable alternative in educational delivery

The failure served as a motivating factor for countries to increasingly look to Open and Distance Learning (ODL) as a viable alternative in educational delivery.

It led to a proliferation of Open and Distance Education institutions which no doubt augment the educational delivery capacities of their countries.

(Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Botswana, South Africa, and dual mode delivery in many conventional universities

Open Distance and Learning (ODL) is...

A flexible mode of educational delivery and most of it is at tertiary level.

Takes a certain type of learner mainly mature and, motivated to learn and earn

They may have lost their jobs and coming back to equip themselves with the skills that they need in order to compete for ever-scarcer vacancies.

Open Distance and Learning (ODL) is...

ODL institutions have a relatively wider reach(not only in a country but regionally and beyond. For example, It was reported in 2009 that UNISA, the only dedicated ODL institution in South Africa, and the largest provider of ODL on the Continent, enrolled just one-third of all publically funded headcount enrolments in South Africa, with approximately 262,000 headcounts in 2008.

Of those, over 90% were South African nationals, over 9% were nationals of other African countries while a little less than 1% were other foreign nationals(Pityana, 2009:11)

Conclusion

- ODL is systematically positioning itself as a distinct alternative vehicle for sustained development of competitive human resources
- Examples abound from many parts of the world of ODL being given a chance to enter the educational landscape
- ODL is becoming an indispensable part of mainstream education in most parts of both the developed and developing world (UNESCO, 2002 cited in Nyerere (2016, p. 3)..

Conclusion

The ODL system has:

- Provided educational opportunities to those who are deprived of good education due to various constraints
- Has also facilitated access to education,.
- As a field of educational practice ODL has a reputation for changing mindsets and giving a fresh orientation to

Conclusion

The ODL system facilitates a process in which employees of organisations that aim to be competitive, become astute adult learners

Therefore, it is concluded and recommended that ODL institutions should enhance the approach they already use to develop need-and skill-based courses to continue to respond to labour market demands for competitive human resources,